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**COOPERATIVE (URBAN) PRACTICES
BETWEEN CONNECTIVITY AND FRAGMENTATION**

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Cooperative (Urban) Practices

Connectivity vs. Fragmentation

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ABSTRACT

For several years, an intense and controversial debate on patterns and trends of spatial practices has been going on in discourses related to urban development. In this context practices of "do-it yourself" civic engagement and self-initiated projects are highly discussed (et. all Bishop and Williams, 2012; Peck, Theodore and Brenner, 2012). Against this background a variety of different projects are developed in cooperation with local authorities, planners, architects, as well as commercial and civil society actors. Thus different actors, in addition to the classical professions are contributing to urban development and to diverse modifications of classical planning structures, with new approaches and mechanisms to adjust urban development to new challenges. They seem to satisfy the desire for participation in the production of the built environment, and are gaining power in the negotiation of new urban policies (e.g. Holzmarkt Berlin). Their claims and active enrolments are highlighting new opportunities for the developments or the testing of all conceivable forms of cohabitation, economic activity, and the use of public and private spaces. Based on a two-years research project in cooperation with the Wüstenrot Foundation on new formats of production, transformation and appropriation of urban spaces in urban development from the perspective of the "ephemeral" (in terms of improvised, self-initiated and volatile projects) we have deepened our understanding of the patterns of current spatial practices and the actions of the involved stakeholders. Involved (civil) actors turn into experts for their own environment in terms of urban development issues. This spatial practice opposes an understanding of urban development as an issue that can only be targeted by the planning discipline. Overall, a shift in the importance of disciplinary knowledge can be recognized, thereby unlocking the locally produced knowledge in the development of projects gains importance and becomes a new challenge. Against this background the search for ways to retrieve the locally produced knowledge begins. The professional interest addresses the possibilities of the resulting development and transformation of space and the emerging local expertise which is produced in the process of communication in-between the project participants, thus the kind knowledge that derives from "adaptation" and "learning experience".

KEYWORDS: local governance, (social-spatial) inclusion, civil participation, co-production, fragmentation

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This paper is based on the authors' research projects: "Ephemere Stadtentwicklung" (Wüstenrot Stiftung 2012-2014), Urban Research and Design Laboratory; TU-Berlin; "Ansätze kooperativer Stadtentwicklung und ihr Einfluss auf die Entwicklung von sozial-inklusiven Stadträumen – ein internationaler Vergleich von Theorie und Praxis" (TU Berlin /DFG starting 2016) Alfaro d'Alençon; Consultancy for several urban projects in Berlin (Initiative RAW. Kulturensemble; Ostkreuz Initiativen Netzwerk) Urban Resarch and Design Studio, Berlin.

Data was obtained through discourse analyses and comparative case studies in different German cities (e.g. Berlin, Leipzig and Hamburg) involving municipalities, planners, various actors in the civil society related to the local urban development, and through consultation and monitoring of collaborative projects within local communities and the private sector. In both cases, the work concentrates on the processes of adaptation and transformation, which is accompanied by in-depth research on development approaches that initiate new forms of collaboration, local economies and local learning processes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cities are continuously challenged by changing urban societies, cultural, economic and political transformations and thus always have been subjected to negotiation and debates on patterns and trends of spatial practices. In recent years questions concerning the access to common goods such as affordable housing, social and public infrastructure have gained renewed attention and triggered contestation and disputes in the urban context (Helfrich 2012, Dellenbaugh et al. 2015). Academics research the many layers of influences and interrelations between economy, societal processes and local urban environments and the related traits that bear new forms of spatial inequality (Brenner, Schmid 2011) often supported by neoliberal (urban) practices.

This concern is in particular present in urban re-development projects. Many European cities are charged with the task of encouraging the revitalization and redevelopment of such areas but lack the resources to implement formal master plans (Bishop and Williams, 2012). Subsequently power and control over the implementation of plans is passed on to the private sector and citizens might be involved to further develop the areas "hands-on". In this context a variety of different projects are developed in cooperation with local authorities, planners, architects, as well as commercial and civil society actors. Thus different actors, in addition to the classical professions are contributing to urban development and to diverse modifications of classical planning structures, with new approaches and mechanisms to adjust urban development to new challenges.

Against this backdrop intense and controversial debates have centred on patterns and trends of "do-it yourself" civic engagement and self-initiated spatial practices in urban development (Bishop and Williams et. all, 2012) as a response to diminished public resources and the increasing influence of private sectors actors. Hence a growing interest in ways of producing, providing and establishing common goods such as public and social services can be recognized (Dellenbaugh et al. 2015, Buttenberg et al. 2014).

Also in Germany do-it yourself practices have drawn more and more attention in recent years. They seem to satisfy the desire for participation in the production of the built environment, and are gaining power in the negotiation of new urban policies (e.g. Holzmarkt Berlin, former airfield Tempelhof Berlin). Their claims and active enrolments

are highlighting new opportunities for the developments or the testing of all conceivable forms of cohabitation, economic activity, and the use of public and private spaces. However with diminished public resources, governments in Germany tend to restrict their role to project initiator or moderator. In this context the private sector actors' influence is becoming increasingly influential in urban planning and development and various new tendencies can be seen in Germany related with the shifting context as, that large-scale and long-term master plans are influenced by reduced economic and financial frameworks of the government, along with the fact that private investors are influencing agendas with the purchases of urban land steered by their own particular interests (Bishop, Williams, 2012). Planning policies are limited mainly to the creation of good investment conditions and public urban projects are seen as no longer fundable in many places. The approach to build the city "nach Plan gebaute Stadt" (built according to master plans) (Selle, 2010) focuses only on plots, which are under a correspondingly high pressure of redevelopment and which are further developed by private investors. According to these dynamics, urban space development is promoted in areas where its commodification and payback of investment seems suitable. Urban space development manifests a "Inselurbanismus" (island urbanism), a fragmented and selective development. Social disparities are increasing along the multiple and fragmented boundaries between those areas that are either lucrative or unattractive for the private sector. (Heeg, Rosol 2007; Griffith 1998).

The academic discussion revolves around the constraints and possibilities deriving from collective forms of designing and governing the city. Critics highlight the depoliticised nature of collaboration and 'inclusive' forms of consensus building in urban politics. New proposals for collaborative practices often resonate with a certain neoliberal individualism, pointing at creative self-organisation of citizens. Yet the idea of the self-organised city entails risks of social exclusion and underestimates some of the broader structural changes that are happening in urban development and planning (Raco, Savini, 2015). Hence many complex, and in terms of cooperation and influence, often asymmetric interrelations result from the relationship between the private sector, public sector, and civil society. Consequently the actual impact of civil society on the development of urban spaces remains unclear.

2. LEARNING FROM CO-OPERATIVE PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND THE "RIGHT TO THE CITY"

In what way social inequality develops spatially depends strongly on the interaction of the public social security systems (Ähnelt, Göbel, Gorning, Häußermann 2009). In this respect the public sector, the government and the communities are confronted with the task to govern the spatial transformation processes and to newly explore and navigate their potential to influence these processes despite diminished resources. This implies to complement and adjust the existent, often normative instruments for spatial development. The role of the civil society remains often unclear in this context, however the wish for a more active co-operation between the public sector and the civil society in these processes is noticeable on both sides. In order to achieve more sustainable development goals, attempts are made by the public administration to incorporate the various use-oriented interests of the civil society in the planning and decision-making processes, particularly because civil society actors increasingly insist on their integration into the development processes. With so-called "trilateral" methods (Sinning, 1995; Fuchs, Fürst, Rohrzäcker, 2002) it is intended to achieve a greater involvement between different public sector-, private sector- and civil society -actors.

In this context, the approach of co-production, which constitutes the mutual relationship

between the state, the private sector and civil society, is currently increasingly discussed again. According to Ostrom (1996), the concept of "co-production" was developed in the late 1970s to reduce government spending into public services. Co-production key assumptions fit thus comfortably in the performance side of the "governance equation" identified by Harpham and Boateng (1997), where citizens are considered a fundamental stakeholder who can mobilise resources for service provisions.

Literature on the co-production of public services has been experiencing an important revival in the last few years and scholars are increasingly investigating the many forms co-production can assume and the numerous facets it can display. Coproduction may be the initiative of citizens or governments (Jakobsen, 2012); include third sector, public and for-profit organisations (Verschuere et al., 2012); be disaggregated into co-planning, co-design, co-managing (Bovaird, Leoffler, 2012); focus on consumer coproduction, participative coproduction, enhanced coproduction (Osborne, Strokosh, 2013), or collective coproduction (Bovaird et al. 2015). In particular a strengthening of co-productive practices has increasingly taken place as a form of reaction to the global crisis in urban spaces. This trend depends on several factors, which involve socio-economic, political-institutional and cultural elements. In a new context of inequality, where a growing number of citizens is deprived of basic rights, the creation of solidarity networks in accessing housing and services and the development of mutualism and informal institution are an alternative to the crisis of the welfare State and to the incapacity of public institutions in responding to the 'right to the city' in several countries in Europe (Secchi, 2013). The power, authority and control of resources is shared between the state and groups of citizens in a way that can entail interdependent and ambiguous relationships as well as blurred boundaries between the public and the private spheres (McGranahan, 2013; McMillan et al., 2014). "Institutionalised co-production" concentrates thus on new forms of democratic governance and shared decision-making in which power, authority and control are redistributed between government agencies and citizens. It can clearly represent a tool not only to effectively improve service access but also to build up an active and responsible form of citizenship. This can not only be a tool to provide access to services in an effective way, but also for the formation of an active and responsible civil society.

However the extend and scope of these practices seem to correlate directly to the development perspectives the private sector sees for certain areas and plots. In the context of return-oriented developments a power asymmetry can be generally stated in favor of private sector actors that have an adverse effect in particular for the civil society in terms of opportunities to participate and possible outcomes since for the stabilization and development of stagnant areas participation is often sought or even demanded (Sinning, 2001; Heart, Jacob, Pauly, 2005; Langhagen - Rohrbach 2010). Thus many complex and in terms of cooperation and influence often asymmetric interactions derive from the relationship between the private sector, public sector and civil society, depending on the respective development context, stakeholders and formulated objectives resulting. Consequently, it is not clear what impact this procedure actually has on the development of urban spaces.

2.1. Co-operative practices - The case of the former airport Tempelhof in Berlin

Nevertheless certain strategies have been established and tested between the city, private sector and civil society that show possible approaches for mutual benefits and that pick up on the current practices of sharing and swapping within urban actions. In this context it remains very important to clarify the role each party plays. On the one hand the municipalities show uncertainty with respect to the new planning tasks, as these are different from the well-known approaches to planning, design methods and tools. On the

other hand, the uncertainty for civil society actors remains a major challenge with regard to their own security within the project framework and their possible benefit especially because of the often rather limited perspectives in terms of economic return, options for ownership or even the limitation of time for the occupation and use of buildings or plots (in the cases of temporary uses). In this regard it is important to understand who is legitimized in urban development processes and how “spatial demands” are strategically organised and distributed, especially if the public sector is “only” acting as a facilitator or initiator.

Based on the on-going research on new formats of production, transformation and appropriation of urban spaces in urban development from the perspective of the “ephemeral” (in terms of improvised, self-initiated and volatile projects) we have deepened our understanding of the patterns of current spatial practices and the actions of the involved stakeholders. During the research on the re-uses of the former airfield Tempelhof in Berlin (a vacant inner-city airport) it became apparent how comprehensive principles of temporary projects and civil society actions are coming into play for the reinterpretation of the space and formation of its identity.

The former airfield Tempelhof, as one of the most famous examples in Berlin, challenges the concept of “co-production” and societal par-share on many levels. Tempelhof, an area of 386-hectares is currently one of the largest open public spaces and thus could be seen as one of the biggest urban commons in Berlin. Since 1st September 2009, the State of Berlin is the landowner of the site, its possible re-use has been a public and controversially discussed issue since long before the closure of the airport in 2008. The whole process of re-occupying this vacant area and the discussion on its future has always been highly politicized and all parties involved claimed to be advocating for what is best for the common interest of Berlin’s citizens. In this regard the concept of a “common interest” seems not sufficient to cover the diverse opinions on the priorities in terms of creating urban commons in Berlin. The concept of the commons can be summarized as the attempt to self organize, govern and design the social and physical environment to sustainably satisfy both, individual and common needs. Processes are usually bottom-up organized and are targeted at the development of individual and societal values and norms Dellenbaugh et al. 2015). The former airfield Tempelhof offers many opportunities for the realization of common practices: For one, its value as an open space, with the former runways and service streets without any specific meaning, opens space for all kinds of leisure-activities that can usually not be exercised in a dense inner-city area. Secondly the large free area plays an important role for the city climate and as a natural resource. At the same time the area represents one of the largest remaining inner-city resources for the realization of newly built affordable housing. Additionally investors were keen to develop luxury housing on this rare exclusively central area. This would have created an opportunity for the state of Berlin to receive badly needed funding to reinvest in social infrastructure and affordable housing elsewhere. Along these lines of argumentation a citywide dispute developed between those in favor of housing and those who did argue against it. Ever since the Berlin Senate has been under extreme pressure to develop the area and while the planning process was initiated with the known instruments of classical master planning the Senate of Berlin established a second path tailored for the direct involvement of the citizens and helping to “re-brand” the former airport.

2.2. Connectivity

While the former airfield was opened by the Berlin Senate to the public for leisure and recreational activities in 2010, the master plan developed by the Senate’s Department for Urban Development promoted the idea to create thematic development sections at various

edges forming a “donut” surrounding the centre of the former airfield, a 250-hectare open space, which should remain a public site and would be developed into a park. In the meantime the privately operated subsidiary Tempelhof AG was founded, which in turn provided space for the so-called pioneer usages. They provide a platform for small-scale, self-organized and common interest oriented projects by civil society actors. The pioneering uses combine a range of projects between leisure and cultural uses, which contribute significantly to the activation of the large open space and constitute a form of “communing”. By outsourcing the establishment, management and completion of these projects, most responsibility is transferred from the public to the private sector that remains only partly in municipal hands. At the same time the projects help the Senate of Berlin to market and brand the area, raising its value.

But the discrepancy in-between the space produced by the different pioneer uses and the envisaged plans for the transformation make the misguided co-operation and the growing gap between todays practiced reality and the master plan very apparent. The Tempelhof AG activated citizens and thus brought new actors to the table that - once having started to inhabit the area, promoted other interests, concerns and claims and gained attention through their presence on the field and media. The case shows how easily citizens were drawn into a situation that is seemingly helping them realize common and individual interests but never gained any influence or say concerning the master planning, instead this privately operated “detour” was strictly kept apart from the decision-making. This set up was only challenged by the referendum in 2014. In 2011 a citizens' initiative was founded which started to actively promote the idea to keep the area open as it is, and therefore initiated a referendum in 2014. Citizens of the neighbouring areas voted to keep the area as 100% open space. With this referendum the plans of the Senate to develop the thematic cluster and the park become redundant, however also any plans for the construction of affordable housing on the fringes of the field had been abandoned for the time being.

2.3. Fragmentation

This case exemplifies the delicate relationship between a city and its citizens. The Berlin Senate had from the beginning of the opening “allowed” that areas of the airfield be used for temporary and self-initiated projects. Citizens could apply with their various initiatives and projects (commercial and non-profit) for funding and realization (e.g. urban gardening projects, businesses for renting kite and surf material). They were deliberately thought of as a strategic tool for the development of the space. This points out the dilemma: Common Goods can be understood as social practice because their existence as a good is directly tied to the society. They are only kept alive and accessible through social practice (vgl. Meretz in: Helfrich 2012). In order to preserve the transformation of the former airport into a commonly shared space, future plans need to respect the social practice and need to work with the values and norms established through this process. The procedure at the airfield Tempelhof is representative for the emerging trend of local politics to involve citizen in neighbourhood developments to secure and design vacant spaces in varies German cities. In this context, such projects are models, promoting – temporarily - alternative socio-spatial concepts and the strengthening of community based activities through a low-threshold access to self-help, or voluntary and temporary participation in social initiatives.

In fact our research shows that particular regulations or conditions are missing, which had previously secured the long-term economic and social involvement of citizens who have assumed responsibility for the development of urban space as actors. However the strategic positioning of pioneering uses into the project development by the city of Berlin, shows that apparently such projects can be very well integrated into a formalised framework. In

the case of the former airfield Tempelhof its fame and popularity ultimately contributed to and initiated directly the processes of gentrification of its adjacent districts, simultaneously initiating a displacement of lower income residents. The fact that construction on the area was prevented by a plebiscite despite the impetus to realize affordable housing shows the increasing distrust of parts of the citizenry in its government to put their interests first against the determined "Verwertungslogik" (market-oriented logic of exploitation). What will happen with the future of the former airfield Tempelhof remains open and will certainly be re-negotiated. Hence in terms of socio-spatial results of these new developments, they are not sufficiently clear and are still subject to various researches.

3. CONCLUSION: THE INNOVATIVE POWER OF COLLABORATIVE URBAN DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

The research shows that dedicated regulations or conditions structuring the distribution of resources, and long-term economic and social safeguards are currently missing. The growing number and diversity of stakeholders requires direct and open communication and the inclusion of various levels of knowledge. Hence transparency and accountability in planning processes is crucial to weight legitimacy claims, responsibilities and commitment within the projects and to overcome conflicts so that external demand and pressure does not immediately endanger the entire collaboration.

From the research it became clear that there are no blanket solutions and building a good relationship of trust between city, citizens and planners can only be achieved with time. Every case is an individual case, the confidence in a successful cooperation is established between the project participants, and can hardly be transmitted to the responsible institutions. In this respect projects are largely determined by the involved persons, who's presence or absence is key for the continuity in the cooperation. Social and spatial effects of these processes are therefore neither predictable nor projectable. As mentioned in the previous example there are already certain strategies in place between the city, the private sector and civil society that show possible approaches of mutual benefit to all, but the example also highlight the challenges. The innovative potential can be found in the large number of new players, the personal commitments, the reduced financial risk for the city, as well as the opportunity to try out new ideas and the fact that these spatial practices opposes an understanding of urban development as an issue that can only be targeted by the planning discipline.

3.1. Move beyond existing debates and knowledge production in urban theory

This paper and the practices at the former airfield Tempelhof, which stands as an example for common approaches to urban re-development project illustrate very radical that for moving beyond and deepen existing debates in urban theory, disciplinary boundaries need to be challenged. In particular when it comes to the understanding of the contribution and potentials, but also the limitations and risks social movements and citizen participation bear in urban development. Overall, a shift in the importance of disciplinary knowledge can be recognized, thereby unlocking the locally produced knowledge in the development of projects gains importance and becomes a new challenge. Against this background the search for ways to retrieve the locally produced knowledge begins. The professional interest addresses the possibilities of the resulting development and transformation of space and the emerging local expertise which is produced in the process of communication in-between the project participants, thus the kind knowledge that derives from "adaptation" and "learning experience". In this context our research aims to understand the production of knowledge and thus the particular role cooperative projects (may) play in

urban development. It aims to convey what differences exist between various forms of cooperation regarding the interdependence between actors as well as the application of different cooperation models. The research is particularly interested in the effects on the envisioned social-spatial inclusiveness, the forms of knowledge produced and the methods of communication. Citizens understand best their neighbourhood and are willing to invest time and money, however they are rarely included in higher-level decision-making structures. While some projects might improve the situation locally, offers oriented toward the ‘common good’ of the entire community remain scarce. It is therefore important to understand who can actively take part in the development processes, and who is excluded to apprehend the effects on the envisioned social-spatial development in terms of the inclusiveness in these developments:

3.2. Informing practice through theoretical discussion as a vice-versa approach

In the attempt of providing meaningful knowledge for urban struggles and transformations this paper shows that we need to move beyond buzz-words and assumed best-practices. Since from the research it became clear that strong citizen involvement in collaborative development offers a promising approach for the conversion of areas that had previously accommodated military, industry or infrastructural projects. The implementation of projects through increased civic engagement (see. Raumpioniere) support and ensure certain services such as to secure and preserve buildings, to re-use buildings and to ensure profitability (vgl. Goderbauer). Municipalities benefit from the practices of self-organised citizens in urban development and use these projects as development engines, either through active support or self-initiation. Especially the logic of the ephemeral nourishes particularly the hope of local governments that target-oriented spatial planning can be enriched by temporary elements despite scarce resources and limited time. Through the unexpected and unplanned arises spatial innovation, which might lead to new ideas that produce a higher quality, more sustainable and/or local identity. The ephemeral also holds the promise to slow down the planning process and to resist – at least for some time – the exploitation logics of the market in order to give the project time and freedom toward their development for adjustment, change or appropriation. The research shows that a temporary involvement of civil society in urban development processes can positively influence the development of neighbourhoods. They promote heterogeneity in the project framework and allow different actors to be part of the project developments - at least temporarily - to assume responsibility for the development of urban space. The knowledge of their own living environment is an important stimulus for the development of the projects. Involved citizens generate and share knowledge and resources, and qualify themselves through further accumulated experiences in such projects.

However the research also clearly shows that these projects are in its first phases successful and further research needs to inform theory and knowledge creation since these projects as the research shows are mostly limited to the specific single area and are rarely a refurbishment that can be extended to the entire neighbourhood. Although the civil society actors may provide key socio-spatial impulses; with the increasing professionalisation of their work, they are more likely to become entrepreneurs in their own quarters. Hence it raises the question of how the development of urban spaces from the perspective of the various singular interests, can become a higher-level impact on the development of overarching visions in urban development.

Hence, it is important to clarify if these developments are only operational actions or really cooperative models. In this light the question arises what collective civil society action actually means, and how such structures can ensure public welfare-oriented interests, as well as what it means for long term contributions.

From these observations we can firstly draw the conclusion that to inform from the theoretical discussions practice it is not a one-way than rather a vice-verse action which contains several challenges -at least for urban planning and development- such as:

- (1) When traditional planning tasks are made redundant, planners need to adapt to current changes in urban development, actual in-situ knowledge on the motives and backgrounds of these changes is often missing (e.g. the acknowledgement of citizens' knowledge as expert knowledge);
- (2) Today, planners have a wide range of tools to work with actors from the private sector, however they have little knowledge or fewer methods concerning cooperative planning practice with civil society. This thus turns planners and planning into a purely regulatory task, lacking the capacity to grasp urgent societal problems and dynamics. (e.g. participatory budgeting or division of planning responsibility);
- (3) Little knowledge allowing generalisation exists. Experiences from specific neighbourhoods are only partially transmittable to other cases. The contribution of the civil actors contributes significantly to the change in the knowledge pool and the competency models in urban development projects. The research shows that this knowledge is produced for individual situations and through a wide network of actors, and contributes to specific spatial and functional solutions for the neighbourhood development.
- (4) This spatial practice breaks the understanding of planning as a discipline rooted by an influence on the living environment, and a shift can be observed in the importance of knowledge. Therefore unlocking the locally produced knowledge is gaining in importance, and is becoming a new challenge in project development.

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