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Abstract

Inner-city living is a hot topic in Germany. Policy-makers long for new middle- and upper-class residents; evidence of urban in-flight has been documented by scholars, and debates on reurbanisation are in full swing. This trend has also led to the emergence of a new housing product in German metropolises: high-priced, centrally located and newly built apartment and townhouse developments. In this paper, these luxury developments are analysed as part of a general process of urban restructuring and a focus is on the contradictions inherent to the idea of urbanity taking shape here. Guided by Foucault's governmentality approach, new luxury developments are understood as a powerful reworking of how the city, its uses and users are imagined and governed. In doing so, the paper aims to show that the concept of governmentality enables a critique of current processes of urban restructuring that may enrich the on-going debates on gentrification.

1. Introduction

Lately, a new kind of housing product—newly built, luxury inner-city residences—is being introduced to German cities as an answer to the growing need for urban housing. Townhouses, lofts and 'urban villages' are appearing in German metropolises, especially in Berlin. According to one unofficial estimate, 35 luxury complexes (each with more than 10 flats to sell) have been constructed in Berlin since 2000 (Holm, 2010). While this is a small fraction of the overall building activity in that city, this rather uncommon housing product has received a lot of media attention; it has become the subject of intense debates and a target for the anti-gentrification movement in Berlin.

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Forms of protest range from neighbourhood initiatives to acts of sabotage at building sites, prompting some developers to hire security services for overnight monitoring.

The luxury developments reveal the contested way in which reurbanisation is taking shape on the micro scale of inner-city neighbourhoods. While we agree with criticisms that consider the developments as a prime example of new-build gentrification (Davidson and Lees, 2010), in this paper we argue that it may be fruitful to look at them in a more nuanced way. The developments are a site for examining how conceptions of urbanity are generated. Besides attracting high-status residents and thereby creating gentrification effects, they significantly shape the way we imagine the city. These discursive effects are often underestimated as 'not real', as Sharon Zukin argues

> Skeptics may scoff that these are only words and images; both together and alone, they lack the power to make material changes in the city's built environment. These words and images though, create a language that embodies our desire for a good place to live (Zukin, 2010, pp. 227–228).

As we will argue here, contemporary changes in the urban landscape cannot be understood without focusing on the new desire for authentic urban experiences, the contradictory attempts to produce urban atmospheres and the strategies to control and maximise their advantages.

Foucault's concept of governmentality helps us to conceptualise the production of urban atmospheres as a crucial strategy for inner-city restructuring in Berlin. Following Foucault, we propose that luxury inner-city housing is not only an investment in urban space that results in the upscaling and displacement in neighbourhoods, but that it also opens up a 'field of actions' to alter the look of urban spaces, their usages and ultimately our imagination of the city.

Foucault's theoretical concepts have been used previously by scholars for questions of urban development, notably Paul Rabinow, who argues in his analysis of urban planning in 19th-century France that the design of the urban environment follows certain norms of the social (Rabinow, 1989, p. 11). Similarly, we argue that this is true of the emerging luxury developments in Berlin. The new urban forms we focus on do follow certain norms—namely, those of creativity, individuality and flexibility.

Urban experiences today may be more staged and orchestrated than ever. Our goal is to show that this is not only true for popular urban destinations like Times Square, but also for new private domestic spaces that are currently emerging as a part of the 'work–live–play' paradigm guiding reurbanisation. Applying the concept of governmentality allows an analysis of new luxury developments as powerful spaces for governing urban populations. They must not be underestimated as artifacts, representing the struggles over urban space in current processes of 'revitalisation'. As we want to show, they can be understood as operational spaces and as part of a new dispositive of governing the city. As such, they organise relations between "words and images" that embody the desire for urbanity and the material changes in the city's built environment (Zukin, 2010, pp. 227–228).

In the marketing, the new-build luxury developments are conceptualised as close to the 'urban edge', but also as safe havens, retreats from the nuisances imposed by the city. Their architectural form, accoutrements, amenities and services are arranged to generate a lifestyle that follows certain norms defined as 'urban' and yet is substantially detached from the surrounding city. At first sight, the promise of secure living in an interesting surrounding appears to be the selling point of any inner-city housing product. Yet upon closer

examination of the new luxury developments, this narration prescribes a comprehensive lifestyle on offer, a blueprint for how everyday life should be lived in these built environments. Answering Foucault's call to use the frictions inherent to rationalities of governing as entry points for critical investigations, we focus on these contradictions in the urban imaginary as they are currently emerging.

In the first part of this paper, we position our study in relation to discussions of inner-city restructuring along middle- and upper-class lines in the literature on gentrification. We then turn our focus to luxury developments in Berlin, in order to explore in detail the ideas of urbanity they bring forth. By examining the narration, marketing, layout, amenities and services provided by the new luxury developments, we point to ambiguities in the vision of urbanity that emerges from the developments. Our empirical examples comprise two developments each in the districts Prenzlauer Berg ('Marthashof' and 'Kolle Belle'), Kreuzberg ('CarLofts' and 'Engelgärten') and Mitte ('The Charleston' and 'Fehrbelliner Höfe'). In order to examine the narrative of urban living and to highlight its built form, we collected marketing material for the developments, analysed media coverage and conducted interviews with developers and marketing staff. We visited the construction sites with our interview partners and let them explain their design decisions. We also examined floor plans and other visual material projecting the future usages of— and everyday life in—the buildings.

2. Context: Processes behind the 'Urban Renaissance'

In order to substantiate our analysis of a changing urban imaginary realised by the Berlin developments, we first place these projects within the context of recent processes of urban restructuring. The relocation of middle- and upper-class households to inner-city neighbourhoods as a strategy of 'revitalisation' and social mixing from city governments has been broadly discussed as a new dimension of gentrification. The drivers and scope of this current 'gentrification blueprint' (Davidson and Lees, 2005) differ from the 'classical' gentrification process (that is nevertheless still in place as well), in which former working-class neighbourhoods are remade through the influx of middle-class culture. This 'classical' version of gentrification is generally explained in terms of capital accumulation strategies (Smith, 1982), or in terms of the collective social action of affluent residents with a desire for urban lifestyles (Ley, 1996; Zukin, 2010). The scope of gentrification processes has expanded from "islands of renewal in seas of decay" (Berry, 1985), to Wyly and Hammel's (1999) "islands of decay in seas of renewal" and now encompasses cities globally (Smith, 2002). Gentrification today is "not a sideshow in the city, but a major component of the urban imaginary" (Ley, 2003, p. 2527). The current reworking of inner-city neighbourhoods has become an explicit goal of public policy (Lees and Ley, 2008). City governments are trying to provide a basis for creative industries as possible avenues to urban prosperity (Scott, 2006; Peck, 2005), aiming at the relocation of taxpayers (Roussea, 2009), or using gentrification as a strategy for establishing social order in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Uitermark *et al.*, 2007; Reese *et al.*, 2010).

More recent work on gentrification links the phenomenon to neo-liberal policy turns and global investment strategies. Major investors are said to play a leading role (Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Smith, 2002). As a result, urban restructuring increasingly becomes visible in the form of large

developments (Hackworth, 2002; Slater *et al.*, 2004; Rérat *et al.*, 2010, Kern, 2010).

The effects of this restructuring on different social groups and their right to the city have become more difficult to discern, given the intricate connection between 'urban renaissance' and gentrification (Slater, 2006). On the one hand, the 'emancipatory city thesis' that provides the political legitimation for state-led gentrification has received substantial critique. According to that thesis, socially mixed urban communities are the beneficial result of enforcing middle-class relocation. Critics, however, point to the harmful consequences of urban renewal strategies, predominantly household displacement and community conflict (Lees, 2008; Walks and Maaranen, 2008; Atkinson, 2006; Wyly and Hammel, 1999, 2004). However, because restructuring today often takes the form of developments on brownfield or in former industrial areas, such direct effects cannot always be observed (Boddy, 2007).

To retain the critical perspective of gentrification research, it is necessary to engage with the broader effects of the current restructuring (Slater, 2009), not least by turning more explicitly towards the way urban restructuring is discursively framed (Lees, 2000; Uitermark *et al.*, 2007; Davidson and Lees, 2005; Kern, 2007, 2010). Our paper adds to this strand of research. Our intention is not to measure displacement dynamics and show how these can be traced back to new-build developments. Rather, we approach these developments as spaces where a vision of urbanity becomes articulated and point to ways in which these spaces lead to 'exclusionary displacement' (Marcuse, 1986).

While gentrification lies "at the heart of urban renaissance" (Lees, 2009, p. 1529), a second strand of research concerns how urban restructuring results in an intensification of social control and the extension of spatial bifurcation. An important part of 'urban renaissance' policies has been the intensified policing and moral ordering of space (Helms *et al.*, 2007). Surveillance, broken-windows policing, the criminalisation of homeless people (Mitchel, 1997), the privatisation of control in shopping malls and Business Improvement Districts (Ward, 2006, 2007; Peyroux *et al.* 2012; Marquardt and Füller, 2012) and the fortification of residential enclaves mark an increasingly revanchist urban landscape (Herbert and Brown, 2006; MacLeod, 2002).

In the literature, this revanchist urban landscape is often approached at the street level by retracing the grim face of criminalisation and control. Detached private enclaves of higher-income groups are scrutinised in the research on gated communities (Glasze, 2005; Glasze *et al.*, 2006; Le Goix and Webster, 2008; Low, 2003) and on processes of enclavism (Atkinson, 2006; Butler, 2007).

With the on-going 'urban renaissance' and the reworking of inner-city neighbourhoods through high-priced developments, questions emerge precisely at the intersection of those literatures. How is the urban fear of the middle classes managed if the city also provides the selling point for new loft-style apartments? How do securitised luxury developments affect the way surrounding neighbourhoods are policed? New luxury developments as an epitome of current processes of urban restructuring are a helpful subject-matter for bringing together the literatures on gentrification, enclavism and the disciplining of urban space (Füller and Marquardt, 2010). With our empirical study, we add a German example to an emerging literature that is mostly centred on the UK (for exceptions, see Neisen, 2008; Bodnar and Molnar, 2010) and North America (Kern, 2007, 2010).

Overall, new housing is being built at an extremely low rate in Berlin, with an

estimated 3500 flats built annually (GSW, 2011). Smaller national developers prevail in Berlin's new-build residential market; large international funds predominantly buy into the existing housing stock (Bodnar and Molnar, 2010). While Berlin's geography of gentrification differs from the general 'blueprint' in those regards, rent increases and displacement are occurring, especially in the sought-after neighbourhoods of Mitte, Kreuzberg and Neukölln (IVD Berlin-Brandenburg, 2010). There is a growing demand for upscale housing in those areas (GSW, 2011). As a result, about 40 new luxury developments have been approved in the past five years. Given the overall low number of new-build residential units, this number stands out and the projects are the subject of public debate in local and national media (Lomoth, 2008; Gelinsky, 2010).

3. Luxury Developments: A New Urban Order in the Making

The concept of governmentality implies a specific understanding of *how* populations and individuals are governed. Governing is not only understood as a mode of exercising power by the state, but in a very broad sense that comprises individual conduct and the governing of enterprises, communities, cities and families. Governmentality puts special emphasis on "political power beyond the state" (Rose and Miller, 2010). In our case, this means understanding urban development not only as the product of urban planning by municipal governments, but also as the net effect of different (including non-state) actors changing the city. For Foucault, government works through certain technologies and dispositifs. Dispositifs can be understood as

a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid (Foucault, 1980, p. 194).

Technology also is understood in a broad sense, entailing heterogeneous measures directed towards certain goals of government. Foucault proposes a particular style of analysis able to take this heterogeneity into account and to draw particular attention to the specific interconnections between discourses and design forms. Foucault and scholars who follow his notion of governmentality have stressed the importance that design and architectural technologies have gained in governing modern societies (Foucault, 2007, p. 11; Rabinow, 1989). This emphasis on the importance of design technologies for governmental projects is particularly important for our case study. We tried to include different kinds of data (what our interview partners said, the marketing material, but also floor plans, our impressions when visiting the building sites, the visibility of security technology as a crucial feature of the new buildings, etc.) to understand the role new luxury developments may play in the governing of urban populations.

The governmentality approach encourages us to focus on these measures and technical means instead of understanding governing only in terms of opposing interests, dominant ideologies or a proliferation of values. It requires the bracketing of these immediate questions in order to step back and analyse—as Foucault put it—'problematisations'. For Foucault, a problematisation

does not mean the representation of a preexistent object nor the creation through discourse of an object that did not exist. It is the ensemble of discursive and nondiscursive practices that makes something enter into the play of true and false and constitute it as an object of

thought (Foucault; quoted in Rabinow, 2003, pp. 18).

Foucault understands governing as an "order of 'problematisation'—which is to say, the development of a domain of acts, practices, and thoughts" (Foucault, 1997, p. 114). Problematisations constitute "fields of actions" (Foucault, 1982, p. 221) and propose ways to make problems processable. Governmentality draws particular attention to the reciprocal relation between types of knowledge (that may assume the form of truth claims) and types of action. Academic research on the degree and dimension of reurbanisation may function as such a truth claim, problematising urban development and justifying certain ways to act upon the urban landscape as a field of intervention.

Following the governmentality approach, our main intention is not to critique urban 'revitalisation' as an ideology that serves to reshape the city along middle- and upper-class lines. It is not our goal to reveal planners' and developers' hidden agendas or to show that their use of 'revitalisation' vocabulary only camouflages other, 'truer' motives. Nor is our aim to analyse the extent to which new developments are needed in the districts or to propose how they could be planned differently to avoid gentrification effects. Governmentality proposes a particular style of inquiry: instead of criticising ideologies and proposing solutions to existing problems, a focus on problematisations induces—as Rabinow maintains—a "modal change from seeing a situation not only as 'a given' but as 'a question'" (Rabinow, 2003, p. 18).

In urban geography, there has been a growing interest in the concept of governmentality (see Elden, 2007; Dikeç, 2007; Huxley, 2007, 2008; Legg, 2007; Rose-Redwood, 2006). With the rise of neoliberal policies reshaping urban governance and the built environment of cities, the concept of governmentality has gained attention as a way to make sense of these changes in urban space, to understand the political rationalities underpinning them and their contradictory effects. As Steve Herbert and Elizabeth Brown (2006, p. 756) claim, urban space today "is not just impacted by neoliberal policies, but … its conceptualisation importantly helps legitimate those policies". Following this take on governmentality, new luxury developments in Berlin are not just another example of a general trend of urban neo-liberalisation, but a crucial place where neo-liberalism is produced and 'built'. Although studies working with governmentality often focus on 'big government programmes' to retrace political rationalities, we argue that it may also be fruitful to engage with phenomena situated at the micro level—in our case, the new luxury developments—and to analyse them as part of a reorganisation of urban order that is taking concrete shape.

As many scholars have stressed, working with the concept of governmentality also means focusing on the links between direct forms of regulating conduct and indirect effects of governing at a distance. Studies on neo-liberalism have stressed how neoliberal rationalities of governing at a distance call on people to conduct themselves as free, responsible and self-optimising subjects. The conceptualisation of governmentality as modes of subjectification is one of Foucault's main theoretical contributions and a prominent topic in governmentality studies.

In our case, the governmentality approach allows us to conceptualise the links between specific visions of urban development and ways to act upon the city's built environment. Instead of focusing on the way cultural consumers try to realise their subjective identity with the help of particular images of urban authenticity, we focus on the field of urban experiences that is

created *for them* by actors, practices and discourses involved in creating urban living experiences. By drawing on the governmentality approach, we show that the residential developments are a form of governance where "to govern, in this sense, is *to structure possible fields of actions of others*" (Foucault, 1982, p. 221; emphasis added). Foucault sees historical phenomena of urban planning as prime examples of this definition of governing as 'structuring fields of action' and understood the urban landscape as a field (Foucault, 2007, p. 17), where diverse actors bring "both norms and forms of the social environment into a common frame that would produce a healthy, efficient, and productive social order" (Rabinow, 1989, p. 11).

For our case study, these reflections by Foucault and others in his wake on the 'art of governing' translate into the following research questions. How are the developments legitimised as a reasonable answer to the 'forces' of reurbanisation? What are the strategies to produce urban atmospheres and to control and maximise their advantages? How does the planning for these complexes both invoke the idea of and try to appeal to an 'ideal urban dweller'? What are the desires and anxieties ascribed to this type of future dweller and how are they incorporated in the design of the buildings? What kind of vision of the city, its future users and usages is taking shape here?

4. New-build Luxury Developments: The Case of Berlin

In the case of Berlin, the new luxury residential market segment emerged rather recently. The flight to the suburbs was especially strong during the 1990s, because unification opened up the possibility of suburban detached housing for people in the city for the first time in decades. This 'catch-up suburbanisation' meant a loss in population of 30 000 people between 1992 and 1998 (Bluth, 2004). This trend has changed slightly in recent years. Between 1999 and 2008 approximately 80 600 people moved to Berlin (Investitionsbank Berlin, 2010). The influx of young professionals, a preference for inner-city living among families and demographic changes now sustain a growing demand for inner-city housing.

In this context, newly built developments are gaining importance. In 2008, 6300 housing units were licensed to be built, predominantly infill developments (Investitionsbank Berlin, 2010, p. 37). Also, homeownership in Berlin is growing. Up to now, Berlin has been known as a 'city of tenants'; in 2007, 13 per cent of residents were homeowners, compared with 20 per cent in Hamburg, Munich or Cologne. In 2008, this ratio increased to 14 per cent and it is expected to grow further (Investitionsbank Berlin, 2010).

Another factor is the changing way the local state intervenes in the housing market. The development of subsidised housing was reduced continually before it came to a total halt in 2004 and the city now concentrates on facilitating private investment (Berning, 2006, p. 4). This has led to a growing polarisation of the housing market (Res Urbana, 2010). In certain neighbourhoods, gentrification has gained new momentum; rents go up by 30 per cent or more once a new lease is signed (IVD Berlin-Brandenburg, 2010). It is in this context that new luxury residential building is entering the market.

4.1 Contested Developments

The local debate over luxury developments in Berlin is dominated by two viewpoints that regard the developments either as examples of reurbanisation or as engines of gentrification. The fact that the developments are highly contested makes them

particularly interesting for an analysis based on theories of governmentality, because it shows that in this "historically troubled situation" of restructuring the city, there are "multiple constraints at work but multiple responses as well" (Rabinow, 2003, p. 19). The conflict also shows how closely processes of inner-city restructuring are linked with the production of scientific knowledge. Urban policy-makers and private actors promoting an 'urban renaissance' rely strongly on scientific studies documenting a growing interest in inner-city living by the upper and middle classes to legitimise their planning decisions. Remarkably though, urban social movements emerging in German metropolises increasingly make use of work within urban studies as well. In the German context, 'gentrification' has only recently diffused out of scientific contexts to become a buzzword that is used to question narratives of urban restructuring. Although it may be too early to describe these kinds of protest as a coherent, emergent counter-culture, the protests—especially in Berlin—have successfully made urban planning decisions a matter of public debate.

Recently, the City of Berlin has moved away from using regulations and rent control areas [*Sanierungsschutzgebiete*] to intervene directly in the housing market and the social fabric of neighbourhoods. This has resulted in the growing importance of the private market. The luxury developments are prime examples of how political constellations support gentrification. The narrative bolstering them is a familiar one: they are supposed to avert urban flight by the middle and upper classes. In Berlin, this argument is often combined with a reference to the high number of people receiving social assistance in some of the inner-city districts. As has been observed in other cases, neighbourhood upscaling in the context of Berlin's reurbanisation is promoted

in the name of community regeneration (in the face of supposed social/community breakdown/degeneration) through policies of mixed communities (Lees and Ley, 2008, p. 2381).

In the increasingly heated discussions of reurbanisation in Berlin, the new developments have become symbolic focal points. Even though they might not resemble classical landscapes of gentrification, the critique that is forming clearly sees them as meaningful caesuras in the restructuring of Berlin's inner city.

4.2 Urban Living Re-envisioned

The narratives surrounding the developments share many similarities. Particularly notable is how conceptions of urbanity and the assumption of a growing demand for urban life dominate the discussions. The kind of narrative of 'urban revitalisation' that is taking shape here remains extremely vague, placeless and surprisingly maleable. Berlin has its own specific history of urbanisation. It is home to various subcultures and large migrant communities, and for decades it was divided into two separate political entitites (East Berlin and West Berlin). Despite this unique history, the marketing of the luxury developments mostly invokes associations of other urban metropolises to describe the 'urban' character of these products. The Marthashof and Prenzlauer Gärten developments claim to introduce the concept of "London style townhouses" to Berlin (Stoffanel Development, 2007a, 2009; Artprojekt Development, 2011). The patio gardens inside Marthashof are also supposed to exude "Italian flair" (Stoffanel Development, 2007b). The *Gründerzeit*-style architecture of Kolle Belle, not uncommon in Berlin, is supposed to re-create the "historical chic" and "*savoir*

vivre" of 19th-century inner-city *arrondisse-ments* in Paris, mixed with design features from Italian and Greek cities (Econ-cept Development, 2010). The CarLofts claim to evoke the "American feel" of loft living (CarLoft Development, 2007) and the Charleston is supposed to be reminiscent of high-class, inner-city living in the Upper East Side, standing "in the tradition of great New York Apartment building complexes" (Groth Development, 2010).

Neighborhood distinctiveness is also prominent in the marketing material. To satisfy the demand for authenticity, the neighbourhoods in question are marketed as milieus 'breeding' urban subjectivities. Yet the narratives evoked are far from telling distinct stories about the 'one-of-a-kind neighbourhoods' they claim to represent. On the contrary, every single one of the neighbourhoods surrounding the infill developments is uniformly described as 'vibrant', 'lively' and 'creative'. The stories told about neighbourhood distinctiveness are completely interchangeable. As Zukin argues, authenticity can deliberately be made up of pieces of cultural references. While these fictional qualities of authenticity may not be 'real', they do have a real effect on our imagination of city life (Zukin, 2010, p. xii). Interestingly, most of the references evoked in our data do not refer to the local culture of the spaces they try to capitalise on, but remain even more generic. However, what the stories do produce is a detailed agenda for living in the city and for acceptable 'urban lifestyles'. The specific 'liveliness' of the neighbourhoods in question, often originally working-class and immigrant quarters, remains mostly unnamed. Evoked as a distinguishing feature of the housing product, urbanity is referred to as a universal form of vibrant city life, filled deliberately with reminiscences of iconic cities. Instead of engaging with specific urban atmospheres,

the new-build developments are shaped by blueprint ideas of urbanism that circulate as best practice in real estate discourses. Detailed reference to the history of the neighbourhood can only be found in the marketing of the Engelgärten. This is not a chance exception: the development is situated in the former border area, known as the 'death zone' during the Cold War. This historical specificity was stressed through celebrations held at the construction site to mark the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Here, the development is further legitimised by pointing to the history of the brownfield—a "wound in the heart of the city" that the construction is now closing (Engelgärten Development, 2009).

4.3 Cross-purposes in Discourse and Design

A closer look at the marketing strategies promoting the developments as homes of 'new urban lifestyles' shows that the definition of urbanity brought forward here is not only generic, but surprisingly ambiguous. Marthashof's promise to "live in the city and the countryside at the same time" (Stoffanel Development, 2007a), the Charleston's assurance of "security and calmness" in the middle of an environment "that vibrates of life" (Groth Development, 2010), the combination of "peace and the buzz of city life, bright lights and the dark side" (Orco Group, 2007) offered by the Fehrbelliner, or the claim to provide "all the benefits of life in the big city without all the usual drawbacks" (CarLoft Development, 2007) are all variations of a central element shaping reurbanisation.

The new 'urban dweller' projected in our material clearly is an inexperienced one who has yet to learn how to make use of the city. The assumption that the newly arisen interest in inner-city living mainly comes

from middle- and upper-class people not used to the level of diversity in the urban environment translates into a dubious narrative of urban living, which is incorporated in the design of the buildings. The developments are represented as imaginary spaces where antagonistic desires can be fulfilled without conflict. Their built form is supposed to balance the ambiguousness of a desire for urban authenticity and anti-urban anxieties. Two strands of narration are programmatically intertwined in the discussions around the luxury developments and then realised in the way these spaces are built. On the one hand, there is the story of the revitalised, vibrant and spectacular city; on the other hand, there is the story of the cosy, safe and secure home.

'Blending in with the urban'. In these developments, the idea of the revitalised and vibrant city becomes operative: the developments are designed to serve contemporary lifestyle needs comprehensively. Thus, they are supposed to blend in with the area surrounding them and to complement qualities already present in the urban environment. Surely, target-group marketing is no novelty and housing choices have been advertised as lifestyle choices in the German real estate market before. Yet the way the developments are insistently presented as lifestyle-enabling milieus throughout the whole development process—from the first building licence up to the sale and leasing of the finished apartments—is striking for German real estate development.

At the forefront in this regard are the Marthashof and CarLoft developments, which were explicitly planned and built to encourage and facilitate new urban lifestyles. Prices start well above the average for new-build housing in Berlin. What you get for this extra charge is "a certain quality of life ... a certain atmosphere that's top-value".[1] The Charleston and Fehrbelliner take the idea of pre-defined environments further by adding a number of amenities typically connected to the image of the young urban professional. The developments claim to produce housing spaces that "keep you in shape" (Orco Group, 2007). Thus, The Charleston includes a range of services to choose from, including "treatments you'd expect from a luxury hotel" and a large fitness club (Groth Development, 2010). The Fehrbelliner development provides fitness and wellness facilities, as well as a child-minding service, promising that children are no obstacle for the new 'work-life-play' lifestyle.

Following the perspective of governmentality, these efforts to create environments that facilitate certain usages of urban space can be read as governmental strategies, as ways in which

> assorted agencies, authorities, and groups seek to shape and incite the self-formation of the comportments, habits, capacities and desires of particular categories of individuals (Huxley, 2007, p. 188).

Foucault describes this as efforts towards a 'conduct of conduct'. The design and architecture of the developments create a field of constrained possibility that shapes certain ways of life, but without prescribing or determining them. The design of the developments is supposed to enable forms of self-conduct, but also to follow the desires of future inhabitants. The fact that these efforts are powerful does not imply that they need to be coherent. Looking at the developments, different facets emerge, contradicting the picture of 'city-mindedness' that is evoked in the marketing material and by the developers. Despite the alleged unconventionality of this 'urban product', developers pointed out a demand for

formalised codes of conduct in our interviews. "[Our customers] simply want a surrounding they know exactly. Graduated privacy. This is the key to wellbeing".[2] Certain measures are supposed further to increase the character of the developments as stable environments. Describing the typical buyer, the developer points out a characteristic gap between the liberal attitudes underlying the desire for urbanity and the demands also fulfilled in his product

> All experimental stuff is completely neglected. Hardwood floors, a room height of 3.7 metres, the fireplace, own house, private garden, private terrace and attached garage—can you have it any more bourgeois?[3]

The way lifestyles are presented in the discussions surrounding the developments is more than a comprehensive marketing strategy. Ideas of reurbanisation are concretely shaped and perpetuated here, but their contradictions are also revealed. These contradictions include the demand for private property in an ordered environment, the need for a better integration of 'work, life and play' in an increasingly tight schedule and the aspiration for a lifestyle adorned with urban chic.

'Disassociating from the urban'. Aside from 'blending in' with the urban environment, the developments are also supposed to provide the comforts of a safeguarded space and function as strongholds against the surrounding city. The security architecture and services may appear restrained and low-key compared with gated communities developing in other European cities lately or to heavy-handed, broken-windows policing strategies in other urban spaces. However, in the German context, the luxury developments introduce a considerable and unfamiliar mix of security-oriented design and infrastructure to the inner city.

The CarLofts offer their inhabitants the possibility literally to take their cars with them inside the apartments

> Nervous about dark alleyways and gloomy underground car parks? … You can now reach your home without even having to get out of your car (CarLoft Development, 2007).

The location of the CarLofts in Kreuzberg—an area known for its leftist sub-culture—helps to highlight these distinguishing features of the architectural concept, the developer claims

> Especially here, at this location, people say: I would prefer to take my car into a garage, or—even better—to take it with me onto the floor.[4]

A certain degree of detachment from the neighbourhood is characteristic of all the developments we examined. Security features are pervasive in the design and amenities of the buildings. In our interviews and in the marketing material, they appear as 'additional services' for increased comfort, diffused in a comprehensive programme alongside features like spa and wellness, fitness, child minding and housekeeping. Concièrge and doorman services, rather uncommon in German cities until now, are classified as a luxury attribute of upscale housing. The fact that these services also represent a measure of social control is a mere afterword in this context

> It goes without saying that [the doorman] pays attention to who's coming and going. He's friendly and confident, yet nothing escapes his eye … (Groth Development, 2010).

Security technologies and surveillance equipment like cameras, motion detectors

and closing systems are part of the sales package, but their understated character is always emphasised. 'Intelligent living', as envisioned at the Fehrbelliner complex, is enclosed in a compact, digital entrance control and flexible locking system. Lifts, front doors and the garage are integrated into the system, providing "a central control of all relevant components for additional comfort" (Orco Group, 2007). Advertising for Marthashof does not directly mention the security technologies and surveillance equipment that are in place inside the development; instead, it simply promises

> a protected home environment … in the centre of the pulsating metropolis … a secure and warm home which offers everything that really makes the difference in a healthy and fulfilling life (Stoffanel Development, 2007a).

In most cases, the architectural layouts include a 'pocket park' space amid the residential buildings. Even if publicly accessible during the day, these park spaces are privately owned and clearly connected to the surrounding private property. The developments' park spaces are much cleaner, more orderly and under greater surveillance than surrounding spaces, characteristics that effectively seal them off from the rest of the neighbourhood. The Fehrbelliner ensemble forms a closed courtyard with integrated alarm systems. All entrance areas and routes to the underground car park are monitored by video by the concièrge and closed at night (Orco Group, 2007). Marthashof proclaims to be a small community of its own and provides 3000 square metres of private gardens. A similar layout can be found in the Prenzlauer Gärten and Engelgärten. In our interview, the developer of the Prenzlauer Gärten complex felt the need to explain the high wall separating the townhouses from the outside

The two-metre concrete wall, they called us crazy when we first showed the building plan, but it was well received. It is creating privacy. Like an island. All this gives a cave-like character, detaching the developments and their residents from the surrounding city.[5]

5. Conclusion

New-build luxury developments assist in realising a powerful narrative of the revitalised city. Our empirical goal was to retrace the strategies employed to produce an urban atmosphere and to control and maximise their advantages in the context of new luxury developments in Berlin. Our theoretical goal was to use these empirical insights to contribute to wider debates about gentrification, urban restructuring and middle-class recolonisation of the city today. Following particularly Zukin's account of how authentic urban life and the desire to consume it in late capitalism have become a powerful tool in the remaking of cities, we focused on luxury developments as one of the most elaborate spatial manifestations of this trend. Interpreting our findings through the prism of theories of governmentality has helped us to understand the developments as part of a more general process of urban restructuring. By drawing on Foucault's notion of governing as the structuring of fields of actions of others, it became possible to understand the developments as part of a new urban order in the making, one that structures the way urban space, its uses and users are imagined and governed. When these considerations are applied to contemporary urban restructuring, the luxury developments can be seen as powerful tools for restructuring urban space as a governmental field of action. They are not only representational spaces displaying the power struggles that

shape the city's built form; they are operational spaces taking part in the governing of urban populations.

In the end, the creation of new urban subjects and spaces may be an incidental consequence of the drive to revalorise land and generate profit. Gentrification studies have already focused on these more instrumental motives of developers. Theories of governmentality, however, may help us draw attention to the unintended effects of these processes, to see beyond the motives of developers, planning professionals and people with high purchasing power who look for houses that offer all the benefits of urban life. While the legitimisations brought forward to position luxury developments on the housing market may not be 'real' in the sense that they are not congruent with other motives and interests underpinning urban restructuring, they are *real* in their consequences for the material shape of the city and the way urban life is imagined. New luxury developments reveal urban restructuring as an ambiguous project in a double sense: a disputed material process and a conflicting symbolic order in the making. The 'urban renaissance' as a political project is taking concrete shape in these developments.

Our empirical example shows how urban space is put to work in the context of such projects. The reorganisation of space can be read as "attempts to produce and regulate particular behaviours and subjectivities" (Huxley, 2006, p. 772). The way city living is designed in our empirical cases reduces the residents' relationships to the city to one of consuming urban atmosphere, with the assurance of an extended private space as a retreat always at hand. The distinctiveness of neighbourhoods is invoked as a catalytic environment that can be opened up and further used for real estate development purposes. At the same time, all the developments we focused on have deployed ideas of urbanity and neighbourhood distinctiveness that downplayed the everyday cultures established on site. Instead, generic and arbitrary definitions of urbanity informed the planning of the developments. While the developments are supposed to benefit from the neighbourhoods in which they are situated and contribute to the urban atmosphere on site, the possibility of homeownership introduced by them undermines Berlin's tradition as a 'city of tenants'. Thus making the inner city 'fit' for reurbanisation effectively implies breaking with specific urban traditions, rather than contributing to them.

The luxury developments also introduce intensified security architecture. In line with findings in other contexts, we found that Berlin's new residential spaces are detached from the surrounding city, not least by means of security technology and architectural layout (Atkinson, 2006; Butler, 2007; Kern, 2007; Atkinson and Blandy, 2007). Yet while the developments have a lot in common with the gated communities that used to answer to the heightened middle-class desire for security and social separation, they look a lot different and represent increasing sophistication in secure housing.

The insights derived from our case study of urban spaces created in the context of a new 'work–live–play' paradigm are relevant for our understanding of the types of urbanity that contemporary processes of gentrification bring forth. The simple dichotomy between public, unordered surroundings on the outside and the private realm of housing on the inside does not capture the more sophisticated version of the privatised city we found to be at work in Berlin. The city on the outside is objectified as a vibrant and exciting atmosphere to be consumed. Urbanity is celebrated, but the narrow lens of a 'work–live–play' lifestyle silences the complex social realities of the city. The new paradigm of urban

lifestyles also affects the inside and the private realm. Amenities are provided not only to guarantee lively atmosphere, but to contribute to a comprehensive programme of urban living in the city today. The conceptions of urbanity brought forth by new-build luxury housing must not be dismissed as ideological supplements to a process of restructuring that would go on anyway. Rather, they are elements of urban governance, realised through the shape and design of the new housing products.

Note

1. Interview with Johannes Kauka (developer CarLofts) on 24 July 2008 in Berlin.
2. Interview with Willo Göpel (developer Prenzlauer Gärten) on 1 March 2008 in Berlin.
3. Interview with Willo Göpel (developer Prenzlauer Gärten) on 1 March 2008 in Berlin.
4. Interview with Johannes Kauka (developer CarLofts) on 24 July 2008 in Berlin.
5. Interview with Willo Göpel (developer Prenzlauer Gärten) on 1 March 2008 in Berlin.

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