Alienation and authoritarian appropriation – the spatio-temporality of political subjectivation under East German urban neoliberalism

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Summary: This paper contributes to a growing field of spatial analyses of authoritarianism by asking how urban neoliberalization impacts authoritarian subjectivation. It analyses why working class long-term tenants in a gentrifying working class district of the East German city of Leipzig are susceptible to authoritarianism. It traces how their political subjectivation operates through space and time. The theoretical contribution is a spatio-temporally sensitive theorization of subjectivation between alienation and appropriation. Tenants' experiences of alienation and their attempts of appropriation depend on processes of political economic restructuring in a row of scales from their flat to the reunited nation, and their classed position within these. The tenants in focus develop a nostalgic temporality of belonging, reminiscent of a lost past and devoid of present engagement or an imaginable future. This fosters ideological, authoritarian forms of appropriation, reproducing social hierarchies and scapegoating instead of encouraging practical engagement with present conditions.

Keywords: authoritarianism, political subjectivation, East Germany, alienation, space, time

Entfremdung und autoritäre Aneignung – die Raum-Zeitlichkeit politischer Subjektivierung im ostdeutschen urbanen Neoliberalismus

Zusammenfassung: Mit der Frage, wie urbane Neoliberalisierung autoritäre Subjektivierung prägt, trägt der Artikel zur gegenwärtigen Konjunktur räumlicher Analysen von Autoritarismus bei. Er analysiert, warum Langzeitmieter:innen in einem gentrifizierenden Arbeiter:innenviertel im ostdeutschen Leipzig autoritäre Tendenzen aufweisen und wie sich ihre politische Subjektivierung in Abhängigkeit von Raum und Zeit vollzieht. Der zentrale Beitrag ist eine raum- und zeitsensible Konzeptualisierung von Subjektivierung zwischen Entfremdung und Aneignung. Die Erfahrungen der Mieter:innen zwischen Entfremdung und Aneignungsversuchen sind abhängig von Restrukturierungsprozessen auf verschiedenen Ebenen, von ihrer bedrohten Wohnung bis zur wiedervereinten Nation, so wie von ihrer klassenbedingten Position in diesen Ebenen. Die befragten Mieter:innen entwickeln eine nostalgische Zugehörigkeit, die in einer verlorenen Vergangenheit schwelgt und weder gegenwärtigen noch zukünftigen Bezug zum Viertel hat. Das begünstigt eine ideologische, autoritäre Form der Aneignung, die statt auf praktisches Engagement auf soziale Hierarchien und Sündenbockdenken rekurriert.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Autoritarismus, politische Subjektivierung, Ostdeutschland, Entfremdung, Raum, Zeit

1   Introduction

Despite increasing interest in the spatiality of the far right (Koch 2022; Mullis/Miggelbrink 2022b), multiscalar and temporally sensitive analyses of authoritarian subjectivation are sparse. Addressing this gap, the paper traces the political subjectivation of elderly, working class, long term tenants on the base of an ethnographic and qualitative field study in a restructuring, financializing neighbourhood in Leipzig, East Germany. It studies the impact of urban neoliberalization on their political subjectivation and asks how authoritarian subjectivation develops through space and time. Determining financializaton driven accumulation enabled by uneven spatial development as "that which is established and in power" in the case study, the paper analyses its "unconditional recognition" by subjects, coupled with their acceptance and reproduction of degrading social hierarchies (Horkheimer/Adorno 2003: 367).

The paper untangles the impact of spatio-temporality on political subjectivation. Focusing on neoliberal urban restructuring in East Germany, it is shown how capitalist uneven spatial development, as a driver of current accumulation (Harvey 2006), generates alienation. To illuminate the impact of tenants' alienation on their authoritarian subjectivation, it is firstly argued that subjectivation is mediated spatio-temporally. For this, the concept temporalities of belonging is developed. Temporalities of belonging define tenants' place attachment and identification in relation to the timing and pace of their experiences of uneven development and urban neoliberalization in the aftermath of German reunification. In the case analysed, elderly working class tenants develop a nostalgic belonging to a lost neighbourhood that permits attachment without current engagement or an imaginable future. To untangle how these nostalgic belongings develop in relation to wider political economic processes, these are divided into nested scales ranging from the reunited nation to the threatened flat. Secondly the paper argues that the nostalgic tenants respond to alienation through scapegoating. For this the second central concept, ideological appropriation is introduced. Instead of addressing the central conflict behind their alienation, neoliberal urbanization, tenants refer to authoritarian attitudes and behaviours blaming those perceived to be lower in a social hierarchy for their negative experiences. Abstracting from these findings, the paper shows that not only class position, but its spatio-temporal mediation impacts political subjectivation. In other words, the spacing and timing of tenants' biographies in relation to uneven development shape how they relate to their surroundings and thus also whether they recur to authoritarianism.

After sketching recent research on the spatiality of approval to the far right and pointing to its limitations in section two, the theoretical groundwork of the article is introduced. Subjectivation and belonging are defined as theoretical concepts to address the diagnosed gaps. For this, a Bourdieuian framework is adapted. To ground the analysis of identification in the neoliberalizing urban sphere, displacement literatures are consulted. Following, the dialectics of alienation and ideological appropriation are suggested as a power-sensitive framework to analyse authoritarian subjectivation. Subsequently, section three develops the conceptual contributions of the paper. The developed concepts stem from the retroductive analysis of a 13-month ethnographic and qualitative case study in a poor, politically polarized, gentrifying inner-city neighbourhood of Leipzig, East Germany. Here, urban restructuring and uneven development currently manifest in housing financialization – hence its development into an asset (Wijburg & Aalbers, 2017). Tracing how this impacts tenants' subjectivation, the

concept of temporalities of belonging is introduced to underpin the analysis of authoritarian subjectivation. Following, these temporalities are grounded in the political economic context of the case study. The nested scales of subjectivation are sketched, ranging from the unevenly reunited nation over the restructuring city and the changing neighbourhood to the commodifying house. Subsequently, tenants' authoritarian responses to residential alienation are illuminated and analysed as forms of ideological appropriation. The concluding section revisits the central contributions and gives an outlook on their implications for urban politics beyond the specific case.

2   Studying authoritarian subjectivation spatio-temporally

In light of what I propose to conceive as globally resurgent forms of variegated authoritarianism, social theoretical and empirical debates about their emergence and approval have gained new relevance. Why is it, that different authoritarian politics are successful in specific spaces and times? To transcend simplified explanations reducing authoritarianism to cultural or class dynamics recent studies have addressed spatial factors influencing far-right attitudes, behaviours and voting patterns (Mullis/Miggelbrink 2022b). However, they lack both a temporal analysis and a sophisticated theorization of the mechanisms of subjectivation. This article seeks to expand both, to understand how authoritarian subjectivation of working class tenants is mediated through temporality (generation, biography, pace of life vs. pace of upgrading) and multiple geographical scales.

A widespread spatial hypothesis is linked to far-right electoral successes in "places that don't matter" (Rodríguez-Pose 2018), implying that the frustration of a working-class suffering from the daily consequences of neoliberalization (alienation), is politically exploitable by right wing populists (Eribon 2016; Nachtwey 2016; Sablowski/Thien 2018). Proposing to focus not on voters' "worries as such, but the ethnocentric, exclusive way, in which they process them" (Eversberg 2018: 46), a contrasting hypothesis addresses the global dimension of authoritarianism as the unwillingness to give up an exclusive imperial lifestyle.

On a smaller scale, recent work on the "urban conditions for the rise of the far right" has illuminated authoritarian reactions to gentrification, austerity urbanism and the role of political representation and immediacy within these (Mullis 2021; Bescherer et al. 2021; Domann/Nuissl 2022). That these processes not only affect cities differently from rural regions, but also manifest with stark differences on a granular spatial level, is shown by small-scale voting analyses (Reichle/Bescherer 2021), the studies of specific local conflicts confined to neighbourhood developments (Bescherer/Feustel 2020) or locally established far-right hegemonies (Salheiser/Quent 2022; Zschocke 2022). Recent attempts of theorizing far-right subjectivation have emphasized the integration of local daily life in "multiscalar orders, power relations and economies" (Mullis/Miggelbrink 2022a: 31) and called for "attention to spatio-historical contexts of subjectivation and the ramifications of disruptive events" (Miggelbrink 2020: 1). However, a fine-grained analysis of the spatio-temporal mechanisms of authoritarian subjectivation is yet lacking. Addressing this gap, the following sections illustrate first its theoretical and then its empirical foundations.

2.1 Subjectivation and belonging

To grasp the spatiality of political subjectivation, this paper proposes a Bourdieuian lens. Hence I define subjectivation as a relational process of identification, that occurs in a societal context marked by structural power relations. In contrast to post structural and discursive understandings of identification, that recur in Foucault's (2006) theory of governmentality or Althusser's (1977) figure of interpellation, Bourdieu's work focusses on the "objective relation between the significance and the value of [an individual's] positions within a directed space at the time they are considered" (Bourdieu 2000: 302). Thereby, "the collections of positions simultaneously occupied at a given moment of time by a biological individual socially instituted, act[…] as support to a collection of attributes suitable for allowing him to intervene as an efficient agent in different fields." (ibid: 302) Agency is thus grounded in power relations, and subjects' positionality within them, and both are mutually contingent on space and time. This lens is fruitful to grasp the connection of geographically uneven political economic development and granular forms of identification.

A field of study that has explored this connection empirically, is displacement research. Especially qualitative perspectives concerned with displacement pressure and exclusionary displacement (Marcuse 1985; Valli 2015), associated displacement anxiety (Watt 2018), "affective displacement" and "spatial dislocation" (Butcher/Dickens 2016) illustrate how people's senses of place, self and agency are disrupted by political-economic processes of urban restructuring, such as the financialization of housing.

Recent interventions in the field of displacement research have foregrounded the mutli-scalarity of (affective) displacement and belonging (Pohl et al. 2020; Watt 2021; Wynne/ Rogers 2021). Especially "the neighbourhood […] [as] an essential part of the way in which people are socialised into [the] wider social order" (Forrest/Kearns 2001: 2134), is emphasized as a relevant scale for identification. For an empirical analysis of the multi-scalarity of political subjectivation, Kearns and Parkinson's nested differentiation of neighbourhood is instructive. Spatially, they divide the neighbourhood into a "home area", coining an immediate sense of belonging; a wider "locality", important for residential activities; and "urban district or region", constituting a "landscape of social and economic opportunities" (Kearns/ Parkinson 2001: 2104).

These perspectives provide a background to a spatially sensitive analysis of subjectivation. What they lack however, is an analysis of temporality. To counter this trend, different scales of subjectivation are analysed as inherently temporal in this paper. Thereby the "temporal is not a general sense of time particular to an epoch of history but a specific experience of time that is structured in specific political and economic contexts" (Sharma 2014: 9). The power relations shaping subjectivation are situated both within "power geometries" (Massey 1992: 81) and "power chronographies" (Sharma 2014). Throughout the paper, I trace how tenants' classed positioning within a time/space/power matrix shapes their subjectivation.

2.2 Alienation, appropriation, authoritarianism

Despite major differences among critical subjectivation theories, a review of which would transcend the scope of this article, they all refer to specific, capitalist contexts coined by a

division of labour grounded in the historical freeing of workers from serfdom/dispossession and freedom/obligation to sell their labour power (Maihofer 2007). Consequentially, "subjectivation is associated with a dialectic of freedom and unfreedom, of equality and inequality" (ibid: 334). I propose to grasp this dialectic with the concepts of alienation and appropriation. Based on an unorthodox Marxist reading of the term, alienation is understood as a "negative relationship between social structures and humans in heteronomous societies" (Fuchs 2018: 456), that is structural but not total. This means, alienation is structurally enshrined in capitalist relations of value production through exploitation, dispossession and Landnahme, yet it nevertheless has concrete historical forms that differ from one another (Ollman 1977). As part of the above cited displacement scholarship, residential alienation describes a specific form of alienation, coined by accumulation through housing financialization and its granular, psycho-social implications (Gehriger 2023; Madden/Marcuse 2016).

As a dialectical counterpart to alienation, Jaeggi (2014) proposes appropriation. Alienation implies a disruption of the affective identification of an individual to her preconditions and manifests in a lack of control over them. Appropriation then describes a mechanism of trying to solve or integrate the inner conflicts caused by exploitative social structures. It is the ongoing attempt of being in control, or conceiving oneself as a meaningful, coherent social actor.

Situating subjectivation within the alienation-appropriation dialectic means that neither spatial contexts nor structural power relations "get 'inscribed' into the subjects" (Rehmann 2008: 130) in a totally determinant manner. Identification, rather, is the "balancing out of inner ambivalences or of (externally caused) conflicts and in securing continuity in the face of changing commitments." (Jaeggi 2014: 175)

In section 3, I will explore how tenants navigate this tension between residential alienation and attempts of appropriation, and how this is mediated by their temporalities of belonging. This is done through the concept of ideological appropriation, which describes a mechanism of "shifting attention to a third and technically unrelated party [for] compensatory satisfaction" instead of targeting an actual conflict (Reichle/Bescherer 2021: 21).

2.3   Retroductive analysis from Leipzig, East Germany

The theorizations of subjectivation between alienation and appropriation hitherto provide the theoretical groundwork for the conceptual contributions of the paper. These were generated through the retroductive analysis of a 13month ethnography. Retroduction is a critical realist method that "describes a continuous, spiral movement between the abstract and the concrete, between theoretical and empirical work, involving both an interpretive and a causal dimension of explanation." (Belfrage/Hauf 2017: 10) Part of a research agenda of critical grounded theory, it relies on a "continuous process of confrontation" (Jessop 2005: 43) of sensitizing critical theories and inductive openness in the field.

The field at the base of this article is a poor, working-class, stigmatized inner-city neighbourhood in the East German city of Leipzig. Here, German reunification marked the beginning of a neoliberal era, initiated by widespread deindustrialization and the valorisation of space and the built environment. This manifested in an exodus of population coupled with nationally and supranationally funded attempts of creating a profitable housing market in East Germany, leading to an unusual trajectory of urban restructuring (Haase et al. 2016). After a

decade of shrinkage, urban growth that became dramatic around 2010 resulted in processes of gentrification and upgrading (Haase/Rink 2015). Within the city, the neighbourhood of study is a current prism of these historical developments. Affected intensely by deindustrialization and shrinkage, its decayed stock of historical housing was the base for rapid upgrading in the last eight years. Financialization is observable as it is currently the neighbourhood with the fastest rising rents, many consecutive ownership changes and a central place to invest in real estate the city (Reichle 2023). It is home to an above average share of poor tenants, roughly dividable into overall penniless students, welfare dependant or extremely precariously employed first and second-generation immigrants and similarly precariously employed, unemployed or poor pensioned East German long-term residents (ibid; Haase et al. 2020). All of these suffer from secondary exploitation through raising rents in the neighbourhood and have similarly precarious economic preconditions. However, their experiences vary greatly in a spatio-temporal sense.

24 expert interviews were conducted on the city's development to understand the political economic developments and 26 narrative interviews formed the base of analysing its implications for tenants. This was accompanied by a neighbourhood ethnography consisting of many informal conversations, participant observation in public places, activist meetings, social centres and pubs. As part of the retroductive analysis, the research was conducted in four phases with intermittent analysis and literature reviews. The material chosen for this article stems from conversations with long term tenants, as most manifestations of ideological appropriation were uttered by them. For the sake of vividness, the following sections adapt an ethnographic lens and mainly present my interaction with a group of elderly men, Dirk and his friends. This is complemented with other interview material, to illustrate different nuances of alienation, nostalgic belonging, and ideological appropriation. All names are pseudonyms.

3   Alienation, nostalgic belonging, ideological appropriation in Leipzig's inner East

3.1   Alienation and nostalgic belonging

I meet Dirk and his two buddies on a bar terrace in summer 2020. They are happy about my request to hear about the neighbourhood's development. Having grown up here, they have a strong, nostalgic sense of belonging to it and are glad to share stories. The oldest is born in 1950 and wears a white shirt, Dirk and the third one are some ten years younger. Dirk has long blond hair, his moustache is dyed black, and he is wearing a leather jacket. The third has his white undershirt pulled up in the heat, revealing his belly button. They meet in this bar every Wednesday.

"The sad part is, we are the last ones remaining", Dirk tells me. A central driver behind the disappearance of their friends is the rising rent. "They move over there [points north] into the houses that are still in worse condition, where it's a bit cheaper." He himself has received continuous rent raises since 2013, when his building was bought by a locally founded real estate company, which by now has fused into a listed company and sold off large shares to a European fund manager. "If it continues like this, in one or two years, I can go." They all agree that this is both especially stressful and especially unjust because their pensions are so low.

Their former GDR jobs ended with the *Wende* and after initial unemployment "I worked for the windmills, you can imagine what we earned in the East [laughs] and now for our pension we get nothing. And then the rents go up […] it's starting to be like *over there*", one of them says with resignation, making several indirect references to West Germany and inter-German power relations. West German owned wind parks in East Germany, established after thorough deindustrialization and land reforms, much like rental housing, are a central factor in capital flows from East to West (Land 2003).

Dirk is not the only research participant who describes the pattern of former friends and neighbours "moving across the train rails." Several interviewees name rising rents or changing jobcentre regulations as frequent "silent" displacement causes, and a social worker even reports specific landlord strategies targeted at long-term, elderly residents, like turning off elevators. Asked about his prospects if the rent increases further, Dirk stubbornly shouts "I'm not leaving! We stay here! This is our neighbourhood!"

Despite their social attachment to the neighbourhood, Dirk and his buddies are very unhappy with its restructuring. It turns out that the neighbourhood they feel attached to is not the current one, but a lost one. It is mainly the changing infrastructure they bemoan – "it was a dream, we had an old swimming pool, but it was not good enough […] we had cinemas […] they tore everything down! So many bars! It was lively!" Nostalgically recollecting the stories of different bars, the encounters they had there, the food that was served, they identify reunification as the turning point. As the last quote highlights, their stories are marked by a bitterness stemming from what they see as a lack of recognition for their remembered former neighbourhood with its cultural and social spaces. The recent upgrading exacerbates their isolating anonymizing and alienating post-Wende experience and further impedes their place attachment.

Several other pensioned long-term tenants express similar experiences of rising rents, disappearing neighbours, a changing environment and increasing anonymization. Their re-actions vary between a lack of understanding, displacement anxieties and complete withdrawal. Reporting on the displacement of a former, job-centre dependent elderly neighbour, Mrs Meyer's perspective is marked by disbelief: "I didn't understand it, I said you can't understand something like that." Learning about the rent rise of her new neighbours, her disbelief is coupled with displacement anxieties. As a retired cleaner her pensions are low and she is aware that her building, being the last unrefurbished one in the street, is also the only one in the area where she can still afford to live. Her flat now marks her central attachment to the neighbourhood, as she, much like Dirk and his friends, feels discontented with and separated from the changes around.

These experiences of separation are a defining feature of alienation. Philosophically, alienation is a form of division or, on a subjective level, a form of "degenerating into an abstraction, those parts of his being which have been split off (which are no longer under his control) are undergoing their own transformation." (Ollman 1977: 134). Much as in research on affective displacement (Butcher/Dickens 2016), the tenants' alienation is contingent on urban restructuring. In their case, this is part in of a multilayered context of political economic processes, consisting of reunification, urban neoliberalization, neighbourhood change and housing financialization. Within these contexts, tenants occupy different positions in "a socially hierarchized geographical space" (Bourdieu 1987: 206) that impact how they identify with their surroundings.

Their positionality, along with their emergent sense of belonging is however not only spatial, but also inherently temporal. I propose to grasp this through the concept temporalities of belonging, meaning its relation to past, present and future and its relation to the pace of restructuring. The temporality of belonging Dirk and the other long term tenants is nostalgic; it is anchored in a lost past. Whereas present identification with the neighbourhood is lacking, constant reactivation of nostalgia can be considered as an attempt of maintaining a sense of belonging through memories, coping with present changes and their actual position of powerlessness (May 2017). Their nostalgia "can be a way to release frustration and discontent […] to face political realities" (Barney 2009: 133). The specific place-bound nostalgia of Dirk, his friends and other long term tenants is a way of sustaining localized identity, place attachment and a (retrograde) sense of belonging in the face of alienating changes.

3.2   Spatio-temporal power matrix and nested scales of subjectivation

To analyse the emergence of tenants' nostalgic sense of belonging in relation to political economic processes, this section comes back to Kearns and Parkinson's (2001) nested model of the neighbourhood, but adapts it to a wider geographical context. From the vantage point of alienation as a lack of control over structural conditions, the subjects' experiences of different scales will be considered. I show that their classed position is mediated spatio-temporally and impacts their identification and agency.

The unevenly reunited nation
The experiences of long-term East German tenants interviewed are contingent on their specific positionality in a reunited nation. Not only did East Germans "basically [have] to move without (laughs) actually moving away, but we needed to rearrange our entire lives" with German reunification, as a resident remembers. Since then, they are underrepresented throughout all social elites and, not least economically, disadvantaged vis-à-vis West Germans. Historical differences between East and West German socializations, into a worker-oriented versus a middle-class-oriented society, shape the subjective but also material foundation for current inequalities and (dis)identifications (Ahbe 2018). These gained increasing meaning (symbolically and economically) with German reunification and the assertion of West German neoliberalism, in which East Germany became an extended workbench for the West (Intelmann 2020). Reunification transformed East German cities, initiating the valorisation and neoliberalization of housing and urban space and paved the way for ownership-structures reproducing an ongoing capital outflow from East to West Germany.

In the memories of long-term tenants, *die Wende* is a historical marker, having brought change to their entire lives. As the story of Dirk and his buddies illustrates, the scale of the divided nation is fundamental to residents' experiences and its history determines the recurrent, specific retrograde temporalities of belonging present in most GDR-socialized tenants' accounts. Many interlocutors hardly remember recent neighbourhood changes, yet reunification is a continuous point of reference. Deindustrialization and the post-Wende exodus of people from the region, the city, the neighbourhood "because they looked for work" caused anonymization and fragmentation, and tenants were thrown into unemployment or precarious employment. Existing communities were disrupted, and new ones impeded by the restructuring of East German working and living conditions, the shifting composition of the

local population, competition, withdrawal, and shame. Emergent relations with others are inhibited by the perceived lack of common experiences, with younger generations, with West Germans and with "foreigners" (resident). Tenants' spatial but also historical position within an unevenly reunited national scale, marked by origin, citizenship, generation, and experience, thus influences their class position, their access or exclusion to resources, networks, jobs, and housing, and, respectively, the stratified preconditions for local (dis)identification, belonging and appropriation.

The restructuring city

Within East Germany, Leipzig underwent a specific process of urbanization through its recent, unparalleled regrowth, owing to the city's strategic location, historical housing stock, (sub) cultural and international tradition. The changes in the neighbourhood that tenants' bemoan, are contingent on the patterns of urban restructuring marked by East German shrinkage, as well as Leipzig's regrowth (Haase/Rink 2015; Reichle 2022).

As the city started growing again, different neighbourhoods gentrified at different points of time (Grossmann & Haase, 2016). Whilst other inner city neighbourhoods started upgrading, the inner East, which had been especially decayed, especially vacant and which was a historical "neighbourhood of arrival" (Haase et al. 2020), stayed an ideal part of the city to house unwanted yet necessary racialized surplus populations (Soederberg 2020). With time, the regrowth, regeneration and rising rents in other neighbourhoods also pushed other populations, like students, to the inner East, laying the groundwork for gentrification and housing financialization.

The tenants that stayed behind after the Wende grapple with their identification with this particular neighbourhood in relation to city wide dynamics. Whilst living in the stigmatized surplus area "that other people [in the city] are afraid of" (resident) and cannot go anywhere else as the rest of the city is too expensive.

The changing neighbourhood between appropriation and alienation

At the same time, the neighbourhood does not feel familiar to long term tenants anymore. Their belonging has been disrupted through the twofold loss of neighbours, once with reunification and deindustrialization and once with gentrification and upgrading. Within the city, the post-Wende population exodus was especially extreme in the inner East, due to the abysmal housing quality. Respectively, also the local infrastructure died down. Consequentially, after a long period of vacancy, the influx of immigrants and students led to vast changes (Haase et al. 2020). During these changes, the remaining senior, East German working-class has withdrawn from the public (Reichle 2022). The increasing "culture of estrangement" referenced in interviews with social workers provides a breeding ground for authoritarian divisions. The withdrawn tenants are suspicious about the changing neighbourhood they feel alienated from. Their scepticism is fuelled by racist media coverage that transcends the city and state interventions, like a recent "weapons prohibition zone", criminalizing the entire neighbourhood. The resulting racist territorial stigma remains uncorrected by tenants' own experiences. A woman says: "You think you're abroad, we don't go through there, through Eisenbahnstraße, you hear too much, it's dangerous".

Tenants' place-attachment is further impeded through perceived decline and the disappearance of social spaces. The places that did not get abandoned in the wake of deindustrialization, are now threatened by displacement as they are not profitable enough (Reichle, 2021). Tenants react with defensive occupation and strong identification with a few

remaining places, exemplified by the local bar of Dirk and friends, a homogenous space frequented almost exclusively by white, elderly East German men. With many of them sharing not only experiences of anonymization and fragmentation, but also their authoritarian interpretation of these, these bars serve as spaces of mutual political affirmation, reproducing ideological, authoritarian appropriation "with a sense of restorative nostalgia out of lack of a perceivable future" (Reichle/Bescherer 2021: 28).

The commodifying house and the (in)secure flat
Within the neighbourhood, the building is the most proximate site of community but also of anonymization. Its transformation into an investment opportunity could be the reason for a common interest and shared struggle among the residents of a building, however most elderly tenants are not in touch with their neighbours. This stands in contrast to remembered "house communities", central to tenants' nostalgic place attachment. Since reunification, they witnessed manifold episodes of outmigration of neighbours, and more recently high fluctuation caused by upgrading, direct and indirect displacement and landlords' explicit targeting of students with a dynamic life style. Their response is withdrawal. This is furthered by the commodification and professionalization of tasks like cleaning the stairs or taking care of the backyard. Once organized communally, these chores are now carried out by precariously employed – often racialized – strangers, who do not even do them to tenants' satisfaction.

All this feeds into a perceived decline of community at the level of the house, fuelling emerging fragmentations, withdrawal, mistrust, and individualization. Newcomers in the house are met with scepticism, not even noticed or blamed for the precarious living conditions. A recurring phrase in the narratives of elderly tenants is "closing the door" behind oneself, describing a retreat that stands in harsh contrast to the remembered mutual aid before German reunification.

The flat is the space that these tenants withdraw to. Ideally, it is their site of security, dwelling and identification in a turbulently changing neighbourhood. This is the case for a few elderly tenants, who live in quite secure and therewith exceptional tenancies: "we don't go out anymore". Yet for the majority of poor long-term tenants, who experience insecure housing conditions through neglect, displacement pressure or rent raises, the flat threatens to lose its function as a home. At the moment of study in Leipzig's inner East, most long-term tenants have already been displaced, as witnessed by their few remaining friends and social workers. Considering their experiences and positionalities in all the spatio-temporal scales outlined above, the threat of displacement for the remaining ones illustrates why their temporality of belonging can hardly be one oriented to present or future. Instead, their nostalgic belonging discourages an active, collective form of appropriation.

3.3   Ideological appropriation through scapegoating

Coming back to the understanding of subjectivation as a dialectical process between alienation and appropriation, tenants' authoritarian reactions to their alienation are classified as a form of ideological appropriation in this section. Despite their strong, nostalgic attachment to the neighbourhood, the elderly tenants show an acute dislike for their current place of residence. Their place in the neighbourhood is threatened symbolically (they don't feel at home) and materially (it is getting expensive). In this situation they react by finding a scapegoat. Despite

their sometimes clear and sometimes implicit explanations of political-economic inner German developments leading to both the restructuring of the neighbourhood and their struggle with housing, Dirk and his buddies keep emphasizing a different culprit for their frustration. When asked about the reason for the developments they dislike one of them gets enraged and keeps shouting: "Foreigners! Foreigners! The foreigners must go!" Responding to my bewildered reaction, they are eager to tell me stories about the specific problems they have with "foreigners" – one had a car parked next to the bar with the music on for too long. Whereas Dirk admits that he likes that one can smoke inside Turkish bars, his friends are quick to blame "them" on taking over the spots of their former locals.

This aligns with a mechanism common among several long-term tenants who interpret their precarious living conditions through a lens of racist prejudice (Bescherer/Reichle 2022). Within the wider neighbourhood, several tenants complain about the "high concentration of people immigrated from abroad. With all the problems they bring." Some simply verbalize an unspecific discontent with "too many foreigners", that crystallize in this elderly man's statement: "it's a good area, but the people don't fit! What's lingering around here!" Others refer to concrete problems, like the changing infrastructure since German reunification. Ms Meyer blames "foreigners" of having "occupied them all [the shops]." Complaining about the poor housing quality, another woman is quick to blame it on "the Romanians", at whose "place it always smells like cat piss."

Following Mullis, "authoritarian and far-right political solutions can be interpreted as attempts to get back control of one's own life" (Mullis 2021: 134–135). In that sense, the reproduction of authoritarian practices, beliefs and articulations can be conceived as strategies of appropriation that rely not on practical attempts at organizing against exploitative contexts, but instead on scapegoating (Coser 1956). Scapegoating works by deferring a specific "frustration" from "realistic conflicts" to "unrealistic" ones (1956: 49). It is predestined to take on authoritarian characteristics that rely on passing on frustration towards those perceived inferior in an accepted social hierarchy. This form of appropriation is contingent on the powerlessness implied by alienation, but also on its specific, spatio-temporal mediation. Tenants' nostalgic form of belonging hinders any attempts at practical appropriation in the present or intentions of active transformation of the heteronomous context. Instead, they sustain their attachment through (idealized) memories and blaming their new neighbours.

4   Conclusion

Research on authoritarianism has often been concerned with scrutinizing who is susceptible to the far right – be it according to class or specific socio-psychological factors. The recent surge of spatial contributions has somewhat relieved these often polarized debates, yet they have initiated other conflicts on the meaning of specific spaces or spatial dichotomies – like centre and periphery or urban and rural (Belina 2022). Nevertheless, space- and time sensitive analyses of authoritarianism are overdue, considering the ongoing valorization of the built environment and with it the central role of spatial restructuring for capitalist accumulation. These developments go hand in hand with questions considering their social implications, potential contestation and (anti)democratic meaning. Seeking to contribute to such questions,

this paper has refrained from asking who the authoritarian subject is or where the authoritarian risk lies. Instead it has proposed to scrutinize a process – authoritarian subjectivation, as the putting oneself in relationship with the world – and how it is mediated not only by class, but also space and time. Taking up the image of variegated authoritarianisms from the introduction, this provides conceptual tools to analyse their different forms empirically by scrutinizing the interplay of politics and spatial restructuring through time.

The conceptual tools were developed through an analysis of the field of tension between alienation and appropriation in Leipzig's inner East. Here, residential alienation is structurally contingent on logics of uneven spatial development based on the neoliberal developments post reunification. These combine East German deindustrialization with nationally subsidized commodification of housing and urban space, both to the benefit of West German capital. The result is a structural local heteronomy, that manifests in the successive disinvestment, stigmatization, revalorization and financialization of rental housing. Analysing the implications of these processes, the paper traced long-term residents' alienation as a loss of "control of the structures that affect their everyday lives" (Fuchs 2018: 456), hence their control over spaces of home and belonging. Alienation has specific implications for the focussed group of elderly, working class, long term residents.

Their experiences are mediated by a row of spatio-temporal scales and their positionality within them – where they are born, where they have lived, where they live now, how they perceive them. Thereby, stratification is not merely determined by class, but by its mediation through spatio-temporal scales. Hence, generational factors and the timing and rhythms that shapes subjective experiences of a reunited nation, a shrinking and regrowing city, a neglected and gentrifying neighbourhood or the house and flat that turns into an asset, all play out in the way working class tenants (dis)identify with their surroundings. In other words, belonging and subjectivation are always contingent on "where one stands in relation to others (space) as well as how one's experience of time is always tied to another's temporality" (Sharma 2013: 314). Fleshing this out empirically, the paper demonstrated how a concrete, historical form of alienation of a specific group of residents has generated among them a nostalgic temporality of belonging. Their sense of place is rooted in a lost past, disconnected from a frustrating presence and without future. This furthers their current disidentification and incentivizes authoritarian forms of ideological appropriation. Practically their nostalgic belonging manifests in the withdrawal from most public spaces – from the house community to large parts of the neighbourhood, and to their flat or "(exclusive) social spaces of political consolidation" (Reichle 2021: 228), like the bar where I met Dirk. Their withdrawal feeds into resignation and limits present engagement with the neighbourhood, making active forms of collective appropriation or contestation unlikely. Instead, tenants' reactions to residential alienation follow an authoritarian logic: With structural causes of precarious housing and dwelling experiences out of reach, those believed to be inferior in a social hierarchy are blamed for the alienating status quo.

Despite the focus on a specific group, the analysis of temporalities of belonging coined by spatio-temporal power matrices can serve as a method to analyse authoritarianism elsewhere. An important undertaking that the paper does not provide would be an analysis of gender and other axes of power that are not determined by socio-spatial processes, but interplay with these. Furthermore, the specific scales chosen could be extended or adapted to different empirical contexts. Thereby, an ethnographic perspective is instructive to develop an un-

derstanding of fine-grained mechanisms of subjectivation, however it limits the scope and scale of analysis.

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