Gentrification-Gentle or Traumatic? Urban Renewal Policies and Socioeconomic Transformations in Copenhagen

Larsen, Henrik Gutzon; Lund Hansen, Anders

Gentrification—Gentle or Traumatic? Urban Renewal Policies and Socioeconomic Transformations in Copenhagen

Henrik Gutzon Larsen and Anders Lund Hansen

Abstract

This article contrasts the intentions and outcomes of the publicly instigated and supported urban renewal of Copenhagen's Inner Vesterbro district. Apart from physically upgrading the decaying buildings, the municipality's aim was to include the inhabitants in the urban renewal process and, seemingly, to prevent the dislocation of people from the neighbourhood. However, due to ambiguous policies, the workings of the property market and the lack of sufficient deflecting mechanisms, middle-class inhabitants are now replacing the high concentration of socioeconomically vulnerable people that characterised Vesterbro before the urban renewal. This process may appear 'gentle', but it is nonetheless an example of how state and market interact to produce gentrification with 'traumatic' consequences for individuals and the city as a socially just space.

1. Introduction

Beset in recent years by suburban flight and urban decay, Denmark's capital city responded with exceptionally creative measures to reinvigorate hard-hit neighbourhoods. Vesterbro, a shabby district near downtown notorious for drug deals, was targeted for revitalization. But this was not urban renewal as we know it, which destroys a neighbourhood to save it, or

gentrification, which clears up problems by pushing out residents. Instead, old tenement buildings were rehabbed through generous government grants (even in cases where it would have been cheaper to build new ones), and local residents helped draft the plans (Walljasper, 2001, p. 83).

Urban change in 'wonderful Copenhagen', as presented for instance in this quotation,

Henrik Gutzon Larsen is in the Department of Development and Planning, University of Aalborg, Fibigerstræde 13, Aalborg, 9220, Denmark. E-mail: hgl@plan.aau.dk.

Anders Lund Hansen is in the Department of Economic and Cultural Geography, Lund University, Geocentrum byggnad I, Sölvegatan 10, Lund, 223 62, Sweden. E-mail: Anders.Lund_Hansen@keg.lu.se.

sounds like a fairytale. Yet is reality that simple and unproblematic? Vesterbro is a centrally located district, which traditionally has been inhabited by immigrants—originally from the countryside, latterly from other countries. Privately developed as speculative rental housing for the expanding working class in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Vesterbro has always been among the poorest areas of Copenhagen and the district has from the 1960s increasingly been associated with urban decay and a high proportion of marginalised and exposed social groups. Located near the central railway station, Vesterbro is also the traditional red-light district of Copenhagen and has become a centre of the drugs trade. Since the early 1990s, the inner parts of Vesterbro have been the object of Denmark's ambitious urban renewal project, a project in which both local and central governmental tiers of the Danish state are key actors. In this paper, we contrast the ostensibly inclusive policy of Inner Vesterbro's urban renewal with the actual outcomes.

Reflecting our conclusion that Inner Vesterbro is undergoing a process of middle-class gentrification spurred by the urban renewal project, the next section of the paper outlines key elements of the gentrification literature and the theoretical propositions that inform this study. The third section clears the way for our concrete analysis through a critical introduction to the development of Danish urban politics. Following from this, the next section investigates the policy aims of the Inner Vesterbro urban renewal project, which are contrasted with the current outcomes of the project, particularly with respect to processes of socioeconomic transformations and dislocations. The so-called social dimension in the renewal project is in this respect accorded particular emphasis. Finally, we discuss our concrete findings in relation to the more general propositions of the gentrification literature, arguing that the Vesterbro project in spite of

its 'gentle' appearance represents an example of middle-class gentrification with 'traumatic' consequences.

Our interest in the intertwining processes of urban renewal and gentrification in Vesterbro derives not only from analytical curiosity, but also from our involvement as past and present residents in the district. One of us was thus (more or less voluntarily) rehoused away from Vesterbro as part of the renewal process, while the other has lived in the district throughout the renewal. For the present paper, we have compounded—and to a certain extent challenged—our personal experiences and observations in Vesterbro through a systematic reading of the official planning documents and the associated debates in the city council, which in 1989–91 started the urban renewal project. Our purpose has in this respect been to tease out the policy aims of the project, particularly with respect to the existing, pre-renewal social groups in Inner Vesterbro. To probe these aims, we have in particular drawn on detailed statistics on the evolving socioeconomic composition of Inner Vesterbro inhabitants and on changes in the types of property ownership.

2. Gentrification—Gentle or Traumatic?

Processes of modernisation have inherent elements of creative destruction, "be it gentle and democratic, or the revolutionary, traumatic, and authoritarian kind" (Harvey, 2003, p. 1). This tendency can be recognised in the creation and destruction associated with gentrification. In this paper, we analyse the possibly "gentle and democratic" creative destruction associated with the urban renewal project of Inner Vesterbro in Copenhagen. We pose the question: does the process succeed in creating a socioeconomically inclusive, 'gentle' urban transformation? May it be an avenue that could be followed by other cities that look for methods to produce a socially

just city? Or, rather, are the consequences of urban renewal in Vesterbro the classical outcome of gentrification? We will suggest the latter.

Processes of gentrification have deep historical roots and are geographically widespread (Clark *et al.*, 2007). Discussions have often revolved around cultural (Ley, 1996) and economic (Smith, 1996) arguments, and the majority of case studies until the beginning of the 1990s were conducted in cities "occupying strategic positions in the international urban hierarchy" (Dutton, 2003, p. 2558). A vein in the debates has paid tribute to the complexity of the process (Beauregard, 1986), a debate that sometimes fails to remember the root causes of gentrification. As Clark (2005) reminds us, these root causes are: the commodification of space, polarised power relations and a set of fictions that strategically naturalises the drive to conquer space.

Another tension in the debate is the 'emancipatory city' versus the 'revanchist city' thesis (Lees, 2000). The prior perspective argues that 'social mixing' is a positive outcome. Byrne (2003) concludes, for instance, that gentrification can improve the economic opportunities for the urban poor. Furthermore, this positive vision can be recognised in recent hyperbole around the 'creative city'. The popular argument (Florida, 2002, 2005) is that business and people move to the places where the creative urban environments are. Accordingly, 'people climate' is important for the branding of cities and gentrified neighbourhoods are seen as magnets attracting the 'creative class'. From this perspective, it makes economic sense for the city to facilitate gentrification. 'Good' governance targets deprived neighbourhoods for (state-led) gentrification (Cameron, 2003; Slater, 2004) in order to emancipate the creative potential of the city. The gentrifiers are seen as the embodiment of global cultural and economic flows—an emerging global élite community (Rofe, 2003)

equivalent to the creative class. Forces of global capital accumulation, shifts towards neo-liberal urban governance and increased interurban competition during past decades have led to a "nouveau-bourgeois war for talent" (Peck, 2005, p. 766), causing increased struggles over urban space and sweeping displacement of people.

In his book on the revanchist city, Neil Smith (1996) identifies how the logic of the market, the state and police force produce unjust conditions for the urban poor and other socioeconomically weak groups while serving the upper classes to 'reclaim' the city. Smith analyses the flip-side of gentrification

> As new frontier, the gentrifying city since the 1980s has been oozing with optimism. Hostile landscapes are regenerated, cleansed, reinfused with middle-class sensibility; real estate values soar; yuppies consume; elite gentility is democratized in mass-produced styles of distinction. So what's not to like? The contradictions of the actual frontier are not entirely eradicated in this imagery but they are smoothed into an acceptable groove (Smith, 1996, p. 13).

According to Neil Smith (2005), uneven development is today increasingly organised around the nexus of global and local. The 'glocal' (Swyngedouw, 1997) rhythms of capitalism and urban governance formed by competition between cities translate into uneven development—segregation, exclusion and 'space wars' (Lund Hansen, 2003, 2006). A focus on space wars carries a critical perspective across to the study of urban transformation processes and uneven development, and is related to the processes of gentrification (Lewis, 2001) at multiple scales (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005; Smith, 1996, 2002). It sheds critical light on urban renewal—especially in a Scandinavian context where gentrification is given little public or political attention and researchers on urban issues often gloss over the connection between urban renewal

and gentrification. As Clark suggests, this may in part be due to the successes of the Scandinavian welfare state

> The cumulative outcome of political and legal battles in Sweden during the 20th century set the stage for less violent ways of dealing with inherently conflictual processes of change. I believe it is fair and accurate to say this is changing, with increasing polarisation and decreasing concern for the rights of users of place. Perhaps there will in the foreseeable future be gentrification battlefields also in Sweden (Clark, 2005, p. 263).

This should also be kept in mind in relation to urban renewal in Copenhagen, although the Danish slum clearance policies of the 1980s did create very real battlefields between the state and residents. 'Byggeren' (a playground with self-built constructions) in Inner Nørrebro, in particular, became the epicentre of battles between the police and people fighting for their right to the city. The protests were primarily directed towards the municipality's wholesale demolition scheme for the area (Andersen, 2001); but the battles could also be interpreted as a reflection of a broader class struggle for social justice (Harvey, 1973).

Zygmunt Bauman helps us to understand how the city

> becomes the battlefield of continuous space war, sometimes erupting into the public spectacle of inner-city riots, ... but waged daily just beneath the surface of the public (publicized), official version of the routine urban order (Bauman, 1998, p. 22).

Bauman here alludes to the link between 'gentle' and 'traumatic' urban transformation, also identified by David Harvey (2003) in the context of creative destruction.

There are tendencies in the European, and especially Scandinavian, literature on 'urban renewal' to claim that the North American urban conflict rhetoric is highly exaggerated and theories developed in a North American context cannot be transferred to Scandinavia. In this view, Scandinavia *supposedly* has superior planning legislation and rent regulation that prevent the kind of urbanism practised in North American cities. In this article, we will look closely at the potential deflecting mechanisms and the consequences of a Danish urban renewal project. The analysis will be facilitated by a brief outline of the general context of Danish urban politics.

3. Urban Politics

The past 20 years of changes in Danish urban politics have involved three intertwined tendencies. First, urban political priorities have moved from an agenda of redistribution to an agenda of growth. Secondly, urban politics has shifted perspective from predominantly 'inward' looking to a more 'outward' looking approach. And thirdly, private enterprise is to a greater extent included in decision-making, while the public sector has embraced entrepreneurial forms of organisation and behaviour. In the early 1990s, this led to a virtual political turnaround. From a longstanding tradition of restricting investment and growth in the capital city, central government adopted a proactive politics of putting Copenhagen on the map of 'global cities'—primarily in a European context. The central actors on the urban political scene have increasingly perceived Copenhagen as a node in the European urban system and as a 'growth engine' for all of Scandinavia (Lund Hansen *et al.*, 2001).

The accelerating cross-border infrastructural and economic integration of the Øresund Region (south Sweden and Greater Copenhagen) is expected to increase the region's attractiveness for international investment in competition with Stockholm, Hamburg and Berlin. Malmö, Sweden's third-largest city, is less than 20 kilometres from Copenhagen. Major investments in a motorway and railway bridge over The

Sound connecting Malmö to Copenhagen, expansion of the international airport, a new metro line connecting the downtown with the airport and a new major urban development project (Ørestad), a new 'city tunnel' in Malmö facilitating train services between Scania and Copenhagen, all draw on and lend the credence to this new 'cross-border region'. Other material manifestations include symbolic works of architecture such as Arken (The Ark), the new museum of modern art and Den Sorte Diamant (The Black Diamond), the new waterfront annex to the Royal Library, and the construction of new opera and theatre houses on the harbour front. Furthermore, the material manifestations include newly built environments for the main actors in the 'new economy' (the IT and FIRE sectors), including luxury hotels, restaurants, conference centres and shopping malls, such as the new Fisketorvet on the harbour. To this must be added investments in luxury housing and the publicly financed renewal of inner-city housing to attract the 'new middle-class' employees in the 'new economy'. The introduction of public–public and public–private partnerships during the 1990s (the first one, Ørestad Corporation, in 1992) was central to the turn towards market-oriented planning. The establishment of these corporations gave private capital a stronger position in decision-making, with increased transparency for the involved companies and a corresponding opaqueness for the wider public.

An entrepreneurial urban politics, more accommodating towards investors and developers, has been implemented here as in many other Western cities (Harvey, 1989). Urban political coalitions and institutional setups are temporally and spatially specific. However, responses to the challenges of globalisation and post-Fordist structural and spatial transformations have been rather uniform across space (Swyngedouw et al., 2002). Proactive city governance uses Margaret Thatcher's TINA acronym to suggest that 'There Is No Alternative' to the global neo-liberal (uneven) growth agenda (Harvey, 2005). City branding and investments in infrastructure, waterfront redevelopment and other large urban development projects are well-known elements in the entrepreneurial ethos. In an effort to fuel the urban 'growth machine', political and economic élites are trying to attract global capital to their city's commodified land resources (Molotch, 1999). Moreover, Copenhagen, like many other city-regions, targets what Richard Florida (2002, 2005) has called the 'creative class' in the race for global competitiveness.

The recent housing policy goal of Copenhagen municipality is laid out in a report with the socially conscientious title 'Housing for all' (Copenhagen Municipality, 2000). The contents, however, reveal the contradictory ambition to transform the built environment and housing stock in order to create suitable conditions for the so-called economically sustainable population. Sustainability is used here to mean economic sustainability for Copenhagen municipality. The municipal head of planning at the time, Holger Bisgaard, expresses the strategy as follows

> For me, housing policy is the key to Copenhagen's development. If we can't change the housing stock, we will continue to be the poorest municipality in the capital region. We won't change the type of people living here, and so the municipality won't become sustainable. ... We have made a study that shows that we get all the trash, pardon the expression, because of the cheap housing. The middle class, who we would want to stay, moves to Sweden (quoted in Lund Hansen et al., 2001, p. 862)

The underlying revanchist reference to a population group as "the trash" is also found in a recent evaluation of the Vesterbro urban renewal by former director of economy in

Copenhagen Municipality, Jens N. Christensen, who describes this population group as "the rest product of the industrial society" (quoted in Baastrup, 2008, p. 123).

Direct references to "trash" and "rest product" are in the official language cloaked by more seductive terms like 'sustainability', language aimed at excluding some people while attracting others—the 'creative class'. Although there is no mention of any economically *un*sustainable population, whomever that may be, this is implied by the notion of the economically sustainable population. In the housing plan from 2005 (Copenhagen Municipality, 2005a), the language has shifted towards more 'soft' formulations; the aim to create conditions for the 'economically sustainable population' nevertheless remains intact and, according to Holger Bisgaard, the language in the new plan has been adjusted to ensure political consensus behind the plan (Lund Hansen, 2006, p. 109).

4. Vesterbro

The district of Vesterbro was built along the westward radial road from the old city of Copenhagen during the second part of the 19th century; hence the name, which alludes to the paved area outside the western city gate. Yet the history of Vesterbro can be traced back at least to 1600. At that time, what was to become Vesterbro was a small area outside the city ramparts, close to where Tivoli Gardens lies today, which gradually developed into a sprawling amusement area with public houses, dance halls and theatres. In addition, the area became the centre of 'dirty' business, particularly animal slaughtering and the meat trade. These functions have left traces in contemporary Vesterbro. The south of the district is thus dominated by the 'Meat City' (*Kødbyen*), which is still characterised by some food-related enterprises, although urban renewal has converted the

old abattoirs for cultural purposes. The district is also known for its (increasingly gentrified) bars and it is notorious for its porn shops, drug pushers and users, brothels and a noticeable sex trade in the streets. Until the mid 19th century, actual urbanisation of Vesterbro was held at bay for military purposes, not least in the decades following the British bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807. As the population behind the ramparts swelled during the economic upturn in the 1840s, the military restrictions were eventually lifted and Vesterbro quickly emerged as one the new housing districts for migrants to Copenhagen. From less than 2000 inhabitants in the mid 19th century, Vesterbro had by the turn of the century grown to accommodate more than 65 000 and peaked at about 85 000 inhabitants in 1920. In comparison, the district now houses some 36 000 inhabitants, 7861 (2007) of whom live in the urban renewal area of Inner Vesterbro (Figure 1). These figures suggest how rapidly Vesterbro was urbanised and hints at the fact that Vesterbro to a very large extent was developed as speculative rental housing for the emerging working class. The working-class character of the district lasted to the economic boom of the 1960s, when those who could afford it left the squalid flats of Vesterbro for the suburbs. In their place, the district was increasingly populated by marginalised groups and the next wave of migrants, this time from abroad (Aydas, 1997; Dengsøe, 2000; Tønnesen and Elgstrøm, 1986).

Vesterbro first entered the city planning of Copenhagen with the so-called Finger-plan of 1947, which involved the district in plans about Copenhagen's westward growth and the possible establishment of motorways connecting the city centre with peripheral urban areas. More ominously, Vesterbro was from 1958 included in the developing 'City Plan West' which, in its 1968 version, envisioned a redevelopment of the district that would have pleased Haussmann (or Robert Moses) by
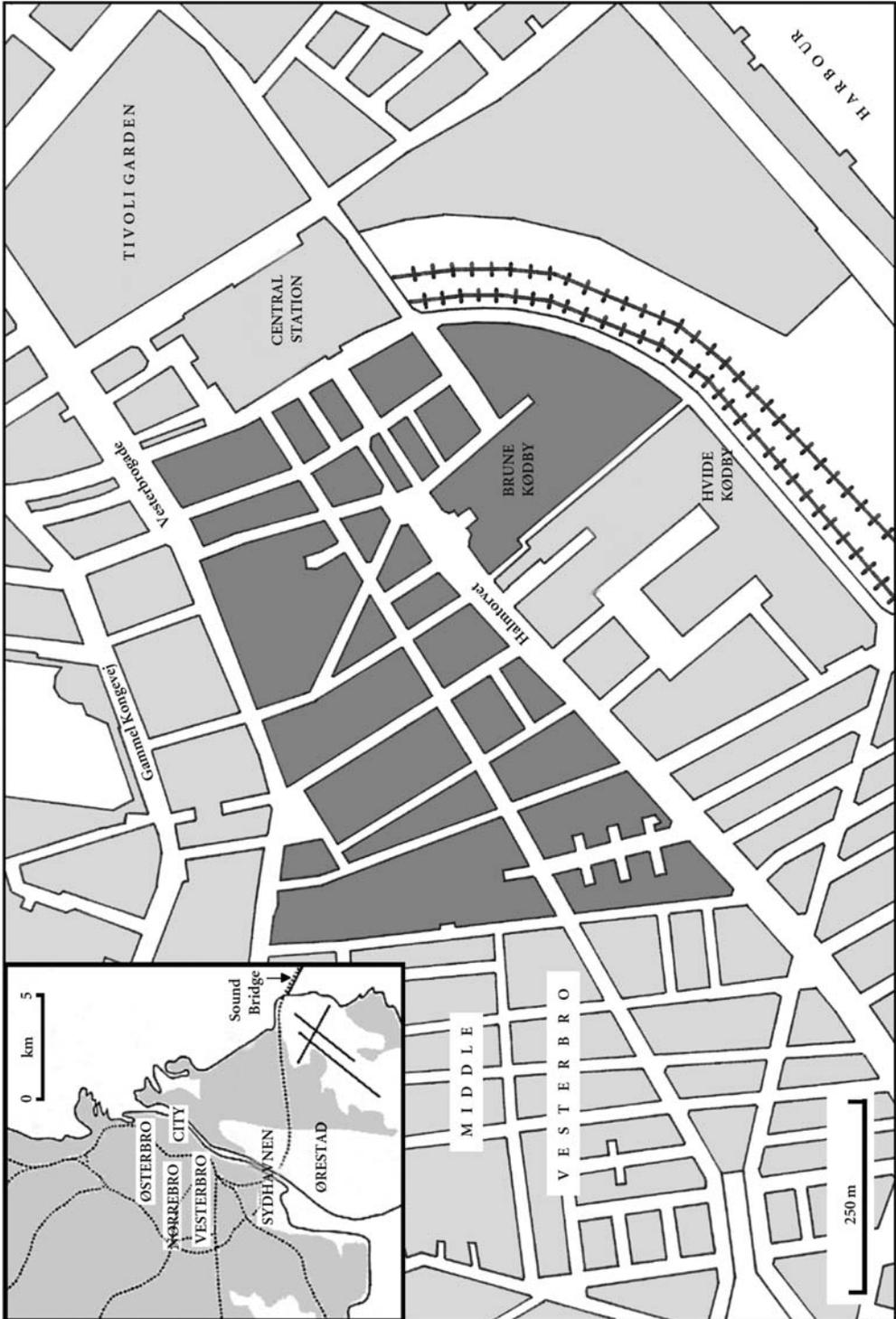
Figure 1. The Inner Vesterbro urban renewal area

its wholesale 'creative destruction'. Although many deliberations and much debate went into these plans, they were never realised. However, until the plans were formally shelved in 1985, the uncertainties surrounding them held urban development in Vesterbro in check and contributed to the physical and—some would maintain—social 'degeneration' of the district. This was particularly the case for Inner Vesterbro. Following the slum clearance law (*Saneringsloven*) of 1969, 19 blocks in Middle Vesterbro and Outer Vesterbro were gradually renewed through the 1970s and early 1980s. As in the neighbouring district of Nørrebro, this renewal was to a large extent carried out through the demolition of existing houses, which were either replaced by new developments or the space was left vacant for recreational uses. Yet with the exception of some courtyard clearances, Inner Vesterbro was practically left as it was (Mazanti and Henriksen, 1997; Dengsøe, 2000).

By the late 1980s, the building stock of Vesterbro and particularly that of Inner Vesterbro was therefore not only among the oldest in Copenhagen, it was also the district with the poorest standard of basic amenities. The vast majority of the housing units had been constructed in the 19th century and the number of housing units without central heating and without own toilet/bath was significantly higher than the rest of Copenhagen

(Table 1). Furthermore, in an outline report prepared for the municipality, the urban renewal companies København and SBS (1989) noted that the population of Inner Vesterbro by the late 1980s was characterised by significantly higher rates of unemployment and receipt of social security than the rest of Copenhagen (Table 2). As an example of how 'foreigners' often become synonymous with 'problems' in Danish policy discourses, the outline report also noted a considerably higher proportion of inhabitants with foreign (or no) citizenship in Inner Vesterbro. Thus Vesterbro had over the years accumulated an array of socioeconomic characteristics which were perceived as problematic. Evidently, this related to the district's status as the centre of the drug trade in Copenhagen and all that engendered in terms of miserable and degrading conditions, including a partially related sex trade. Yet the prevalence of relatively cheap but small and squalid flats was also reflected in the socioeconomic composition of Inner Vesterbro inhabitants.

It is easy to paint a grim picture of Inner Vesterbro before the urban renewal of the 1990s. Yet, while the district also harboured many qualities, not least the availability of comparatively cheap if squalid housing, the social-democratic city councillor Trine Garde was not far from the prevailing view of pre-renewal Inner Vesterbro when she in 1989 said

Table 1. Age and standard of basic amenities in pre-renewal Inner Vesterbro housing, 1989

	Inner Vesterbro	Vesterbro	Copenhagen
Housing units (number)	3 368	20 188	278 649
Pre-1899 (percentage)	88	49	16
1900–19 (percentage)	11	33	20
1920–39 (percentage)	1	10	35
Post-1940 (percentage)	0	8	29
Without central heating (percentage)	64	55	21
Without own toilet (percentage)	11	8	4
Without own bath (percentage)	70	61	30

Source: København and SBS (1989).

Table 2. Socio-cultural characteristics of pre-renewal Inner Vesterbro, 1989/90

	Inner Vesterbro	Vesterbro	Copenhagen
Inhabitants, 1989 (number)	6 118	34 428	467 850
Unemployed, 1989 (percentage)	c.20[a]	18.2	12.2
Social security, 1990 (percentage)	c.24[b]	23.1	16.1
Foreign citizens, 1989 (percentage)	19.4	15.4	7.2

[a] 1985.

[b] 1987.

Sources: København and SBS (1989); Copenhagen Statistical Office (1989, 1990).

It has for many years been clear that sordid social conditions is the reality for many inhabitants in Inner Vesterbro, and that they live in poor dwellings amidst the background of flourishing speculation and much criminality, which has grown in shelter of the slum. Private property has here had free range and shown its true face (Copenhagen Municipality, 1989, pp. 443–444).

4.1 The 'Social Dimension'

As the municipality in the late 1980s embarked on what the social-democratic Lord Mayor Jens Kramer Mikkelsen saw as "the most substantial urban renewal project in Copenhagen during the 1990s" (Copenhagen Municipality, 1990, p. 209), the spectre of the, in many respects, deeply flawed Nørrebro project of the 1980s clearly haunted politicians, planners and the public alike. Gunna Starck, a city councillor of the Left Socialist Party, was probably right that the majority of the city council in its first reasonably substantial policy paper on Inner Vesterbro sought to veil previous mistakes by emphasising the (unspecified) "complex urban renewal problems" of Vesterbro as the reason for the adoption of a significantly more inclusive planning approach: "The urban renewal problems were just as complex in Nørrebro", Starck told her city council colleagues, "only the urban renewal companies and the majority of the city council never managed to spot them" (Copenhagen Municipality, 1990, p. 634). Yet, throughout the initial negotiations and preparations during 1989–91, politicians from all parties inexorably supported their views on the Vesterbro project with references to more or less openly admitted mistakes made in Nørrebro. The 'Nørrebro-model' of wholesale, top–down urban renewal was clearly not in vogue, something that was also reflected in a wider shift from an emphasis on 'urban sanitation' and 'slum clearance' to that of 'urban renewal' in Danish urban policy discourses (Hansen and Skifte Andersen, 1999; Vagnby and Jensen, 2002).

By the time of the lord mayor's first submission on the Inner Vesterbro project to the city council, the new approach had already emerged in at least two respects. Rather than establishing a total plan, as had been the case in the Nørrebro project, the urban renewal of Vesterbro was to be planned and implemented for two to four blocks per year based on "a prioritising in which dwelling-hygienic and social considerations are accorded significant weight" (Copenhagen Municipality, 1989, p. 441). Secondly, following an earlier submission from the Socialist People's Party, there was to be established an urban renewal centre with the aim of involving the inhabitants in the planning and implementation of the Vesterbro project. These proposals made their way to the strategic action plan for the renewal of Inner Vesterbro, which eventually was adopted by the municipal council in June 1991.

The phased implementation and the establishment of an urban renewal centre marked a noticeable departure from the strategy

pursued in Nørrebro with respect to *process*. In the perspective of this paper, however, the *aims* of the Vesterbro urban renewal are central, particularly with respect to how the policy-makers envisioned socioeconomic developments. This issue, which bears directly on our argument relating to the subtle or 'gentle' gentrification of Vesterbro, was early in the political process subsumed under the ambiguous banner of the 'social dimension' in the urban renewal project.

The notion of a 'social dimension' in the Vesterbro project was a floating signifier if ever there was one. This was not lost on the communist city councillor Jesper Langebæk who, in his otherwise-favourable comments on the 1989 outline plan for the renewal of Inner Vesterbro, had already expressed fear that the notion was used to "mystify" the issue at hand. For him, the 'social dimension' should be split into two facets, one concerning information, as envisioned in relation to the urban renewal centre, another relating to the social problems of the area: "We should set ourselves the goal that no matter the social problems, all current inhabitants shall be able to stay" (Copenhagen Municipality, 1990, p. 213). Langebæk was not the only one who sought to imbue the 'social dimension' with concrete social-political goals, particularly in order to resist renewal-induced dislocations of inhabitants. Yet the majority of the city council—and the subsequent unfolding of events—deemed otherwise.

The social aspect was not prominent in the terms of reference, which the city council in 1989 approved for the preparation of an outline plan for Inner Vesterbro's urban renewal (Copenhagen Municipality, 1989, pp. 439–442). However, the outline programme itself, which was prepared by the urban renewal companies København and SBS in close co-ordination with the municipality's political and bureaucratic leadership, recommended that "alongside the renewal of buildings and dwellings will be implemented a programme for the solution of the heavy social problems of the area" (København and SBS, 1989, p. 180). In contrast to the Nørrebro renewal, the plan in this way seemed to recognise an interdependence of the physical and the social in urban policy.

During the preparation of the Inner Vesterbro project, the city council came close to define whom the 'social dimension' particularly was to target. The city council's urban renewal committee had thus in a submission preparing the ground for the eventually approved action plan detailed "the social problems of the area" to include

> the 20- to 30-year old long-term unemployed, the younger of those receiving early pension for social or medical reasons [*førtidspensionister*], the addiction-problems, the prostitutes, the mentally ill, and the immigrants (Copenhagen Municipality, 1990, p. 633).

To this, a minority of the committee pointedly remarked that the mentioning of immigrants as a problem in its own right "borders on racism and is in any case completely beside the point" (p. 634). The chairman of the committee quickly conceded the unfortunate formulation. However, rather than simply deleting 'immigrants' from the submission, the majority of the city council decided to strike out all specification of what it saw as constituting the 'social problems' of Inner Vesterbro. The policy objective of the 'social dimension' was in this way considerably emptied of specificity.

The feebly specified 'social dimension' eventually made its way to the action plan for the renewal of Inner Vesterbro, which in the summer of 1991 was distributed for comments in the district and subsequently adopted by the city council. In fact, the 'social dimension' comprised the first section in the urban renewal programme, which began on the sanguine note that

The urban renewal process will take its point of departure in the conditions of the current inhabitants [and] contribute to a general social uplift of the district (København and SBS, 1991, p. 17).

However, the nature of this "social uplift" was notably vague. Most immediately, it involved the establishment of a 'contact committee' to co-ordinate social work in the district, which also should establish an 'employment committee' to address employment issues, and the initiation of a programme to co-ordinate and improve the social work provided by public and civil society groups. More intriguingly, however, it was also established that the majority of dwellings should remain suitable for singles and couples without children, but that the area at the same time should be made more "family-friendly" so that young people could stay on in the district. The urban renewal project would in any case imply increased rents, but the action plan estimated that these increases could be balanced by reductions in heating expenses and through individual rent rebates. Still, it was recognised that "smaller groups of tenants" would have difficulties affording the new rents and that these groups "to some extent" were "identical to those groups for which separate social measures are assumed" (p. 18). Tellingly, it was thus accepted that "the districts' attraction for economic and socially weak groups gradually will be reduced in concurrence with the physical renovation" (p. 17).

The most concrete measure to deflect a dislocation of inhabitants from Inner Vesterbro in the action plan was the establishment of a rent ceiling of 450 Danish kroner per square metre per year (1991 prices). This was an issue which had caused considerable debate in the city council. In its submission to the council on the action plan, the urban renewal council stated

The committee is aware that the future rent level influences the question of whether the current inhabitants can remain in the neighbourhood and is as such related to the social dimension, but a majority of the committee has from an overall appraisal no objections to the stated rent ceiling for fully restored and modernised flats (Copenhagen Municipality, 1991, p. 2007).

This statement sheltered a disagreement in the city council. The Left Socialist Party and the Greens were in favour of a lower rent ceiling, while the parties of the right argued for a higher ceiling or no ceiling at all. In a minority submission, which could be interpreted as a 'revanchist' attempt to open the neighbourhood for private capital, the urban renewal committee's conservative chairman argued that, to facilitate the possible involvement of private investors, it was "essential not to impose an artificial rent ceiling" (Copenhagen Municipality, 1991, p. 2011). And the liberal spokesperson similarly argued that the proposed rent ceiling was too low and should better reflect the price of new housing developments. The rent ceiling was therefore a compromise, but a compromise that contained the only tangible attempt of the city council to introduce a deflecting mechanism in the urban renewal beyond the rent rebates required by law.

The 1991 action plan for the urban renewal of Inner Vesterbro made provisions to address some of the many forms of social exclusion and deprivation which for years had been the lot of many in the district. However, the plan—and the entire policy process—was more than a little ambiguous in relation to the parallel question of the social-economic dislocations that could be spurred by the renewal project. In a policy paper for the action plan, the majority of the city council had thus "with satisfaction" noted the intention that

There should be created more dwellings, which can attract those population groups that currently are underrepresented in the district, and simultaneously ensure that both

the young and the elderly can stay in the district through the creation of youth- and elderly-friendly housing. (Copenhagen Municipality, 1990, p. 633).

To this, the always-combative left-socialist Gunna Strack wryly commented: "in a very subtle way, it is written that the inhabitants are to be replaced" (p. 634). Events came to prove her right.

4.2 Wallpaper City

Walking around Inner Vesterbro in 2008, some 15 years after the urban renewal process began in earnest, one encounters a radically transformed district. The final account is yet to be made, but in its stylised evaluation of the renewal project, the municipality estimates that the total costs of what is so far the largest urban renewal project in Denmark will amount to some 4.3 billion Danish kroner; that is, on average, approximately 1.15 million Danish kroner (approximately £121 500) for each of the preserved flats (Copenhagen Municipality, 2005b). Often, this has resulted in renovation costs that are well above the price of new developments (Andersen, 2006a). And the physical changes are remarkable. Very few houses have been demolished, but the old speculative tenement houses now present themselves with tastefully refreshed façades, occasional solar panels to signal the urban ecology projects carried out in some blocks and partly cleared courtyards with landscape-architectured lawns and gardens. In contrast to the pre-renewal situation (Table 1), the housing units have also been thoroughly modernised. All flats are now connected to the district heating system and are furnished with toilets; only 4 per cent of the flats are still—by decision of the tenants—without a bathroom, but these flats are all provided with access to common shower-rooms (Copenhagen Municipality, 2005b, p. 178).

The urban life of post-renewal Vesterbro has also been transformed to include the characteristics of a 21st-century inner-city

lifestyle in the style of *Wallpaper* magazine which, not co-incidentally, featured the neighbourhood in its November 2001 special issue on Denmark: 'hip' first- and second-hand shopping, ethnic greengrocers, delicatessen, outlets for upcoming fashion designers and exclusive kitchen showrooms, to mention but a few, and the traditionally working-class pubs are rapidly being replaced by upmarket restaurants, cafes and wine bars; the district can even boast a chic tea room. Sitting in one of several new cafes on what used to be the traditional location for street prostitution, the *New York Times*' correspondent catches some of the gist when he looks across the street to the old 'Meat City' and sighs

> Now it's a graceful exhibition space for designers and fashion shows: where well-fed cattle once stood, nicely starved models prance down a catwalk (Chowder, 2004).

These are the basic ingredients in an urban imaginary based on loft living in the 24/7 globalised city. It is hardly a coincidence that a recent development project was promoted by a façade-high advertisement promising "64 owner-occupied flats in New Yorker style".

The city council of Copenhagen has most certainly succeeded in its objective of upgrading the physical structure of Inner Vesterbro and there is much to suggest that the municipality has acquired the reinvigorated urban district it sought. Yet, as Lees (2007, p. 228) suggests in relation to some gentrified areas of first-tier global cities, in Vesterbro also "we see something else too—the smell of suburbia". Long-term residents, and not a few newly added 'bourgeois bohemians', are already complaining that (Inner) Vesterbro is being suburbanised; alluding to the postcode of the well-to-do suburban Hellerup municipality, "2900 Vesterbro" was thus the telling title of a recent feature article on the neighbourhood in a Danish newspaper (Stensgaard, 2007). This can be recognised in the recent tendency to fortify formally private but hitherto

publicly accessible spaces and post-renewed Inner Vesterbro has also become the battleground of fierce conflicts between residents and the most vulnerable people of 'old' Vesterbro, the drug-users (Larsen, 2008). In large measure, such conflicts relate to changes in the population structure of post-renewal Inner Vesterbro, changes that hark back at the ambiguous policy of the 'social dimension' and suggest that the urban renewal process has been accompanied by a process of middle-class gentrification. The available socioeconomic statistics support this suggestion.[1]

In stark contrast to an unemployment rate of approximately 20 per cent in pre-renewal Inner Vesterbro (Table 2), unemployment had already dropped to 12 per cent by 1997 and further reduced to affect 5 per cent of the working-age population in 2005 (Figure 2). This dramatic drop is partly related to the general recovery of the Danish economy since the mid 1990s, but with an average unemployment rate of 6.4 per cent in the whole of Copenhagen in 2005, Inner Vesterbro has clearly shed its status as a district particularly affected by joblessness. In relation to other key socioeconomic indicators like education and income, we are somewhat disadvantaged by the absence of block-level data from before the late 1990s. Yet the available data
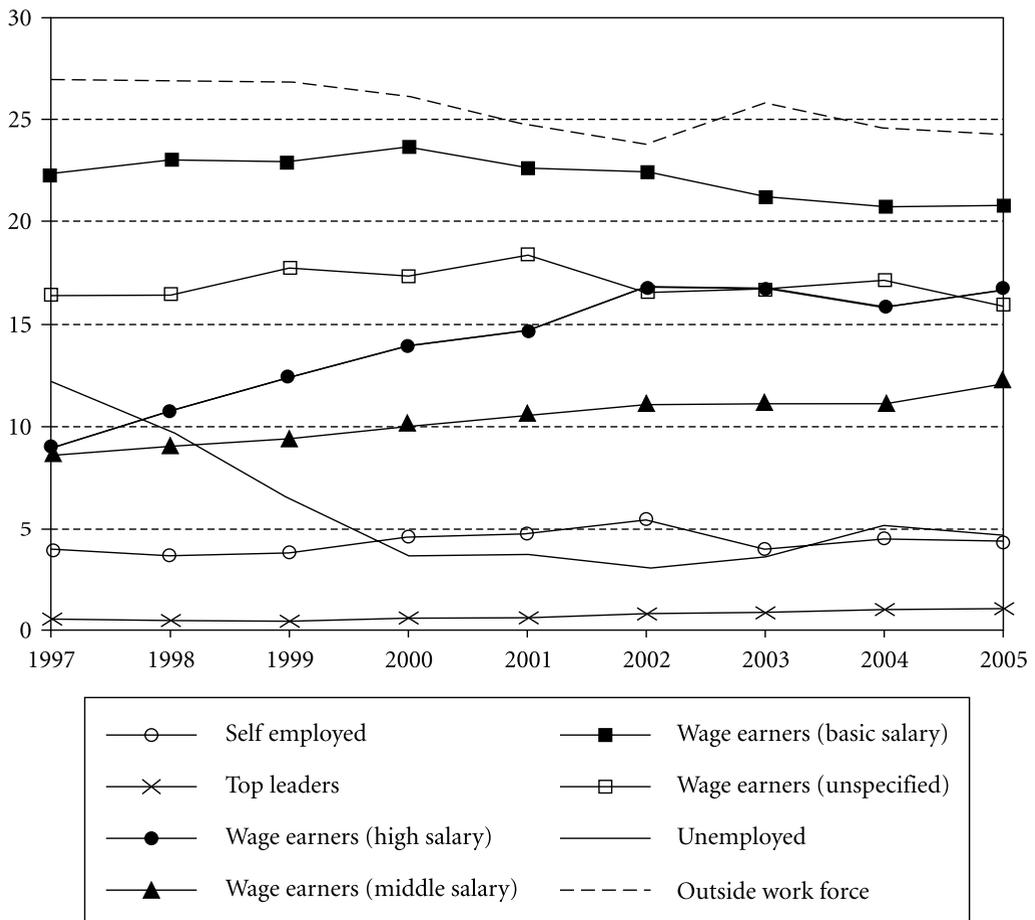

Figure 2. Socioeconomic changes in Inner Vesterbro, 1997–2005 (percentage of the total population aged 16–66)

paint a suggestive picture of socioeconomic transformations of the previously in every respect underprivileged Inner Vesterbro. Thus, of the working-age population in Inner Vesterbro, in 1999, 8.3 per cent had completed a long (university) education, bringing the district close to the Copenhagen average of 8.8 per cent. As the urban renewal drew to a close in 2005, the share of Inner Vesterbro inhabitants with a long education had jumped to 15.1 per cent, surpassing the Copenhagen average of 10.9 per cent. The district's wage structure is similarly changing (Figure 2). The number of employees with 'middle' and 'high' salaries has thus increased by 11.2 percentage points between 1997 and 2005 and, although still a relatively small group, the number of 'top leaders' has in the same period doubled to 1.1 per cent in 2005. Copenhagen Municipality is yet to published recent comparable figures for the whole municipality. However, with 28.6 per cent of the working-age population in the middle- and high-income-groups in 2002, Inner Vesterbro was not far behind the Copenhagen average of 36.2 per cent in the same year.

These figures suggest that Inner Vesterbro has achieved what the 1991 action plan ambiguously termed a 'social uplift' and the population of the district has certainly become 'sustainable' in the more straightforward economic terms the municipality has adopted in its more recent housing policy. Yet we could also say that Inner Vesterbro has undergone socioeconomic changes associated with 'classic' gentrification (Clark *et al.*, 2007). Even in statistically rich Denmark, it is (also for legal reasons) highly difficult to link population movements and socioeconomic characteristics. Some of the evolving gentrification has undoubtedly happened '*in situ*' as young people now are more likely to stay in the district when they have finished their education and possibly become parents. The dramatic increase in education and the fact that the number of children under the age of 16 has increased from 9.3 to 15 per cent of the population in the period 1992–2007 suggest that this partly could be the case. However, in an early evaluation on behalf of Copenhagen Municipality, Henriksen (2002, p. 8) concludes that the urban renewal has meant that inhabitants with "social problems" have moved away from the district, while those moving in "generally are in a better social position". The dislocation of disadvantaged inhabitants feared by a vocal minority of the city council during the preparation of the urban renewal appears, in other words, to be happening. And, in at least one respect, the urban renewal has been parallelled by the dislocation of a statistically recognisable population group. As we have seen, foreign citizens made up more than 19 per cent of the inhabitants in pre-renewal Inner Vesterbro, three times the Copenhagen average (Table 2). This group, which the city council was very close officially to naming as one of "the social problems of the area", has during the renewal been notably reduced. Recent statistics on foreign citizens are not available, but with respect to 'immigrants' (that may include some Danish citizens), Inner Vesterbro in 2007 housed 12.7 per cent, well below the average of 14.6 per cent in the whole of Copenhagen.

For some, gentrification of Inner Vesterbro has undoubtedly been traumatic. As we will see, social workers have for example seen direct links between the urban renewal and at least some cases of homelessness. Yet the gentrification has in our analysis generally worked through two sets of 'stealthy' mechanisms. These are mechanisms that could make the urban transformation of Inner Vesterbro appear 'gentle' and yet in the longer run have traumatic consequences—for individual people and particularly the city as a socially just space.

Rents in Inner Vesterbro have increased by approximately 50 per cent since the urban

renewal process due to renovation costs and the merger of housing units (Henriksen, 2002; Copenhagen Municipality, 2005b). The urban renewal act provides for gradual rent increases over 5 or 10 years according to household income until the rent ceiling decided by the municipality. This should facilitate a 'gentle' transition to the new economic realities. As the former Lord Mayor recently recalled

> After all, we knew very well that the housing units would become more expensive as a result of the renewal and thus it was important to secure that the transition became as gentle [*blid*] as possible (Jens Kramer Mikkelsen; quoted in Baastrup, 2008, p. 69).

In the short term, rent rebates have enabled pre-renewal inhabitants to stay in the area. In the longer term, however, the less affluent are directly or indirectly compelled to move because of higher rents. With more than 70 per cent small flats (two rooms or less), the neighbouring area of Sydhavn [South Harbour] is one of the areas attracting the people that are pushed out of Vesterbro. Brian Lenz, the leader of Sydhavnskompagniet, a social project for homeless people, describes the situation as follows

> It has been a 'truth on the street' that people from Vesterbro were forced to move to Sydhavn. Then they [Copenhagen Municipality] made an investigation of how many have changed their permanent address ... The result was: incredibly few compared with expectations. The reason is that many of the people who are forced to move from Vesterbro do not get an apartment. I know *many* people in Sydhavn who live on a friend's sofa, or in 'Lorte Renden' ['Skid Row', literally 'Shit Ditch', a place where homeless people live in Sydhavn], or a garden allotment or somewhere else. Their moves aren't registered. I think there are many more moves than the statistics indicate (quoted in Lund Hansen, 2003, p. 134).

As mentioned, it is hard to get good data on the people moving in and out of Inner Vesterbro. And we do not know if the people moving out would have done so despite urban renewal. The interview with Lentz suggests, however, that in some cases gradually increasing rents affect socioeconomic 'vulnerable' groups in a very traumatic way. More generally, the data suggest that more than 50 per cent have used their right to permanent rehousing in other neighbourhoods, due to fear of high rent levels after the assisted period, and this group consists particularly of the socioeconomically weak (Henriksen, 2002). The ostensibly socially just provisions for permanent rehousing in the urban renewal act, which provide a means for inhabitants to avoid renewal-induced rent increases, may in this way have become a stealthy mechanism for the dislocation of an 'unwanted' population—"the trash". This mechanism has thus been an effective tool to make room for what Copenhagen Municipality desires: the "economically sustainable population".

However, the socioeconomic transformation of Inner Vesterbro may still be in its infancy. The second—and in our analysis possibly most far-reaching—mechanism of gentrification is thus the on-going commodification of urban space through co-operatives (andelsboligforening). Reflecting its speculative origins, the housing stock of (Inner) Vesterbro has traditionally been characterised by private rental rather than owner-occupied housing. Until 1997, private rental apartments were accordingly the dominant type of housing in the district (Figure 3). However, after 1997, as an integrated part of the urban renewal and often with the municipality as a facilitating 'middleman', co-operatives have come to dominate the ownership structure of Inner Vesterbro housing. Co-operatives have traditionally been regarded as a category 'in-between' rental and owner-occupied housing which, with exemptions
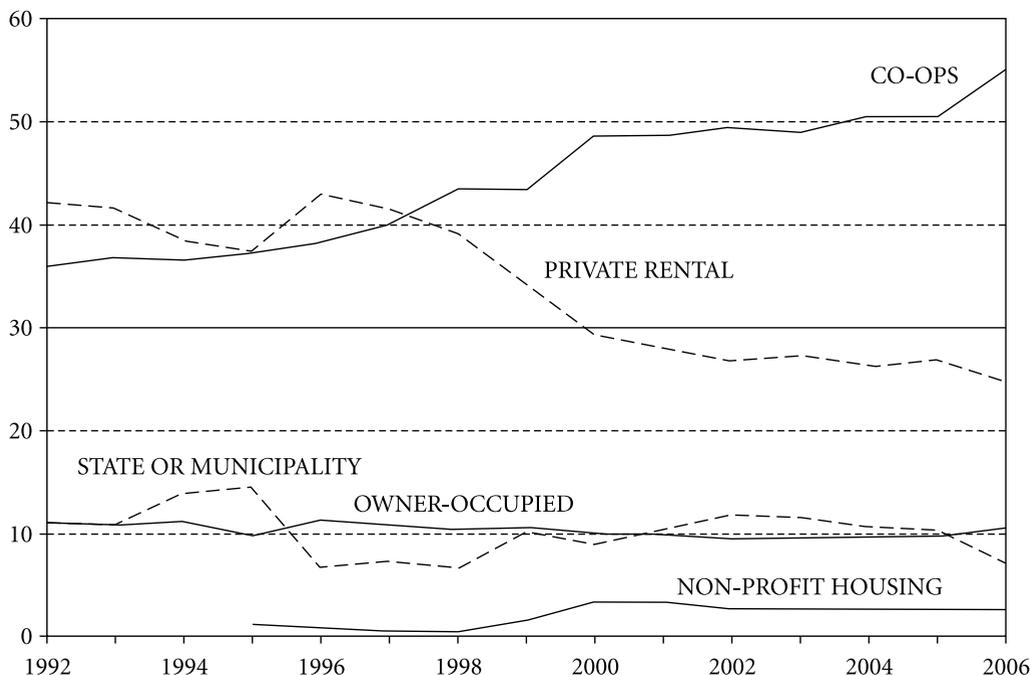
Figure 3. Changes in property ownership in Inner Vesterbro, 1992–2006 (percentage of housing units)

from property taxes and favourable state-guaranteed loans, provided tenants with a way to acquire inexpensive housing. In the pointed formulation of Andersen, co-operatives were ideally

> an attempt to balance between the concrete-heavy welfare bureaucracy and the anarchistic market—a third way characterised by solidarity and responsibility, community and freedom, based on democratic common ownership of the property in which the individual dwellings are located (Andersen, 2006b, p. 27).

As the value of shares was significantly lower than the potential market price, owner-occupied housing also became an effective means to keep 'rent gaps' in the housing market open to the advantage of low-income-groups. Under the current right-wing government, however, it has become legal to revalue shares according to market price. And

the members of owner-occupied housing associations have been induced to do so, not least because the government has legalised members to mortgage their shares. As a result, the price gap between owner-occupied and co-operative flats is rapidly closing (Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelsen, 2006). The price of co-operatives in Copenhagen has in this way increased six-fold over eight years (Copenhagen Municipality, 2008). In the short term, existing inhabitants are not dislocated but rather are enriched by this marketisation of co-operative housing. Yet, as shares are sold at prices approaching market rates, co-operatives become a mechanism that 'gently' but highly effectively lends a hand to middle-class gentrification.

5. Conclusions

The Inner Vesterbro project is not only the most ambitious urban renewal in Denmark;

it is also a significant expression of major urban change through public policy. From its formal adoption by the municipality in 1991, the project has fundamentally transformed the district's built environment. The old and previously notorious slum has been thoroughly redeveloped. Yet the project was also in a Danish context unique for its explicit concern with social issues—what became known as the 'social dimension'. As we have seen, this was from the outset a highly ambiguous policy. On the one hand, it was clearly stated that the project should "take its point of departure" in the conditions of the pre-renewal inhabitants. On the other hand, however, it was also established that the urban renewal should result in a "social uplift" of the district. This could be read as a policy aimed at the existing inhabitants, but in combination with the municipality's policy to attract "those population groups" that were "underrepresented in the district", "social uplift" was actually sought through an influx of stronger socioeconomic groups. We can only interpret this as a classic 'social mix' policy. Social mix policies are often portrayed as one of the key instruments in use in the fight against segregation and urban fragmentation (Andersson and Musterd, 2005). This is, as we have seen, not the case in Copenhagen where the social mix argument was an integral part of the legitimisation of social transformation in Inner Vesterbro.

The urban renewal of the building stock has been parallelled by marked shifts in Inner Vesterbro inhabitants' social status which, in terms of key indicators such as unemployment, education and income, have 'lifted' the district close to or well above the Copenhagen average. This process of middle-class gentrification is still unfolding and has at the same time been both mitigated and advanced by two distinct mechanisms. In the short term, the ostensibly socially just provision for permanent rehousing seems to have acted as a mechanism that has 'sanitised'

at least some of the socioeconomically vulnerable inhabitants from the district. A similar effect has been recorded in Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg district (Bernt and Holm, 2005). In the slightly longer run, however, we identify the stealthy commodification of space through cooperatives as a mechanism that will facilitate and entrench the unfolding gentrification of the district. The urban renewal of Inner Vesterbro in such ways shows the interplay of state and market in gentrification.

This is not to deny the impact of 'culture' (or 'consumption') in processes of gentrification. In the case of Inner Vesterbro, for instance, the 'Wallpaper' dimension has undoubtedly had an effect. Yet the local state has clearly played a pivotal role in triggering the process. Moreover, we will argue that commodification of space in the longer run is a more fundamental driver of gentrification—in Inner Vesterbro, as elsewhere. Copenhagen Municipality could certainly have enacted better deflecting mechanisms—for example, with respect to the rent ceiling—but such 'local' policies are subject to central state policies and are in any case deeply affected by (institutionally facilitated) market dynamics. Also, in relation to gentrification, urban policies are in such ways embedded in wider scalar politics. The 'local' gentrification of Inner Vesterbro is inseparable from the general housing politics (and revanchist rhetoric) at the scale of Copenhagen Municipality, which increasingly has come to emphasise the 'economically sustainable' population. And this feeds into the wider Danish urban politics of positioning Copenhagen in the perceived 'interurban competition'.

The unfolding gentrification of Inner Vesterbro could be interpreted as 'gentle', a process in which local and national welfare policies have deflected and mitigated the harshest consequences of urban change. Yet, as also observed by Clark *et al*. (2007, p. 506), gentrification is "an inherently conflict-ridden process, also in the peaceful Nordic

periphery of Europe, where creative destruction is commonly perceived as being the gentle and democratic kind." In our analysis, the gentrification of Inner Vesterbro conceals 'traumatic' consequences for individual people and more broadly for the city as a socially just space; that is, a city which is not homogenised according to the logic of neoliberal space economies, but embraces the marginalised's right to the city.

Note

1. The following statistics on Inner Vesterbro are based on special data runs provided by Copenhagen Municipality. The dataset is aggregated at the level of *roder* (approximately, city blocks), which enables a distinction between the urban renewal area and the rest of Vesterbro. Comparative data are drawn from the published statistics for Copenhagen Municipality (www.sk.kk.dk/statistik). Lasse Koefoed and Kirsten Simonsen kindly provided data on immigrants.

Acknowledgements

References

Andersen, H. T. (2006a) Bypolitik i Danmark efter 1960: i historisk pespektiv, in: S. B. Christensen (Ed.) *Den Moderne By*, pp. 353–383. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.

Andersen, H. T. (2006b) Andelsboligen: fremtidens boligtype?, in: *Den gode bolig – hvordan skal vi bo i fremtiden?*, pp. 27–29. The Danish Academy of Technical Sciences (ATV), Lyngby.

Andersen, J. (2001) The politics of gambling and ambivalence: struggles over urban policy in Copenhagen, *Geographische Zeitschrift*, 89, pp. 134–143.

Andersson, R. and Musterd, R. (2005) Area based policies: a critical appraisal, *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 96, pp. 377–389.

Atkinson, R. and Bridge, G. (Eds) (2005) *Gentrification in a Global Context: The New Urban Colonialism*. New York: Routledge.

Aydas, M. (1997) *Vesterbro: urban development in the inner city of Copenhagen*. Migration Paper No. 24, Danish Centre for Migration and Ethnic Studies, Esbjerg.

Baastrup, R. (2008) *Det ny København: en analyse af de formative år i Københavns forvaling*. MA thesis, University of Copenhagen.

Bauman, Z. (1998) *Globalization: The Human Consequences*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beauregard, R. E. (1986) The chaos and complexity of gentrification, in: N. Smith and P. Williams (Eds) *Gentrification of the City*, pp. 35–55. London: Allen and Unwin.

Bernt, M. and Holm, A. (2005) Gentrification of a particular type: the case of Prenzlauer Berg, in: R. Atkinson and G. Bridge (Eds) *Gentrification in a Global Context*, pp. 106–125. New York: Routledge.

Byrne, J. P. (2003) Two cheers for gentrification, *Howard Law Journal*, 46, pp. 405–432.

Cameron, S. (2003) Gentrification, housing re-differentiation and urban regeneration, *Urban Studies*, 29, pp. 3–14.

Chowder, K. (2004) The other Copenhagen, *The New York Times*, 8 August.

Clark, E. (2005) The order and simplicity of gentrification: a political challenge, in: R. Atkinson and G. Bridge (Eds) *Gentrification in a Global Context*, pp. 256–264. New York: Routledge.

Clark, E., Johnson, K., Lundholm, E. and Malmberg, G. (2007) Island gentrification and space wars, in: G. Baldacchino (Ed.) *A World of Island*, pp. 483–512. Malta: Agenda Academic.

Copenhagen Municipality (1989) *Københavns Borgerrepræsentations Forhandlinger, Vol. 150*. Copenhagen: Schultz.

Copenhagen Municipality (1990) *Københavns Borgerrepræsentations Forhandlinger, Vol. 151*. Copenhagen: Schultz.

Copenhagen Municipality (1991) *Københavns Borgerrepræsentations Forhandlinger, Vol. 152*. Copenhagen: Schultz.

Copenhagen Municipality (2000) *Boliger til alle – boligpolitisk strategiplan for Københavns kommune*. Copenhagen Municipality.

Copenhagen Municipality (2005a) *Boliger for alle – boligplan for Københavns kommune 2005–2008* (Forslag). Copenhagen Municipality.

Copenhagen Municipality (2005b) *Indre Vesterbros fornyelse, Vol. 1*. Bygge- og Teknikforvaltningen, Copenhagen.

Copenhagen Municipality (2008) *Nøgletal for udviklingen på det københavnske boligmarked*. Copenhagen Municipality.

Copenhagen Statistical Office (1989) *Københavns bydele 1989*. Copenhagen Municipality.

Copenhagen Statistical Office (1990) *Københavns bydele 1990*. Copenhagen Municipality.

Dengsøe, P. (2000) *Hverdagsliv på Vesterbro*. Aalborg: Aalborg University Press.

Dutton, P. (2003) Leeds calling: the influence of London on the gentrification of regional cities, *Urban Studies*, 40, pp. 2557–2572.

Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelsen (2006) *Analyse af andelsboligsektorens rolle på boligmarkedet 2006*. Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelsen, Copenhagen.

Florida, R. (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York: Basic Books.

Florida, R. (2005) *The Flight of the Creative Class*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Hansen, K. E. and Skifte Andersen, H. (1999) Strategies for public regulation of urban renewal and housing rehabilitation in Denmark, in: H. Skifte Andersen and P. Leather (Eds) *Housing Renewal in Europe*, pp. 95–113. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Harvey, D. (1973) *Social Justice and the City*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1989) From managerialism to entrepreneurialism, *Geografiska Annaler B*, 71, pp. 3–17.

Harvey, D. (2003) *Paris, Capital of Modernity*. New York: Routledge.

Harvey, D. (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Henriksen, C. S. (2002) *Den sociale status og udvikling på Indre Vesterbro*. Centre for Alternative Social Analysis (CASA), Copenhagen.

København and SBS (1989) *Fornyelse Indre Vesterbro*. Byfornyelsesselskabet København and Sanerings- og Byfornyelsesselskabet af 1970 (SBS), Copenhagen.

København and SBS (1991) *Fornyelse Indre Vesterbro, Vol. 1*. Byfornyelsesselskabet København and SBS-Byfornyelse, Copenhagen.

Larsen, H. G. (2008) *Pushing: geographies of drugs and gentrification in Copenhagen*. Paper presented at the *2008 Meeting of the Association of American Geographers*, Boston MA, April.

Lees, L. (2000) A reappraisal of gentrification: towards a 'geography of gentrification', *Progress in Human Geography*, 24, pp. 389–408.

Lees, L. (2007) Afterword: progress in gentrification research?, *Environment and Planning A*, 39, pp. 228–234.

Lewis, J. (2001) Space wars in San Francisco, *Art in America*, 89, p. 25.

Ley, D. (1996) *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lund Hansen, A. (2003) Urban space wars in 'wonderful' Copenhagen: uneven development in the age of vagabond capitalism, in: B. Pettersson and E. Clark (Eds) *Identity Dynamics and the Construction of Boundaries*, pp. 121–142. Stockholm: Nordic Academic Press.

Lund Hansen, A. (2006) *Space wars and the new urban imperialism*. Department of Social and Economic Geography, Lund University.

Lund Hansen, A., Andersen, H. T. and Clark, E. (2001) Creative Copenhagen: globalization, urban governance and social change, *European Planning Studies*, 9, pp. 851–869.

Mazanti, B. and Henriksen, C. S. (1997) *Byfornyelse på Indre Vesterbro*. Centre for Alternative Social Analysis (CASA), Copenhagen.

Molotch, H. (1999) Growth machine links: up, down and across, in: A. E. G. Jonas and D. Wilson (Eds) *The Urban Growth Machine*, pp. 247–265. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Peck, J. (2005) Struggling with the creative class, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 29, pp. 740–770.

Rofe, R. (2003) 'I want to be global': theorising the gentrifying class as an emergent élite global community, *Urban Studies*, 40, pp. 2511–2526.

Slater, T. (2004) North American gentrification? Revanchist and emancipatory perspectives explored, *Environment and Planning A*, 36, pp. 1191–1213.

Smith, N. (1996) *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. London: Routledge.

Smith, N. (2002) New globalism, new urbanism: gentrification as global urban strategy, *Antipode*, 34, pp. 427–450.

Smith, N. (2005) Ny globalism, ny urbanism: ojämn utveckling i det tjugoförsta århundradet, *Fronesis*, 18, pp. 94–111.

Stensgaard, P. (2007) 2900 Vesterbro, *Weekendavisen*, 2 March.

Swyngedouw, E. (1997) Neither global nor local: 'glocalization' and the politics of scale, in: K. Cox (Ed.) *Spaces of Globalization*, pp. 137–166. New York: Guilford.

Swyngedouw, E., Moulaert, F. and Rodrigues, A. (2002) Neoliberal urbanization in Europe: largescale urban development projects and the new urban policy, *Antipode*, 34, pp. 543–577.

Tønnesen, A. and Elgstrøm, K. (Eds) (1986) *Vesterbro: en forstadsbebyggelse i København.* Ministry of the Environment, Copenhagen.

Vagnby, B. and Jensen, O. B. (2002) From slum clearance to urban policy: discourses and doctrines in Danish inner city redevelopment, *Housing, Theory and Society*, 19, pp. 3–13.

Walljasper, J. (2001) Seven urban wonders: enlightened cities around the world, *Utne Reader*, November/December, pp. 80–83.