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Self-organised urban space without profit: Four Examples in Berlin

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The following article explores the interdependency between urban crisis as a pre-condition for self-organised responses to it and self-organised projects that try to provide solutions for problems caused by the respective crisis. Berlin is taken as specific field of investigation as self-organisation is very much linked to its recent history and it therefore seems to be a very relevant case for this topic. The example of the International Building Exhibition 1984/1987 in Berlin (IBA 84/87) is studied as a historic reference to provide a framework for comparing more recent processes with a long-term experience since the late 1980'. Four recent examples of self-organised projects that aim to provide spaces without profit are presented with the focus on their creation processes. The article further explores the specific relationship between Berlins' actual housing crisis and various forms of self-organised reactions to it. Finally, the research tries to explore possible impacts these projects might have on formal local planning structures in a long-term perspective.

Keywords: Berlin, production of space, self-organisation, real estate, housing

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Introduction

Berlin has a very strong history of self-organised and self-initiated projects that actively produce urban space without the aim of maximizing personal profit. Throughout this paper we will refer to such projects as "self-organised projects". Berlin is an interesting case in this regard as several examples of citizen engagement exercises have impacted urban planning processes in the city.

The basis of this research is the hypothesis that crises often provoke self-organised responses providing individual solutions, which can influence local urban planning when they address societal questions with a broader relevance. Such processes can be observed in historic examples such as the squatting movement in the late 1970's and early 1980's in West- Berlin, which was a response to the lack of housing corresponding to an increasing demand for individualized ways of living. The squatter movement addressed the question of a renaissance of the urban centre that was beginning at that time and could therefore develop an important impact on the formal planning structures in Berlin. This impact can be observed in the participatory approaches to urban renewal implemented during the International Building Exhibition 1984/1987 in Berlin (IBA 84/87), which still continue to have an impact today. What can we learn from a precise look at what the IBA 84/87 achieved in the 1980' in West Berlin? On the one hand, it seems astonishing how relevant the goals and demands formulated about 30 years ago still are today. It seems that the search for a just urban environment, the demand for a more active citizen participation and the call for a mix of uses enabling a mix of inhabitants are as important today as they were 30 years ago. If this is true we also have to admit that the goal of the IBA to continue its project and continue to follow its goals for urban renewal was not as successful as its realised projects. Critics call it a time of exception and experiment after that everything went back to business as usual. What can be said is that the radical movement of urban activists involved in the squatting of houses during the 1980's was quite de-radicalised and de-politicised as their actors were busy with the maintenance and organisation of their own projects. At the same time, many actors previously involved in completed projects have been able to test ideas and gain knowledge that still informs new projects to this day. Especially the implicitness of participation in actual urban development projects implemented by local administrations goes back to the IBA experience. Self-organising initiatives that provoke more citizen engagement is another link to the historic example of the IBA to the cases presented in this paper.

Analysis

Self-organisation as reaction to crisis situations can provide innovative directions for long-term solutions because they can act and think outside of existing ways of doing or thinking, they can react fast, adapt rapidly and therefore provide a high degree of flexibility. All those attributes are core qualities in the discourse of sustainable urbanism today and most of contemporary integrated urban development plans try to use them on their way towards a lively urban future for all citizens. The present research focuses on the investigation of these processes and their various spatial forms in the current urban situation in Berlin via four examples that are representative of four basic types of organisational structures of self-organised projects:

- Protest movements against investor driven urban development projects
- Temporary users active in inner city areas as pillars of non-commercial urban space
- Spatial appropriations of existing buildings to provide affordable space in a long-term perspective

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- Spatial entrepreneurs creating experimental forms of productions of urban space.

In this paper, these four types are illustrated by four different examples, which exemplify these types of actors in Berlin's urban development today. The examples have been selected as they are part of an ongoing investigation throughout a series of interviews from 2011 till today and therefore data from the last years is available. The four categories are not to be understood to be exclusive but they cover a broad field of possible action. They include a wide range of aspects such as political engagement, bottom-up opposition to formal planning, top-down projects, self-organised development of new housing projects following a set of ambitious social goals set up by the actors themselves, leading to the activation and appropriation of built up or vacant places. They all act on different time frames in order to realize projects that claim to create an added value for the overall urban society. All four examples are from the same period of time and therefore also share the same socio-cultural background of Berlin after the 2000'.

The main aim of this paper is to define today's urban crisis provoked by neoliberal urbanism, to analyse contemporary reactions to this crisis, and the impact they develop on urban planning in Berlin today. This cross view tries to link theory and practical examples in the field of contemporary urbanism in order to explore what roles they might have for each other. Further major issues in which the connection to the overall topic of the conference seems evident are the debate about shifting planning processes, the integration of participatory approaches in urban planning and urban transformation, the questioning of the role of the public sector in urban development and its relation to private actors and finally the investigation of the strength or even the relevance of bottom-up initiatives in a rapid changing urban environment.

Methodically the historic example of the IBA 84/87 serves as an introduction to the topic and the relationship between crisis and self-organisation in the Berlin case. It also introduces the recent four examples, all of which can be understood as reactions to the situation in Berlin after the early 2000'. Their common contextual background is what links them together. The selected examples are representative of the four basic types mentioned above and data was available for them and a series of interviews has been conducted with actors directly involved in the projects since 2011. Besides the literature review and data analysis, these interviews are the most important method applied in the present research. Conclusions out of the four examples as well as to their reflexion in relation to the IBA experience will be shown at the end of the paper.

IBA 84/87 in Berlin

In the late 1970' and early 1980' Berlin was not just politically a quite contradictory place but also regarding its relations between housing provision, population development and lifestyle. There was massive production of subsidised housing in standardised mass-housing complexes in peripheral areas of the city in both parts – East and West Berlin. But at the same time there was also a housing shortage in the inner-city districts of West Berlin. This was mainly due to a high degree of vacancies linked to increasing speculation with real estate at the same time. Speculation with real estate was partly motivated by tax advantages for West-German citizens investing in Berlin in order to increase money flowing in the island city of the West in the former GDR (East-Germany). Furthermore, there was a large part of a political left oriented population in West Berlin that was developing alternative lifestyles, promoting a renaissance of the inner city urban districts and seeking increasing individualism which was increasingly expressed by alternative modes of living and practicing the city.

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Influenced by all of these factors, the housing market in West Berlin at that time created a complex situation in which a growing amount of people could not find what they were looking for, a massive housing production that could not fill that gap and a lot of vacant buildings in the inner-city districts.

Within this context, the population faced a serious problem, and there was no political will in sight to find a solution for them. Thus, citizens started to help and organise themselves. Squatting of houses[9] and occupying of space were at the core of these actions which commenced in order to realise their ideas of how to live in their city. Occupying buildings that have not been renovated since the Second World War was also a challenge for the actors of that movement, because it required certain know-how to repair these apartments and houses at least to the point that it was possible to inhabit them. This process fostered self-organisation by the people and thereby created a common knowledge and a growing ability to organise, repair and resist authorities that wanted to push the squatters out at first. The common interest and an agreement on the renouncement of economic interests between the members of the squatting movement created an atmosphere of solidarity as well as an increasing awareness for urban issues and a growing political influence. This movement of squatters was uncomfortable for the politics at that time, because it brought deeper societal problems and questions to the surface not only by its physical presence in urban space but also in the political dimension it took by creating a discourse around its goals and claims based on direct democracy and citizen participation.

During the same period, it was not just the question of appropriate housing for new lifestyles which became more and more important, but also the paradigms of classical modern urbanism started to be increasingly questioned by society in general and also by experts and practitioners within the planning disciplines. The idea of car-based transportation and suburbanization as well as the radical break with the classical urban form of a clear division between private and public space that was promoted by modern urban planning started to be strongly opposed. Authors such as Alexander Mitscherlich (Mitscherlich, 1965) in Germany or Jane Jacobs (Jacobs, 1961) internationally, were relevant voices for such critical positions towards modern urbanism since the 1960'. With the rise of post-modernism, the historic city centres with an urban life created by a heterogeneous mix of uses had a remarkable renaissance. In this general atmosphere started West Berlin's project for an "International Building Exhibition – IBA" in the late 1970'. It was decided that the IBA would have two directors and two main directions, one, "IBA NEU", dealing with new constructions and the so called "critical reconstruction" with Josef Paul as director and the other, "IBA ALT", dealing with rehabilitation and renovation of the existing building stocks and the so called "careful urban renewal" with Hardt-Waltherr Hämer as director. As main site of intervention for the second part of the IBA 84/87, which should be realized for the cities 750th anniversary in 1987, the district of Kreuzberg was chosen.[10] Kreuzberg was also the place of many occupied houses at that time, so squatters and planners had to deal with each other, as it was also defined in the 12 principles for careful urban renewal that were written as guidelines for the urban transformation process which took place over the years in the framework of the IBA (Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen (ed.), 1991).

12 principles for careful urban renewal[11]:

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[9] On the following website all occupied buildings in Berlin, including their brief histories as well as their evolutions over time are documented and well represented on the basis of an interactive map: http://berlin-besetzt.de

[10] Several maps of the exact sites of intervention within the IBA and a more detailed history about it in general and its various projects can be found in the following study published by Berlins senate department for urban planning: http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/staedtebau/baukultur/iba/download/IBA87_Endbericht_Karte.pdf

[11] Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen (ed.), 1991, translated by the authors

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1. The renewal must be planed and realized with preservation of substance with the actual residents, businessman and craftsman.
2. Planners should agree with residents, businessman and craftsman on the goals of the renewal measures. Technical and social planning should go hand in hand.
3. The particularities of Kreuzberg should be preserved and trust and confidence must be raised in the threatened neighbourhoods. Substance threatening damages on houses have to be immediately repaired.
4. Careful changes in floor plans should enable new forms of living.
5. The renewal of apartments and houses should happen in phases and be completed gradually.
6. The quality of the built environment should be improved by reducing demolitions, plantations in the courtyards and the design of facades.
7. Public facilities as well as streets, squares and green areas must be renewed and supplemented according to actual needs.
8. Right to participation as well as material rights of all concerned persons must be arranged during social planning.
9. Decisions on urban renewal must be found in an open process and if possible discussed on site. The representatives of concerned people have to be strengthened.
10. Urban renewal that generates trust must be based on a fixed financial support. It must be possible to spend the money fast and according to the specific situation.
11. New forms of organizing institutions have to be developed. Fiduciary tasks of renovation and construction tasks should be separated.
12. The urban renewal following those principles must be continued after the time of the IBA.

Following those principles, the process of urban renewal started to involve local residents, businessmen as well as craftsmen. In the case of squatted houses their inhabitants were considered as affected residents and treated as such, which made them active actors of this process. Within this process-oriented approach to urban renewal around 6.000 flats could be renovated until the completion of the IBA in 1987. Various examples of projects realized during that period of time, such as Admiralstraße, Wohnregal, among others were still inhabited by the inhabitants from the time of the IBA 20 years later which can be understood as a success of these projects (Deutsches Institut für Stadtbaukunst, 2012). The IBA was in the comfortable situation to have plenty of public money to invest in projects conducted under its direction, nevertheless new models of financing housing accessible to less fortunate inhabitants were developed. Especially the fact that people could pay their necessary personal share in the financing of a project not just by money but also through their time in form of work was an experiment tested by the IBA, the so called "Muskelhypotheken", which means credits for muscles. Besides the immediate financing of the project costs a strong focus was put on the long-term evolution of the projects and the legal structures that would ensure them. In the publication "25 Jahre Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin" (Bodenschatz, Harald; Lumpugnani, Vittorio Magnago; Sonne, Wolfgang; Deutsches Institut für Stadtbaukunst (Ed.), 2012) many authors such as Harald Bodenschatz or Cordelia Pollina show throughout several examples that the measures taken at that time can be seen as right and appropriate as many of the projects still follow their original goals today.

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Today and possible futures

Today, Berlin is a vibrant city and as such a magnet for many people. Its image as a hub for creative industries and at the same time an affordable city with a high quality of life make it even more attractive for people from a globalized creative class to move there. From the early 2000' on, Berlins population grew constantly[12], but its housing production didn't manage to follow this dynamic fast enough. This was mainly because it was still dealing with the question of what to do with a large percentage of vacancy in the housing-stock which has been a big issue in the late 1990's and early 2000's. As many of the people coming to Berlin are highly educated and working in the city or internationally, they enter the housing market as very dynamic actors that can afford rents or real-estate prices higher than large parts of the local population. This situation led to severe Gentrification processes in inner city areas over the past years and as a consequence to the expulsion of vulnerable populations from the city centre as well as an increase of rents and real-estate prices all over the city. The development of rents in Berlin is observed and statistically treated by the department of urban planning and yearly published in the Berliner Mietspiegel[13]. Besides a growing population and an associated shift in the relation between offer and demand on the local housing market, international investment in real-estate is increasing every year in Berlin. Especially after the economic crisis at the stock market in 2008 a boom of investment in real estate could be recognised, showing clearly how tightly globalized economics and urban development are linked and have a strong impact on the social conditions in our cities. The dominance of economics in this interdependency is pushed to an extreme by neoliberal policies that often seem to be an unquestioned 'common sense' leading to an increase of social differences and loss of diversity in our cities (Schwarz, 2009). It's a strange phenomenon that in the beginning of the 21st century we live in a time where there is more wealth then ever in Europe and still there is a clear presence of an urban crisis nourished by increasing social inequalities (Piketty, 2014).

Looking at four projects in Berlin it is important to mention that they did not pass unseen by the city's urban planners and first steps to find new ways to activate the potential of self-organised citizen engagement for the production of active urban places can be observed. The already enduring discussion about the procedures of selling city-owned real estate led to the creation of the "Runder Tisch zur Neuausrichtung der Berliner Liegenschaftspolitik"[14] - a round table to re-define the direction of public real estate politics in Berlin, that brings together experts, politicians and activists to debate actual real estate questions as well as strategic developments. Further first attempts of new formats of selling procedures, as for example the so called "Konzeptverfahren" have been carried out in recent years. The "Konzeptverfahren" – the concept based procedures – is a tool of the public administrations to sell land not based on the principle of the best price offered but on a combination of the concept proposed by future buyers and the land price they offer. Further urban development goals can be demanded and agreed on in the contracts when the land is sold later on in the procedure. This procedure was tested on several pilot projects and could be used on a bigger scale over the next years, but by now it is not very clear if a systematic use of the procedure is planned by the local administrations or postulated by local politics. Recent

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[12] All statistical data over the last years concerning population development as well as housing units realised and building permits approved can be found at: https://www.statistik-berlin-brandenburg.de

[13] More information about the Mietspiegel as well as all the last editions can be found at the following website: http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/wohnen/mietspiegel/

[14] The meetings of the "Runder Tisch zur Neuausrichtung der Berliner Liegenschaftspolitik" are open to the public and protocols of the past meetings can be found on the website of one of the founding initiatives: http://stadt-neudenken.tumblr.com/Runder%20Tisch

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cases have been for example the former "Blumengroßmarkt" where innovative projects by local architects such as FRIZZ:23 by deadline architects or the "Integratives Bauprojekt am ehemaligen Blumengrossmarkt" by ifau + Heide und von Beckerath architects are under construction at the moment, or the site in "Ritterstraße 50", where the co-housing project with the same name by ifau + Jesko Fezer + Heide und von Beckerath architects has already been realized in 2011 and was successful, or soon to come for the "Schöneberger Linse" where such a procedure is running at the moment and should have been decided in 2017[15]. In 2015 even a new funding scheme for "experimental housing"[16] was announced and carried out with the result of nine awarded projects that were selected to receive funding of in total about 30 Mio € for their processes of implementation. The procedure was carried out as an open competition addressing teams of architects cooperating together with land owners asking them to submit proposals for experimental and innovative housing concepts for the sites they already owned. The projects should be able to enter construction phase in 2017 and provide innovations for the questions of housing and urban development in Berlin. All these attempts, ideas and experiments can be seen as first steps towards more inclusive strategies of an active co-production of the urban environment. These projects can be understood as prototypes of such new attempts to co-produce our cities and rethink the way we use them.

Protest movements against investor driven urban development projects | Example: 100% Tempelhofer Feld e.V.

The first example is the former airport of Tempelhof in Berlin, not only a huge field of vacant inner-city land after the closure of the airport in 2008, but also a symbol of freedom and the very particular history of West Berlin[17]. Right from the end of its use as an airport the so-called "Tempelhofer Feld", the field of Tempelhof, was claimed by Berlin's citizens as a public space and therefore became a crucial space for urban development over the last years. After a very short time the public call to open the airfield as an urban green space accessible for everybody gained political influence. It rapidly became a major green space for the city, preserving its special and unique atmosphere of a converted airport. In parallel to the opening, the Senate of Berlin was working on urban development plans for the fringes of the airfield in order to build housing and a big park. The plans to develop the recently claimed space were not supported by the activists dealing with the Tempelhofer Feld or indeed the simultaneously active 'Raumpioniere' spatial pioneers. The Senate had launched a procedure that allowed people to get access to a plot of land on the airfield in order to set up a temporary project that was selected in a two-phase procedure to be realized for 3 years. In a very short time especially the community garden project "Allmende Kontor" was very successful and has today more that 1.000 people active creating a multicultural non-profit project providing a publicly accessible and lively place. An initiative of urban activists, urban planners and many others formed in order to keep the airfield an un-built open space for

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[15] The final decission in the procedure of Schöneberger Linse has been announced after this article was written.

[16] More information about the funding scheme in general and the procedure carried out in 2015 can be found on the website of Berlins senate department for urban planning:
http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/aktuell/wettbewerbe/ausschreibungen/siwa/ and further information concerning the awarded projects can be downloaded at the following link:
http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/aktuell/pressebox/archiv_volltext.shtml?arch_1511/nachricht5845.html

[17] West Berlin was isolated in the former GDR with East Berlin as its capital and had to be not only financially subsidised by the rest of West Germany, but also had to be provided with food and all goods for daily life and therefore survival through the so called air bridge for almost a year in 1948/1949, meaning that that almost constantly airplanes were landing at Tempelhof Airport making it a symbol for survival, resistance and freedom for the local population.

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everybody. Under the slogan "100% Tempelhofer Feld"[18] they started a campaign against the Senates plans for a classical master planned urban development on the airfield. What seemed a small group of leftist activists in the beginning, gained much more support in their campaign than anybody expected in the beginning. Due to this broad resonance among the population the initiative achieved support for a referendum in Berlin which would pose the question of whether there should be any construction on the airfield or not. To achieve a city-wide referendum was already a remarkable success for "100% Tempelhofer Feld", but at that time the question had already reached everybody in Berlin and it was embedded in a broader discussion about who would decide about future urban developments, what role citizen participation would play in it and what means would stop Gentrification in the city in order to keep its vibrant mix of populations alive. The general public in Berlin is very sensitive to issues dealing with urban development and especially with urban renewal in existing neighbourhoods as it had to face severe changes and saw several paradigms of urban planning fail with their ambitions to shape the city according to their new ideas, such as the car-friendly city. A lot of these transformations lead to expulsions of original populations and since it became a political agenda to use urban upgrading as a tool to advance urban transformation or Gentrification – processes which are very well documented concerning Berlin by the social scientist Andrej Holm[19] who is researching at Humboldt University Berlin. After some months of public debate the referendum was clearly won by 100% Tempelhofer Feld and the Senate of Berlin had to stop its plans for any urban development on the former airfield. The initiative viewed this result as a huge success not only for them but, also for all citizens and as a new symbol for the power that citizen engagement can develop when it claims an interest for everybody.

In the context of the lack of several thousand housing units, the Senates proposal to build new housing on the airfield might have been expected to be very well accepted by a local population. However, the way in which politics dealt with the city owned land over the last decade and the lack of trust in the real estate market stimulated people to fight the official proposal. The disappointment of the local population about the way their city government ruled over public space and the way they tried to provide adequate housing to the population were so strong that it could gather such a large majority of people in the city and by that became a symbol for the power of the inhabitants in the transformation of their city in Berlin.

Temporary users active in inner city areas as pillars of non-commercial urban space | Example: Prinzessinnengärten gGmbh

The second example is a bit further north in Berlin, the Prinzessinnengärten[20] is a community garden project in the heart of Kreuzberg, close to the former Berlin Wall. What started 2009 with a short-term rental contract for a vacant plot of land as an experiment of the association "Nomadisch Grün e.V.", nomadic green, founded by Robert Shaw and Marco Clausen soon became a success story, the so called Prinzessinnengärten. The project is based in an inner-city area with a high diversity concerning its population and commercial structures and the neighbourhood already started to encounter Gentrification when the project started. Right from the beginning, it was a goal of the project not to focus primarily on the production of food but to create an active non-commercial community space for the neighbourhood and the whole city that would of course be oriented towards questions of urban gardening, food production, sustainability and urban development. The Prinzessinnengärten soon became a

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[18] More information about the initiative can be found on their website: http://www.thf100.de/start.html

[19] More information about Andrej Holms studies can be found at his blog on Gentrification issues in Berlin: https://gentrificationblog.wordpress.com.

[20] More information about the project can be found on their website: http://prinzessinnengarten.net

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meeting place for all kinds of people in the city and by its well working network also a self-declared active agent in the discourse about user-based and bottom-up urbanism in Berlin. Over the years the organizational structures of the projects also evolved and at a certain point the association was transformed into a non-profit making limited company in order to be able to manage the growing size of the Prinzessinnengärten. Besides all the events that take place at the garden, its initiators try to communicate the idea of the project and the issues linked at many different occasions in the field of urban development. These networking activities are essential, as the long-term potential of the project is not assured. The lease contract for the plot of land is re-negotiated every year, meaning it is a permanent threat to the existence of the project, thus making it very sensitive to changes in the area. As the neighbourhood around goes through a rapid urban transformation process linked to increasing land prices, the Prinzessinnengärten understand themselves more and more as active actors against Gentrification, keeping up their ambition to provide a publicly accessible and non-commercial urban space for everybody.

The upscaling of existing neighbourhoods such as Kreuzberg is a permanent threat to non-commercial activities and spaces in Berlin as many of them such as the Prinzessinnengärten only dispose of short term rental contracts, which make them very vulnerable actors. The public sphere they create around them is not only important for their daily activities but also a tool to justify their relevance for a neighbourhood to have a stronger position in order to be able to stay and maintain the space they provide for the neighbourhood.

Spatial appropriations of existing buildings to provide affordable space in a long-term perspective | Example: ExRotaPrint gGmbH

The third example is in the district of Wedding in the north of Berlin, a multi-ethnical working-class neighbourhood in the former West Berlin. The urban structure dates from various times of Berlins agitating urban history over the last 150 years. While in large parts of Wedding the so called "Flächensanierung", the demolition and reconstruction of whole neighbourhoods in the 1960', 1970' and early 1980' took place, in some other parts a big housing stock from the period before the First World War was conserved. At that moment, urban planners perceived the housing stock from the 19th century as a problem to solve and their solution was to tear down the old and not renovated buildings in order to be able to build up new neighbourhoods following the ideals of a modern city based on the idea to be as car-friendly as possible. In this area, the former printing company RotaPrint is located, which was established in 1904 and was, with more than 1.000 employees during its best times, one of the biggest companies in Wedding but went bankrupt in 1989. In 1991 the administrative buildings from the 1950' were declared protected monuments. The district that had become the new owner was renting spaces in the former factory complex on a temporary basis to artists and other temporary users till the "Liegenschaftsfond Berlin"[21], the cities real-estate managing company, became the new owner and got the order to sell the complex in 2001. This meant a potential threat of expulsion for all the renters at that time and led to a long process of self-organization and self-initiative organised by the artists Les Schliesser and Daniela Brahms both artists and renters in the building. After more than two years of negotiations they could set up the very particular and complex structure of the "ExRotaPrint"[22], which is based on the fact that two foundations (Trias and Edith Marion) with social guidelines bought the land and gave the ExRotaPrint gGmbH, a non-profit making limited company, a 99 year lease for all the buildings on it, a so called "Erbbaurechtsvertrag" in order for them to be able to manage,

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[21] The Liegenschaftsfond is the legal body managing the real estate owned by the city of Berlin, more information can be found on its website: http://www.liegenschaftsfonds.de

[22] More information about the project can be found on their website: http://exrotaprint.de

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renovate and use the buildings without aiming to maximize profit for anybody and having cut off the complex from further real-estate speculation. The Erbbaurecht is a long-term land lease based on the separation of the land ownership and all constructions built on it, which allows for example having an owner for a certain plot of land and at the same time having another owner of a building standing on the same plot of land. Within its own set of rules the ExRotaPrint has fixed to maintain a mix of a third each of social business, artists and handicrafts among its renters. Besides the rental spaces for studios, etc. there is a café open to the public and a series of spaces that can be rented on a daily basis for events. The process of renovation is still on-going, because it is realized in an incremental way so renters can stay for a maximum of time and the works are conducted little by little instead of having to evict everybody for a certain time during the works. The case of ExRotaPrint became an example for many other project spaces and activists, showing that endurance and straight forward propositions towards politics and potential other project partners can create astonishing results and create more value for a city, a neighbourhood and everybody involved.

The interesting fact about ExRotaPrint is that without the threat of losing their workspace the projects initiators would not have had the idea to start such a project, but the fact that they were threatened by that option through the increasing dynamic on the real estate market was somehow the kick-off for the project in the beginning. What is remarkable is that by doing so and by the learning process of running and realising the project they became more and more aware of the dynamics they were dealing with and therefore started to understand themselves increasingly as active producers of urban space and not only as actors for their personal interest. This shift of perspective can be seen in the structure of the project that allows itself to continue in the same mind-set as it was initiated, assured by its organisational framework and legal status.

Spatial entrepreneurs producing experimental forms of productions of urban space | Example: Spreefeld Berlin eG

The fourth example is situated in the centre of Berlin, close to the Prinzessinnengärten but to the other side of the former Berlin Wall on a former industrial site on the banks of the river Spree. The site, where today the "Spreefeld Wohn- und Baugenossenschaft"23, a cooperative housing project is located, was used by the GDR water police that had three boats in a garage here to control the water border zone before this use became obsolete in 1989 and it became one of Berlin's uncountable inner city urban brownfields that were the paradise for all kinds of temporary users over the 1990' and early 2000' (Overmeyer, 2006). The place at the water and especially the boat house were used as a club for some time before a group of people around the architecture firm "die Zusammenarbeiter"[24] started the Spreefeld project. In a long and participatory process with the future users, three mixed-use buildings were realized with commercial and communal space on the two first levels followed by up to six levels of housing and shared roof-terraces in 2014. The project structure was set up as a newly founded cooperative, the Spreefeld Berlin eG, that operates as a self-organised and self-initiated project developer and therefore is a key actor for the project. At the very beginning of the project a set of rules were established that built the foundation of the project and that could not be changed by the future inhabitants and users in order to assure an active role of the project within its neighbourhood. These rules mainly clarified the

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[23] More information in particular about the basic rules and principles of the "Spreefeld Wohn- und Baugenossenschaft" can be found on their website: http://spreefeld-berlin.de

[24] More information about their projects can be found at http://www.zusammenarbeiter.de

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relation between public and private spaces outside and inside the buildings. The main rules were the following:

- The first two levels stay without housing
- All non-built free spaces stay publicly accessible
- In each of the three buildings there are so called option-spaces for use that had to be defined

Based on these rules the planning dealt with the future users and their various lifestyles that should find an adequate place to live in the future buildings. Due to that process, a huge variety of housing typologies was realized reaching from regular 30sqm flats to 800sqm cluster apartments that are shared by around 20 people[25]. This mix of typologies also reflects the diversity of people in different life phases and with different needs for their living environment. Through its mix-used ground floor the project is an active agent in the neighbourhood that is also undergoing a rapid urban transformation at the moment. The members of the cooperative were able to establish links, relations and find a common ground with all their very diverse neighbours in the area reaching from the architects living and working in the next-door German Architecture Centre - DAZ to the anarchist squatter community called TeePeeLand[26] on the other side. Having been widely published and nominated for the Mies van der Rohe Prize for Contemporary European Architecture in 2015 the project got international attention and it was also featured in several exhibitions dealing with the question of housing in Berlin, such as Urban Living (Ring, 2015), putting its social and urban goals in front and promoting its innovative project structure and development process that enables the creation of a project that complex and holistic in its ambitions.

The Spreefeld is a prototype for a community-oriented way to inhabit the city, for example the fact that the form of a cooperative was actively chosen as a legal and ownership structure is a strong indicator for an alternative approach to classical real estate development in inner city areas. The fact that the present diversity of floor plan layouts and through that the variety of different co-housing forms as it can be found at the Spreefeld cannot be found in any of the housing projects built by the city-owned housing corporation nor on the rather upscale real estate market of investor based projects shows clearly that the project has to be understood as a self-organised reaction to that deficit. The market and the existing housing stock could not provide the inhabitants what they were looking for but the fact that they were able to realise a project that would offer them the spatial framework to experience the form of community living in an inner-city context they were looking for, demonstrates the creative power and potential that lies embedded in processes of self-organisation.

Conclusions and outlook

After having looked at the example of the IBA 84/87 and new types of self-organised projects, it is important to mention the phenomenon of temporary use as a major element of Berlin's recent urban history. In the 1990' and early 2000' they were forms of self-organised appropriations of the huge urban brownfields that were opened up by the fall of the Berlin Wall and that contributed in a remarkable way to the image of Berlin as a centre for creative spatial practice. After the city's experience with the IBA the city's department for urban

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[25] Overall plans including floor plans of various housing units, programmatic schemes of the project and an interview with the initiators and architects of the project can be found in the following article of the architectural magazine die Bauwelt: http://www.bauwelt.de/dl/805623/bw_2014_39_0014-0023_NEU.pdf

[26] More information about this as interesting as unconventional project can be found at https://teepeeland.wordpress.com

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development was already sensitive to the potential of user based bottom-up urbanism and conducted an urban research project called "Urban Pioneers" (Overmeyer, 2006) in order to try to better understand the role of temporary use projects for the city. This approach has to be seen as an important step by the formal administrations towards bottom-up actors in the city and an attempt to learn from them and take them serious as local actors. The fact that real procedures influenced by this process can be observed for example on the former airfield of Tempelhof with the already explained "Raumpioniere" in the early 2010' shows that the actual learning process is quite slow but a real transfer and impact can be seen. Besides that, the process of learning by planning authorities is slow it also seems that it starts anew again for each period of different forms of self-organised and self-initiated projects. The IBA was quite a singular project for many of its ambitions but citizen participation and a sensitive approach to urban renewal remained important factors for further urban development after its completion. After the change of perspective on urban pioneers, formats were developed to activate the potential lying in this approach. The impact of the new self-organised and self-activated projects can just be seen in first steps and attempts but it can already be stated that through research and exhibition projects such as "Stadtschaum" (Sabatier, Schwarz, 2012), "Self Made City" (Ring, 2013), "Urban Living" (Ring, 2015) and "Raumunternehmen" (Overmeyer, 2014) the interest of planning authorities in these projects and approaches to co-produce urban space is already high. Further, it seems that there might be a shift in the way public land is dealt with. Procedures such as the already mentioned "Konzeptverfahren", where the concepts of future projects are taken into consideration before selling land to future developers, show this new approach. At the moment, the application of these procedures is just about to start, so it is too early to make a clear statement if the first attempts in this direction are the signs of a real paradigm shift or just singular projects.

The slow speed of this learning process must be highlighted because when looking at the goals formulated during the time of the IBA regarding social aspects and the warning from an increasing social imbalance, it is evident that they still are almost the same as claimed by urban activists and actors of the above explained self-organised and self-initiated urban space projects. This makes it evident that these goals have not been reached by now, as demonstrated by the their continued relevance. This fact also links the IBA experience to the new cases, because the goals and ambitions formulated and claimed by them are very much corresponding to each other. The fact that the processes of bottom-up urbanism as an alternative to top-down urban development have been central to various urban research projects and publication in the field of academia over the last decades, shows how present the topic is on a theoretical level. However, as the examples from the ground discussed above have shown, the topic is still in a process of entering mainstream practice. It seems very important to us to foster discussion about these issues in an interlinked way between theory and practice, because theory can provide key arguments around the quest for a socially more just urban environment. It is not just an idea from utopian dreamers, but a key factor towards a sustainable urban future as all the factors dealing with ecology, economy, culture and sociality are interdependent and their problems cannot be solved separately. This knowledge seems to be well recognised in theory but still has a certain way to go to find its place in practice. As such, further work is needed to develop its own way of producing or better articulating how to co-produce urban space today for all its inhabitants equally.

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