

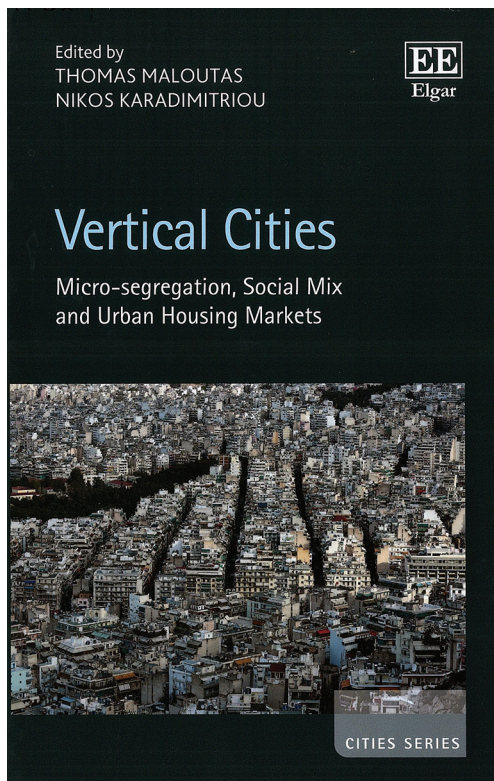
BOOK REVIEW SECTION

Maloutas, T. and Karadimitriou, N. (eds.): Vertical Cities. Micro-segregation, Social Mix and Urban Housing Markets. Cities Series, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 2022. 378 p.

In the book *Vertical Cities*, Thomas MALOUTAS and Nikos KARADIMITRIOU explore social differentiations and micro scale segregation through several lenses. The key aspects covered in the book are: the constantly shifting social mix, which is reconfigured with changes in the housing market; micro-segregation in compact and socially mixed cities; and hierarchies and social inequalities often reproduced by processes taking place in urban spaces. The book is intended to address the question about the form, size, history, and location of micro-segregation; the social actors engaged in the process; the policies regulating the micro-segregated housing stock; the relation between micro-segregation, neighbour segregation, and gentrification; and the impact of micro-segregation on socio-spatial inequalities.

The publication has 340 pages and is divided into six major sections, with thematically grouped chapters describing cities from Europe, Africa, the Americas, and Asia. Drawing from a variety of case studies, of different geographical positioning and socioeconomic assumptions, described by 53 different authors, the volume provides a rich overview of the phenomenon of micro-segregation, its origins, typology, and projected future development. Research shows that social interplay is derived from class stratifications and reinforces these stratifications, which are embodied in regulatory grids and market forces, and that they lie at the centre of the micro-segregation existence. The book can be perceived as a continuation of research paying attention to the contextual approach to segregation (e.g., MALOUTAS, T. and FUJITA, K. 2012; HESS, D.B. *et al.* 2018; VAN HAM, M. *et al.* 2021). It enriches our knowledge about the conducted contemporary research and promotes awareness among decision-makers about the diverse meanings, appearances, and factors of the development of segregation.

In the introductory Chapter 1, the two editors indicate that the phenomenon of micro-segregation has not attracted much attention in ongoing research in urban studies until recently and needs to be introduced. Micro-segregation is studied in areas of high population density, where the city develops not only horizontally, but also vertically. The micro level refers to units smaller than the neighbourhood, and as with other forms of segregation, it is assumed that people living in spatial proximity have unequal positions according to their socioeconomic status or ethno-racial identity. Thus, groups with more resources have access to more desirable properties, while those with fewer resources are delegated to housing that offers lower standards. The examples described in the book show that social hierarchies are constantly being remodelled in space, even in individual buildings, and that social mix is not an alternative to neighbourhood segregation. Socio-spatial hierarchies, even in a socially diverse neighbourhood, are being reconstructed again at the micro level. Therefore, living in one block but on different floors may be subject to social valorisation or evaluation. The authors emphasise that processes standing behind the micro-segregation are difficult or even impossible to compare because of existing contextual differences due to historical conditions (institutional heritage), local housing market



structures, and the sorting function of the housing market. This chapter provides a great introduction to the issues covered in the tome.

The first part (*Hierarchies in Negotiated Social Mix*) concentrates on examples from Europe and Africa. In Chapter 2, Nick DINES and Cristina MATTIUCI present historically conditioned vertical stratification in apartment blocks in Naples, Italy. The authors illustrate how perceptions of segregation have changed over time. They begin by showing the traditional division between social strata in tenements, where the lowest social classes occupied the lowest floors, the first and second floors belonged to people of the highest status, and the upper floors belonged to the middle class. The formation of such an arrangement resulted from the horizontal underdevelopment of the city, which contributed to the concentration (densification) of diverse functions in cities and to the diversification of existing housing stock. Although formerly existing social complexity was seen as an example of underdevelopment or deprivation in the city, today, this social complexity is considered exceptional and should be protected. The authors point out that today, this diversity is threatened by the growing importance of tourism and short-term rentals. Housing prepared for tourists is a resource that is no longer accessible to vulnerable groups, and they are being moved out of the centre, thus, diversification can diminish. In Chapter 3, Apolline MEYER and Thomas PFIRSCH use two apartment-building case studies to explore micro scale residential differentiation in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in central Marseille, France. They analyse the interplay of the individual strategies of city residents, public policy, and the resilience of the urban fabric, which interact to produce new spatial patterns of social stratification at the very local scale (vary from one apartment to the next). Moreover, they show that the pattern is extremely fluid, which is a typical feature of the central 'arrival neighbourhood' and the area shaped by 'marginal gentrification'. What I found interesting is that the authors identify two ways of managing proximity between socially distant groups: 'urbanity of convenience' in buildings where residents share a community of interest over local issues rather than a common social position and 'micro-segregation' produced between more affluent resident owners and other inhabitants when the condominiums are suitable for gradual spontaneous gentrification built upon property investments.

In Chapter 4, Jihad FARAH and Salah el-dinn SADECK take us to Beirut, Lebanon, where special emphasis is placed on informal forms of housing in inner-city neighbourhoods. Most informal neighbourhoods are on the outskirts of the city, but to escape the problems of stigmatisation or the cost and time involved in commuting, migrants choose to live informally in formal neighbourhoods. These are often so-called

micro-houses on rooftops, added parts to the back of the house, or apartments divided into smaller ones. What seems noteworthy is that they are often part of informal constant negotiations that lead to decisions about what practices are considered legal and socially acceptable (authors call it 'different forms of inclusion of the margins'). Adopting such a strategy based on informal relationships contributes to increased vulnerability and insecurity for some groups, which, according to the authors, should be taken into account in urban policies. In the next two chapters, the authors deal with Athens, Greece, where research has long been conducted on the vertical dimension of segregation (MALOUTAS, T. and KARADIMITRIOU, N. 2001). Chapter 5, written by Ifigeneia DIMITRAKOU, Dimitris BALAMPANIDIS, Nikolia MYOFA, Iris POLYZOU, Dimitra SIATITSA, Stavros SPYRELLIS, and Konstantinos VAKALOPOULOS, provides an introduction to segregation research conducted in Greece and introduces the concept of '*antiparochi*' – a market-based mechanism of housing production associated with the massive densification of housing in city boundaries and '*polykatoikia*' = which is a typical Athenian post-war residential building. *Polykatoikia* is seen as a unit in which the social mix and diverse relations between residents are visible, but also which, in everyday life, do not at all imply socio-spatial equality but rather replicate segregationist behaviour on a micro scale. In Chapter 6, Thomas MALOUTAS, Stavros SPYRELLIS, and Nikos KARADIMITRIOU, in turn, propose a new way to study segregation based on microdata. This is the only chapter in the volume that concentrates on methods. It is worth attention, as proposed solutions allow for separating the city space into areas in which segregation is more or less visible. The method is promising and indicates in a more precise way the intensity of vertical segregation and the social context within which it is developed.

Chapter 7 opens Part II, called *Spatial Patterns of Ethnic Proximity*. Issues of segregation based on ethnicity or being of migrant origin are often addressed in studies of segregation (e.g., ANDERSON, H.S. 2019), but less so in micro-segregation. In Chapter 7, Marinus Cornelis DEURLOO, Sako MUSTERD, Bart SLEUTJES, and Jeroen SLOT deal with Moroccans living in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and present what seems very thought-provoking, that within a single nationality group, the level of segregation can vary, and spatial segregation does not necessarily mean lack of integration, quite the opposite, better integration. The authors' observations indicate that the social structure is much more complicated than the picture we get using segregation indicators.

In Chapter 8, Jesus LEAL and Daniel SORANDO point out the divisions between migrants and native Spaniards and the diversity among migrants themselves in Madrid, Spain. Particularly apparent is the segregation of migrants from low-income countries,

who are concentrated in lower-floor apartments in older buildings in central locations. Here, it turns out that affordability plays a significant role, and the cheapest apartments are right in the ground-floor apartments and are used by migrants from poorer countries, while migrants from richer countries have more opportunities to be active players in the real estate market and rent apartments offering better housing conditions.

Chapter 9, by Juan Jose NATERA-RIVAS, Remedios LARRUBIA-VARGAS, and Susana NAVARRO-RODRIGUEZ, takes us to the Haza Cuevas, one of the neighbourhoods in Málaga, Spain. The authors show that the number of migrants has been increasing since 2010, and the sorting function of the housing market is apparent, as in, for example, Madrid (Chapter 8) or Tel Aviv (Chapter 18). More affordable apartments on floors in buildings without elevators are occupied more often by migrants from low-income African and Latin American countries. These apartments are unpopular and less expensive; hence, they are more accessible to this group of migrants. This arrangement appears to be a natural adaptation to existing housing market conditions. We can observe here an increase in social mix, which does not imply equality in access to resources but rather reflects existing divisions of groups or social classes.

In the next section (Part III, *Hierarchical Proximity in Segmented Housing Markets*) the authors discuss case studies beyond Europe, where housing relations are even more diverse. In Chapter 10, Sainan LIN and Zhigang LI examine the three largest cities in China (Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou), showing the differences in access to housing between urban residents and migrants from rural areas. Negative vertical segregation particularly affects the latter group, and existing regulations push migrants into the informal sector. The authors describe basement apartments (which were supposed to serve as air raid shelters) in Beijing, group rental ('shared rental') strategies in Shanghai, and the process of development of urban villages in Guangzhou. The chapter may be of great interest to European readers. The authors described the complex social and urban fabric of very dense areas well. The occupation of basements and sub-standard housing in Beijing and Shanghai is often invisible to the residents of the other (upper) floors, and its residents of informal housing constitute an 'invisible population of the city', without human agency. In the case of Guangzhou, informal self-building in urban villas has increased density, creating the so-called 'hand-shaking buildings' or 'a glam of sky buildings' wherein one can shake hands with neighbours in the next house or can only see a gleam of sky when standing in the alley. In Chapter 11, Vinicius M. NETTO, Camila CARVALHO, Maria FIZSON, and Yasmin COUTO analyse the case study of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The authors present a very good study of the overlapping of social disparities. The researchers point out

the relationship between property type, income, skin colour, political, sexual, and religious orientation and overlay this with issues of the formal and informal housing market. They also show that the process of social 'sorting' occurs within informal neighbourhoods ('segregation within segregation'), and these neighbourhoods are far from homogeneous. Micro-segregation also in the case of favelas reveals complexities, with internal inequalities that are echoes of inequalities found in the city as a whole.

Part IV (*Social Mix in Recommodes State Socialist Cities*), as the name suggests, takes us to post-socialist Europe. In Central Europe, which is considered a region with low segregation rates, vertical segregation does exist, although it has a different basis than in the countries discussed in earlier chapters of this book. In Chapter 12, Szymon MARCIŃCZAK and Daniel Baldwin HESS deal with the two capitals of Bucharest, Romania, and Budapest, Hungary. The authors aptly demonstrate that despite the existing stereotype and prevailing ideology about egalitarianism in socialist cities, access to housing and location varied and reproduced, in part, existing social divisions. During the socialist era, housing was distributed according to status and the role of the household in the economic system. Later transformations, including those involving the privatisation of the housing market, overlaid earlier divisions. In Central Europe, within different neighbourhoods and types of housing, vertical segregation and micro-segregation take different forms (JACZEWSKA, B. and GRZEGORCZYK, A. 2017, 2018). Generally, what seems to be common also in other post-socialist countries is that the higher-status and wealthier households tend to live on intermediate floors (1st-2nd floors) and, thus, do not experience problems with the availability of higher floors or excessive noise on the first floor.

In Chapter 13, Zoltán KOVÁCS, Judit SZÉKELY, and Balázs SZABÓ prove that in post-socialist countries, vertical segregation is linked to the period in which the building was built. Based on research in Budapest, Hungary, they indicate that vertical micro-segregation is more often seen in buildings that were constructed before 1945 than in those built during socialism and afterward. Moreover, new divisions are created in the newest buildings built after 1990, where the level of segregation is not significant, but strong differences related to the occupation of the most attractive apartments by those with higher incomes are visible. It is worth noting that the chapter very well describes how the approach to the study of segregation and how the historical conditions of Budapest's development have changed, making it a valuable case study.

Similarly, broadly described in Chapter 14 are conditions shaping the Dorćol, a central neighbourhood in Belgrade, Serbia. Ivan RATKAJ, Aljoša BUĐOVIĆ, and Nikola Jocić illustrate the historical conditions of the

neighbourhood's formation, its changing status over time, and the evolution that has been taking place in recent years. With a spatially limited scope of formal urban development, Belgrade's urban landscape has always expressed horizontal differentiation, with higher socio-economic strata living in central areas and lower strata in the informal housing in the periphery. This pattern continued under socialism, and only post-socialist privatisation erased public renting versus private owning differences and shaped a housing market with high rates of homeownership. In recent years, commodification and gentrification have changed the face of the Dorćol neighbourhood and the area is becoming attractive for urban redevelopment and less socially diverse.

Chapter 16 tells the story of Tallinn, Estonia. Kadri LEETMAA, Elina Maarja SUITO, Kadi KALM, Ingmar PASTAK, and Tiit TAMMARU point out that the city's situation today is also linked strongly to its history. Almost half of the housing stock was destroyed during the war, and new housing in line with socialist ideas was built after the war. This contributed to a significant diversification of the housing stock in the city centre as well, and reinforced social differentiation. The authors additionally indicate that modern changes resulting from commodification and increasing social differentiation have not contributed to a decrease in the social mix but have actually strengthened it. Diversified housing stock is occupied by representatives of different social groups according to their demands. Nevertheless, at the micro level, segregation is growing, and we can speak of an increase in the polarisation and fragmentation of the city because the processes of reconstruction, revitalisation, or gentrification are occurring at points and not in the entire city centre.

In Part V (*Proximity in Gentrified Urban Spaces*) the impact of gentrification on urban areas is investigated. In Chapter 16, Eftychia BOURNAZOU examines the transformation of the social mix in Mexico City, Mexico, and points out that, in the case of this city, the problem is not a lack of social diversity, which is very high, but a pre-division of poverty and inequality in access to public services. The author points out that state policies that support elite interests, with inadequate controls on housing investment and little state involvement in social housing, mean that gentrification processes are taking place spontaneously, with the most vulnerable groups experiencing further problems with access to housing, relegation to peripheral areas with poorer access to services, and further impoverishment.

In chapters 17 and 18, the authors focus on neighbourhoods in Tel Aviv, Israel. In the former, Tal SHAMUR and Haim YACOBI give an interesting description of the Gan Hahashmal neighbourhood's history and its evolution from a neighbourhood inhabited by the upper class, then turning into a neighbourhood

in decline, and in recent years transforming again under the influence of gentrification. The district's central location means that it has a very diverse social and functional structure. On the one hand, you will find a luxury commercial and leisure hub, a central bus station, gentrifiers, and, on the other hand, members of the lower class. There is also an area where marginal activities, such as drug trafficking and prostitution at night, take place. The authors show the complicated relations between different social groups and how the social mix created by gentrification deepens social differentiation (social hierarchies). Chapter 18, written by Shlomit Flint ASHERY and Rinat Steunlauf MILLO, describes the changes taking place in the Neve-Sha'anán neighbourhood, which has been transformed by the influx of refugees and immigrants over the past 30 years. As in the case of Málaga, Spain newcomers with irregular status occupy small commercial units on the first floors of residential buildings or the upper floors of buildings without an elevator, i.e., apartments that are less attractive and more affordable. The changes that take place and a substantial social mix are not seen as positive and raise questions about the relationship between representatives of different social groups living side by side.

Part VI (*Hierarchies in Housing Towers*), addresses the divisions observable in high-rise buildings. In Chapter 19, Yu-Min Joo shows the considerable dynamics of transformation in Seoul, South Korea (the author called Seoul 'the capital city of the republic of apartments'). Numerous housing developments subdivide the fact that buildings offering different housing conditions exist side by side; hence, micro-segregation is evident more between housing types than within each type of building. Again, the author points out that despite the increase in social differentiation and the reduction in the level of social polarisation, it has not been possible to integrate individual social groups, despite their clearer spatial proximity. A similar situation is described in the case of Hong Kong in Chapter 20. The city is characterised by significant social differentiation and overlapping social divisions, with representatives of different groups living close to each other due to a lack of land and the influence of local housing policies. Hand Kei Ho and Maurice YIP point out that the social mix is provided by the existence of different types of real estate side by side, where at two opposite ends are luxury apartment buildings offering exclusive services and subsidised housing. This chapter describes the housing strategies adopted by representatives of the upper, middle, and working classes. What seems interesting is that the issues of family relations and family support in accessing housing are here important, which, although not analysed widely in this book, are significant for housing strategies in tight housing markets, e.g., in Central Europe.

In Chapter 21, Ernesto LÓPEZ-MORALES and Ignacia Arce ABARCA describe the pull and push forces in high-rise developing neighbourhoods in Santiago, Chile. The authors compare how density is perceived by residents of the four housing types, and they indicate that pressures are contributing to pushing especially home renters to move out of the inner city. In Chapter 22, we return to Europe. Using the example of recently built high-rise buildings in Vienna, the authors Walter MATZNETTER and Robert MUSIL show that even in a city with excellent social housing policies, isolated units of social privilege can arise.

The book *Vertical Cities* provides an original approach to an under-researched topic, making it a vital resource for academics, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. Urban sociologists, housing experts, and those interested in urban studies and geography will find the book's insights valuable. The undoubted value of the book is that the authors were tempted to provide detailed descriptions of case studies and pay attention to the context and peculiarities affecting the formation of socio-spatial differentiation. The book, as I tried to show above, contains many interesting characteristics of social stratification and, importantly, comes from different parts of the world. In the book, we will find analyses of various aspects, but no suggestions for practical solutions or actions. It is also difficult to get an assessment of whether vertical segregation is a positive or negative phenomenon. It challenges us to rethink our urban narratives and invites us to explore the hidden layers of urban social co-existence.

In my opinion, the volume illustrates the socio-spatial diversity and complexity of contemporary cities well. Even if the analyses are not always very detailed, the authors examined how the housing market perpetually reconfigures the social mix, how the structure of the housing stock shapes social dynamics, and how policies are deployed to manage these effects. The book also delves into micro-segregation, and the authors investigate the form and content of social and ethno-racial hierarchies within the socially mixed and dense centres of compact cities worldwide. It sheds light on how these hierarchies have evolved over time. Moreover, it examines how the materiality of these hierarchies significantly impacts the reproduction of social inequalities in today's large cities. It underscores the delicate balance between social cohesion and fragmentation, urging practitioners or policymakers to engage critically with the discussion about the diversification of the social mix that defines our cities.

The content of the tome makes an important contribution to scientific research on segregation. This book offers a fresh perspective on the complex dynamics of urban living and the challenges faced by vertical cities. Certainly, the publication enriches our knowledge of the research being conducted and promotes

our knowledge of the diverse shapes of segregation. Whether you are an academic, practitioner, or simply curious about urban complexities, *Vertical Cities* is an interesting and thought-provoking read, and it is for you.

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