THE SHAPE OF KNOWLEDGE REDISTRIBUTION WITHIN PLANNING CULTURES

The question of resistance in the case of a large-scale urban development project in Vienna

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Abstract

With the beginning of the 21st century a series of large-scale urban development projects (LUDPs) were planned alongside the transformation or modernization of federal railway stations in Vienna. Herein, in October 2012 the City of Vienna together with the landowner set the course for a telling modified urban development project: the new general concept for the former railway station *Wien Nordbahnhof.* Just a stone's throw away from the city's center a new generation of citizens will find its home close or within the typological setting of an experimental superstructure, that is one of today's biggest inner-city transformation zones, originally called the future city ("Stadt der Zukunft"). According to the city planners' intentions the *Nordbahnhof* will be finished until the year of 2025 after a development process of more than three decades and a multifaceted process of public participation. The long period of development led to illuminating different imaginations of the future city and to a particular materialization of the shift of planning ideology into urban form, which accentuates a dialectical process of transformation. This paper focuses on crucial acts of resistance playing a role for the interplay of democracy and innovation within the transformation process in question.

Keywords: planning culture; participation; knowledgesociety; science and technology studies

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Introduction

In this paper the aspect of resistance within planning processes is discussed as a promising point of departure for the further exploration of the interplay between democracy and innovation. The investigation starts with a definition of resistance and its location in a contemporary understanding of planning cultures. From this perspective the empirical case of a large urban development project (LUDP) in the City of Vienna will be presented to draw attention to the shape of knowledge redistribution within planning cultures. The methodology applied to the case study is based on participatory research: The author has actively contributed to the participation process of the LUDP *Nordbahnhof Wien* as a resident on-site and is still actively involved in the planning process as a member of the initiative group "Lebenswerter *Nordbahnhof*" (Lebenswerter *Nordbahnhof* 2015). From summer 2013 to autumn 2014 a series of qualitative interrogations were undertaken with key players within the planning process such as involved citizens, urban planners from the local planning authority as well as "independent" planning experts, representatives of the (single) land owner and urban district managers (Peer 2015). The paper's view goes beyond the relatively short period of the official participation process through a relational under-standing of urbanity, which originates from its past, present and anticipated future. The limits of this approach are particularly defined by the large quantity of arenas and players within an ongoing planning process stretching already over decades, where additionally transparency is only assumed as a principle for certain episodes and arenas, which are officially provided for the participation of citizens.

In planning theory urban resistance (the focus of the Gothenburg conference „Cities that talk") is prominently linked to the late 1960's rising insurgencies for progressive politics and social justice. Notably these insurgencies were not against change in the long run, but represented forms of resistance against the effects of planning systems being locked in modern rationality and their mechanical imperative of taking the least line of resistance. Therefore, postmodern resistance was accompanied by the aim of enabling processes for a different change or by the aim of remaining capable of acting. What we can see is that resistance and participation are twins or in other words different sides of the process of change.

Considering the diversity of planning cultures (or planning systems) – each of them with an even distinctive understanding of planning i.e. between European countries (CEC 1997; Nadin 2012) – the idea of resistance should include a complex understanding of the planning context: First, the frequently used term "modernization" can address different kinds of change (i.e. cultural, social, demographical, technological, economical, political, ideological change); "resistance" can be both an action for or against change; furthermore, the modern dichotomy of "theory and practice" is undermined by the flow of knowledge and the interplay of all kinds of participants within planning processes; therefore,

resistance is not a form of action that is reserved under the name of civil society but an action that plays as well a crucial role within organizations and institutions of both the state and the private sector.

A normative assumption made in this paper is, that resistance as (a facilitator of) a critical distance to all kinds of governance and power as well as a basic form of opposition against undemocratic elements, has the potential to enable processes of social as well as technological innovation in planning. In terms of institutional change, the cultural and societal frame in pacified democratic societies is bound to ensure that resistance has its legitimation and can be successful in nonviolent ways (notably with respect to the declaration of the human rights). While resistance can be understood as a form of rebellion leading to violence and war, the role of resistance as it is perceived within this paper is that of operating prophylactic, in the way of avoiding upcoming violence. Ideally this nonviolent prerequisite applies to all forms of social interaction, communication included. Taking these presumptions into account there is still a huge variety of nonviolent resistance as to all (visible and disguised) kinds of possible forms, arenas and contents of resistance, i.e. ranging from large scale resistance processes within the interplay of political institutions to forms of resistance in everyday life.

In regard to resistance and the interplay of democracy and innovation, today's perception of insurgencies in planning theory is linked to the idea of a dialectical interaction of actors and social institutions. Therein, different approaches are taken into account i.e. the social construction of planning systems (Aibar/Bijker 1997; Farias/Bender 2010; Servillo/Van den Broeck 2012), the transformation of specific governance structures (Bentz 2004; Healey 2006; Albrechts 2010) or planning cultures (Friedmann 2005; Knieling/Othengrafen 2009; Reimer/Blotevogel 2012). As to the diversity of change in today's society, a focus on the production and the exchange of knowledge seems to bring new light into the dynamics of contemporary urban planning. Obviously the distribution of knowledge is of crucial importance for planning processes and certainly the distribution of knowledge itself has changed since the foundation of planning theory as well as the role of civil society has. The today's rediscovery of knowledge as a central dimension of urban planning is taking place in times when knowledge itself got a new meaning for social change through its raising (narrative) importance as a factor of economic production (Madanipour 2011).

Particularly knowledge is linked to institutional change, which is seen as a basic element of processes of innovation. It is expected that these processes are generating variety, selecting across that variety, and producing novelty as the result of interaction among heterogeneous actors (Woolthuis et al. 2005: 610). In political terms the rational (or the logic) of selection is a prominent element in debates between advocates and adversaries of participatory concepts of democracy, especially in regard of the aim of remaining capable of acting.

Historically the political impetus of knowledge found its way into planning theory in the 1970th with Horst W.J. Rittels (1977) identification of different forms of knowledge in the process of decision making by distinguishing factual (what is?), deontic (what should be?), instrumental (as may be modified?), explanatory (how can impact be explained?) and conceptual knowledge (what are concepts meaning?). Arguing that the solution for planning problems is not to be found through the rational but through the social, Rittel took up the cudgels for the argumentative process of planning. In the course of the following communicative and/or argumentative turn in planning, deliberative planning approaches emphasized the attention for knowledge outside of the formal planning institutions (and their education systems) and the importance of public discourse (Fischer/Forester 1993; Healey 1997). More and more, knowledge became theorized as a central capital of exchange in the process of planning (Alexander 2005; Streich 2005; Mathiessen 2007). As it is known from debates about participatory democracies (Schmid 1997: 170 ff), deliberative concepts were increasingly coined by scepticism vis-a-vis unlimited opening-up processes and a plea for the attention on closing-down processes in planning (Rydin 2007, Zimmermann 2010). In short, the coincident discursive structuration of a knowledge turn in planning and in economy led to a (re)growing attention for political aspects within planning knowledge. The following part will introduce a case where the interplay of resistance, selection and innovation will be examined in terms of its political dimensions.

Framing the LUDP *Nordbahnhof Wien*

The Vienna region has become increasingly popular as a place for living in contemporary Central Europe. While its suburbs were already expanding for decades, the core city itself started growing since the 1990ies, especially due to the geo-political change in Europe and the global trend of re-urbanization. In reaction the City of Vienna augmented its social housing scheme (Statistik Austria 2004; 2015), being simultaneously captured by a persisting traditional lack of cooperation with the hinterland. Within this dynamic development several centrally located brownfields held by the Austrian federal railway company (ÖBB) were considered by planners and politicians as ideal areas for developing the future inner-city zones i.e. *Nordbahnhof, Nordwest-Bahnhof, Hauptbahnhof.* The City of Vienna indeed realized some concepts for these areas like the first masterplan for the *Nordbahnhof,* which remained largely unfulfilled during the 1990ies, because parts of these areas were still used by the ÖBB at this time and negotiations for already available parts failed repeatedly. At that time the City of Vienna cleared the way for another opportunity of development as the Vienna Business Agency, and with a minority interest the WBSF[1] (today: wohnfonds_wien, a fund to provide land for state-subsidised housing

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[1] Wiener Bodenbereitstellungs- und Stadterneuerungsfonds

THE SHAPE OF KNOWLEDGE REDISTRIBUTION WITHIN PLANNING CULTURES

construction and to supervise the restoration of old houses) and the federal real-estate company (*Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft*) purchased the large area of a former airfield (240 ha) at the outer limits of the city, the site of one of today's largest Viennese urban development projects, the Seestadt Aspern. There, the city is challenged to develop urban qualities through expensive heavy infrastructure investments (support is coming from the state and from private capital), while the inner city reserves remained rather untouched during the 1990ies. Thus, framed by stubborn rivalry between the centre and the periphery, the period of growth in Vienna started with a strategy that was in favor for an urban extension at the outer limits of the city, while the inner city planning activities kept its focus on small tailed urban renewal projects.

Only in the 21st century, when the trend of urban growth was repeatedly confirmed by predictive knowledge (population census), the City of Vienna strengthened its expansion strategy as well by the densification of populated structures inside the core city and the challenging task of a socially just, ecologically sustainable and certainly economic profitable transformation of brown fields, while paradoxically the production rate of subsidized housing fell back behind the count of the 1990ies. Naturally, these different strategies of urban growth would overlap with each other depending on the context. An allover asset for planners and developers was given by areas located close to the city center, as it is the case for the above mentioned (former) railway stations. In October 2012 the City of Vienna and the landowner (ÖBB – Immobilienmanagement GmbH) set the course for a telling modified urban development project: the town planning ideas competition for the second part of the former railway station *Wien Nordbahnhof* in Leopoldstadt (2nd district) ended in favour of an urban form, that violates sharply the Viennese tradition of the so called *Blockrandbebauung* (*Blockrand*-pattern). The winning project not only abandoned radically a traditional urban form but lifted the very idea of an enclosed open space within one single building block to a higher geographical scale. By forging all buildings to the margins of the development area, the general concept conserves an enormous green treasure of public space for the population, the so called *Freie Mitte*, as well as it banishes motor vehicles form large parts of the core area. The development zone is part of an inner-city transformation process where the *Nordbahnhof* (with a total area of 85 ha) together with the *Nordwestbahnhof* (with a total area of 44 ha) in Brigittenau (20th district), both former railway stations originally built in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and separated in the urban fabric only by a traffic junction, give way to extensive urban densification. According to the city administration's plan the total area will locate 32.000 inhabitants and 25.000 places of work until the year 2025. Just a stone's throw away from the City (1st district) a new generation of citizens will find its home close or within the typological setting of an experimental superstructure, that is one of today's biggest inner-city transformation zones in Vienna.

Especially at the *Nordbahnhof* the changing urban form becomes visible at once. The formal rupture will be physically inscribed into the morphology of the Nordbahnhof because half of the area was already built up in rather typical block structures by following the former master plan's intentions. The first general concept for the urban transformation of the *Nordbahnhof* dates back to the years of 1993/94 (Stadt Wien 2014a) (see Figure 1, left side) and divided the originally called future city ("Stadt der Zukunft") into small sections following the traditional *Blockrand*-pattern. Since then the southern and eastern parts of the *Nordbahnhof* were developed step by step respectively bloc by bloc, without significant effort towards planning participation (as the city administration reaffirmed its will to strengthen the participation of the civil society primary in urban renewal projects and realized new LUDPs by informing the public in mass events rather than by giving way to more elaborated forms of cooperation). A glance at the new masterplan (Stadt Wien 2014b) (see Figure. 1, middle and right side) reveals a sharp break with the former small tailed structure of the 1990s masterplan as well as it suggests a more comprehensive civic participation process.
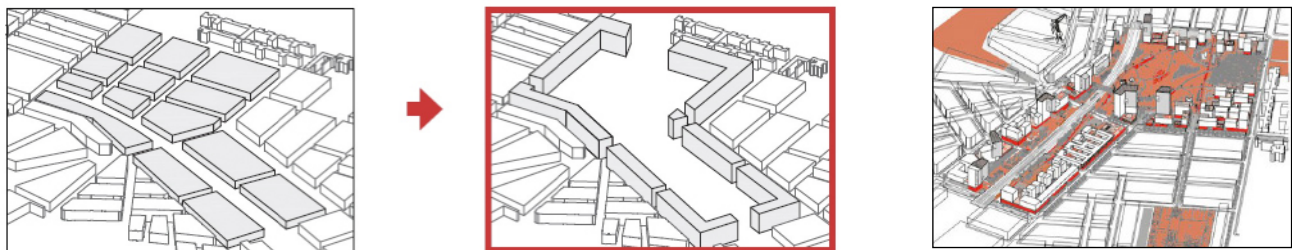
Figure 1. The development concept of the architects Kuzmich and Kleindienst according to the first masterplan for the Nordbahnhof by the architects Tesar and Podrecca in 1993/1994 (left side) and the concept of StudioVlay in 2013 (middle and right side) (source: Stadt Wien 2014a; StudioVlay et al. 2012).

The interplay of resistance, innovation and selection at the LUDP *Nordbahnhof Wien*

This section represents selected examples of resistance playing an important role for the interplay of democracy and (intended) innovation apparent at the LUDP *Nordbahnhof* Wien.

THE SHAPE OF KNOWLEDGE REDISTRIBUTION WITHIN PLANNING CULTURES

1. Resistance and architectural innovation within the process of selection

The decision for the new masterplan of the *Nordbahnhof Wien* in the year 2012 wasn't without controversy. A glance at the inside of the planning system's "black box" (Healey 2006: 303) shows, that a disguised form of resistance was already part of the double-stage masterplan competition process. The mastermind of the new concept, architect Bernd Vlay[2] (2014), explained that it was in his very intention to put the rule of the *Nordbahnhof* Wien competition to the test. Vlay's critical perception of the process was, that the city's planning authority was on its way to develop the *Nordbahnhof* Wien structurally quite similar to Cerda's extension plan for Barcelona (Aibar/Bijker 1997), which means developing a rectangular monotony with an even significant higher density as it was the case for the Spanish equivalent. According to the architects judgement, this process had to be approached by persiflage: Within a hopelessly short period of time, the office StudioVlay prepared a concept for the first stage of the competition in only one week, by radically conserving the wild nature of the large area and according to Vlay in the very style of Rem Koolhaas' contribution to the competition for the site of Melun Senart, a 5000 hectare predominately rural area to be developed as last new town in the south of Paris, in the year of 1987 (OMA 2014). The idea of a large green zone in the middle of LUDPs was already known from recent general concepts for other Viennese conversation zones, like the transformation of the central railway station and the *Nordwestbahnhof.* Still the radical break up with the traditional *Blockrand-*pattern and the quasi elimination of motor vehicles from large parts of the area were unconventional. The project's success during the first stage of the selection process highlighted the contributor's chance to make their half-ironic meant vision real, which lead to more competitive preparations for the second stage, considering the competitive relevant aspects of the development project more in detail. According to the architect his masterplan finally made it, not only due to a sophisticated concept, but also because of the incident that an influential person within the jury committee, which was known as being sceptical towards radical new concepts, became ill and was therefore not present during the final competition day. This incident pictures perfectly that "rules shape, and are shaped by, the interaction between actors that take place within these rules" (Woolthuis 2005: 610). Notably the winning team of the masterplan competition became "part of the dynamics that sustain the planning system and its operation and therefore become its >relevant social group<, which strategically behaves as (even unconscious) >temporary supportive coalition<. Through this process these actors – showing different degrees of intentionality and most probably different interests – become to share the same

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[2] On the basis of his long-term experience with architectural competitions Vlay was and is engaged with the improvement of these influential planning instruments, with regard to their critical consumption of human ressources, questionable guidelines etc., notably during his membership in the steering committee of Europan Europe (www.europan-europe.eu).

cognitive, cultural, political, structural frame […]" (Servillo/Van den Broeck 2012: 47). In other words, the architect's expertise becomes embedded in a field of autonomy (Bourdieu 1993), unspoken the actor's additional or remaining tactics of resistance, demands for reforms and counter-hegemonic strategies. Furthermore, even if the new urban form found its majority in the respective competition process rather by chance, evidence suggests that an (innovation) process towards a campus-like accumulation of space was at least already lying in the air.

Within the framing conditions for the masterplan competition, the area was defined by an optimal structure for buildings and open space with a special regard to the aspects of the social infrastructure, ecology, mobility and gender mainstreaming (Stadt Wien 2012). The competition guidelines did not suggest going for a huge green field, which now underlines hypothetically the presence of a knowledge-based dimension as it symbolizes a campus-like atmosphere at the future *Nordbahnhof*. The sublime connotation of being an enclosed structure is physically strengthened by considerable barriers to the neighbor-hoods through the area's borders defined by railway lines and main streets. Interestingly, the *Nordbahnhof*-quarter hosts a set of different campus models. The area was one of the first sites where the City of Vienna implemented a new type of educational institution called *Bildungscampus*. The social infrastructure cluster for children up to 10 years is seen as an architectonic answer for new pedagogical concepts as well as a new way of urban densification and cost externalisation by public private partnerships. A second even larger educational campus is planned to be realised in the following years. This construction of a social infrastructure was decided by the city at the beginning of the 21st century and constitutes a new strategy. Campus models for other functions (i.e. headquarters for banks, education and promotion zones of companies) are evolving as well at the *Nordbahnhof* area expressing the today's densification of power structures. Certainly the campus model can be interpreted not only as a new superstructure but even as a new cognitive element, where different knowledge areas are interacting with each other at a scale that has overcome the small section of a single bloc. Hence, architects and urban planners are developing these structures with a larger number of different fields of expertise and in addition for (and partially with) a larger amount of affected citizens.

Among the wide diversity of competing concepts in urbanism historical examples the universal acclaim for such new structures providing green space can be found in the social reform of the Modern Movement during the 1920s and 1930s (leading to the Garden City) as well as in the shift towards urban sustainability during the 1980s, with a strong emphasis on environmental protection, energy efficiency, and urban consolidation. On the other hand, the term campus derives from a Latin word for field and was traditionally used to describe the land on which a college or university and related institutional buildings are situated. Today the term defines a collection of buildings that belongs to a given insti-

tution, either academic or non-academic. The coincidence of an incline towards business led urban development, the raise of the campus model for the social infrastructure and the shift of urban form are held in line with the provision of urban structures for the imagined smart citizen of the 21st century. Following the new masterplan's intentions the landscape of the *Nordbahnhof* will i.e. operate as an integral climate control unit (Stadt Wien 2014b: 16). Therefore, the built environment is conceptualized as a generating plant, which actively optimizes the energy balance of the city with its integrated gardens, green spaces, drainage systems and its wind and solar energy production facilities. Without surprise the new masterplan for the *Nordbahnhof* provides a chapter on *smart urban development* as the concept of the *smart city* is prominently travelling around the globe with its very distinct consequences at specific times and places. Nearly every feature of urban development finds its place within this chapter: high quality of buildings and public spaces embedded in urban density, social mix through diversity of housing models, flexible spaces at the ground floor level, ecological buildings, web of green spaces, optimal provision with public traffic infrastructure, collective garages and a good practice model for participation (Stadt Wien 2014b: 16).

One might think that this chapter of the masterplan apparently shows the confusion of the planning authority about the vague term *smart city*. Increasingly these concepts are being critizised for only promoting technological innovation without consideration of the social dimension of urbanity (vgl. Allwinkle/Cruickshank 2011; Greenfield 2013). New technologies are representing a headache to advocates of democracy, when the automatisation of the human being is at stake. Thus, superstructures like the *Nordbahnhof* LUDP are comprising the dialectic moment of an ongoing process of individualization through the production of always bigger and more machine like living entities, while at the same time technological transformations i.e. driven by web technologies like the social media and the internet of things are leading towards a heteronomy of so far unrecognized dimensions. In the course of these transformations additional players like energy companies, IT providers etc. are becoming increasingly important stakeholders within LUDPs. There are few examples where the implantation of a superstructure into the core city web did not lead to inflexible, introverted and monofunctional structures (Swyngedouw et al. 2002). In contrast, the small tailed urban form proved to provide the city with spaces for communication, for small production and consumption, for leisure and recreation and last but not least for an open civil society as a relevant factor vis-a-vis to the disempowerment through commodification and social injustice of global capitalism (Blau 2003: 40). Possibly, resistance as it was presented in the case of the masterplanner's persiflage was already collectively or institutionally absorbed by the process of competitive selection to a large extent and transformed into the power holders' "smart" intention of innovation.

2. Resistance and social innovation within the process of selection

The second focus on the process of selection as an important aspect of institutional change points to the question of social innovation and the role of resistance. As outlined above the development of the *Nordbahnhof*-quarter took already place since decades, while only for a short period of time the city administration pushed forward a process of participation, which took place during the realization of the recent international masterplan competition from 2011 to 2012 and especially through a participative revision of the awarded concept, lasting approximately one year from summer 2013 to spring 2014. One of the administrative and political main goals of this process was to produce a final version of the masterplan, which in the end was confirmed (in a legally unbound modality) by the responsible branch of the city council. The new confirmed masterplan provides repetitive and vague arguments, while strong criteria of planning (besides the promise of the *Freie Mitte* and the abandonment of motorways) are almost absent. The masterplan process was as well accompanied by extensive rhetorics of participative planning, which is calling for accountability with regard to the final 20 pages short PowerPoint-styled collection of catchwords and imprecise intentions (Stadt Wien 2014a) and is questioning the responsiveness with regard to the process of biased selection. The succeeding additional production of a more extensive but only informal handbook about the masterplan includes some more, however substantially filtered, details (Stadt Wien 2014b).

The participation process (as well as the masterplan competition) was brought forward under the authority of the vice-mayor and executive city councillor for urban planning, traffic and transport, climate protection, energy and public participation (as a representative of the green party, governing the City of Vienna together with the traditional dominant social democrats since the year 2010 and for the first time in Viennese history). The realization took place by the planning authority and a subcontracted private agency specialized on communication. Additionally, the district quarter management, an outsourced branch contracted by the executive city councillor for housing, housing construction and urban renewal (a representative of the social democrats), was partly involved in the process and with the shift from planning to construction is playing a more and more crucial role for deliberative processes at the *Nordbahnhof*-quarter. During the participation process a randomly defined set of locals was discursively included along a set of workshops, while the whole process was framed by several public accessible dialogue events (for a detailed description see Peer 2015). Herein, conflicts with inhabitants were selectively solved or accepted, but as well sometimes excluded in the course of a setting that favored or avoided specific stakeholder constellations, leading to a wide acceptance of the second masterplan by the participants without admitting a significant role in the decision making process to them. One of the telling incidents was that of the formal integration of a representative of the social movement "*Wagenburg*" into the participation process.[3]

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[3] The group „*Wagenburg*" is part of a social movement within the network of „Wagenplatz" (http://wagenplatz.at).

THE SHAPE OF KNOWLEDGE REDISTRIBUTION WITHIN PLANNING CULTURES

As the movement is representing an alternative form of living it is therefore interpretable as a sign of resistance against the monotony of contemporary urban housing. While the contribution of a single movement member to the officially designed participation process was accepted, the temporarily installed infrastructures of all the *Wagenburg*-members were simultaneously displaced from the brown field area of the Nordbahnhof. Also the city planners failed to include further players, like citizens with an international immigration background as well as representatives of the local economy. It is a common ground of critics that participation processes fail to specify institutional arrangements for handling multiple knowledges in a way that recognizes the specificity of knowledge claims. Rydin (2007: 52) argues for the limited variety of forms that such knowledge claims can take and the need to create spaces within planning processes for testing and recognizing these different knowledge claims. Formally the participation process in question would have been a good testing ground for different knowledge claims if there was a representative variety of inhabitants and institutions as well. Besides the planning authority's tolerance of these significant lacks of variety in the process of selection, the communication process across different fields of responsibility within the city administration was barely made transparent. This is not about the idea of a total symmetry of information, still more transparency would have been both helpful to counterbalance the lack of coordination within the system and necessary to open-up discussions about the mismatch of regulations, which historically evolved in different fields (i.e. building regulations). Finally the participation process was primarily designed to produce recommendations for the completion of the masterplan, overruling the logic of a process of variety creation, which is actually the result of constant interaction among heterogenous actors in a population. The participation process therefore fulfilled a selective integrative and stabilizing, but rarely a social innovative function. Important political decisions were taken before or aside from the participation process or were not taken yet.

The perception of the already realized parts of the *Nordbahnhof* is ambivalent, because the provision of infrastructure lacks significantly behind the planned state and is partly repaired retroactively. Albeit the large absence of precise measures on the future qualities of the area in the masterplans for the *Nordbahnhof*, the view statements on the planned mixed use and the overall construction volume are revealing that the original intentions are inclined towards a large-scale and profit oriented production of urbanity at the expense of the local quality of life. In contrast to the concept of the first masterplan, companies, developers and housing cooperatives were able to modify the zoning shape and the intended mixed use with the result of even bigger and more mono-functional blocks (including disfunctional technological solutions like overheated low energy buildings, etc.). This applies especially to the quality of public space and the provision of space for small businesses and social infrastructure in the ground floors of the buildings. The same incline towards business led development becomes visible through the increase of the maximum

allowed gross floor space within the finalized new masterplan (Stadt Wien 2014b) in comparison to the criteria of the planning ideas competition (Stadt Wien 2012).

The above-mentioned hegemonic configurations are still presenting simplifying images widely concealing the more interwoven patterns of urban planning's contradictions behind the discursive structuration of best possible planning participation. But the incidences are already delivering sufficient insight into the dialectical process of change: business led development and traditional power-holders remain the main pillars of urban development in Vienna. At the same time the rhetoric of participation is increasing as well as experiments with planning participation, but only leading to modest results, so that a significant change within the Viennese planning culture is barely traceable. Therefore, city planners dispose over strong instruments to execute closing down processes, which in fact might be seen as an asset of planning if the results are increasing life qualities in an inclusive manner. Unfortunately the institutionalized mode of competition regulates the redistribution of knowledge without making a significant difference between the very different goals of social and technological innovation.

Thus, a finer grained concern with opportunities of participation seems to be important. These opportunities at question are spread at different levels. Firstly, in the case of the *Nordbahnhof*, the general conceptual level itself consists of three development phases during the whole period of transformation stretching across decades (first masterplan 1994-2014, intersection zone 2014-2020, second masterplan 2015-2025) and is followed by the process of zoning of the respective building plots, with its late and unsatisfying participation opportunities. Secondly, basic infrastructure like public transport and parks have to be provided. Many decisions are still open, like the share of responsibility for the development and the service of the *Freie Mitte* as well as the plans for the public traffic facilities. Third, the process of change takes place at the level of the buildings on site during the phases of planning, construction, settlement and operation (i.e. collaborative housing). This level includes housing as well as educational and cultural facilities and herein also decisions about different forms of energy supply respectively alternative energy production facilities, as well as decisions made about the share of facilities between neighboring buildings etc. At another level the processes are driven by small and medium sized incentives stimulated by public and private actors, increasingly designed as competitions for best ideas (i.e. small financial compensation, infrastructural or knowhow support for private urban gardening initiatives, health care initiatives). All these processes are influenced by the current flow of today's social network society, undermining the logic of physical space by the seamless web of virtual interconnections in everyday life. Within the planning cultural frame the need of specific forms of knowledge may then be regarded as dependent on the defined problem (i.e. effectiveness, efficiency, equity), the process level/path (i.e. masterplan, detailed planning), the field or the object (i.e. housing, traffic planning), the claim (i.e. expert, layperson) and the role of the planner (i.e. moderation, bureaucracy).

Conclusion

The ongoing urban transformation process of the LUDP *Nordbahnhof* Wien is characterized by its rising but still limited range of participation, comprising a rather intransparent interplay of hegemonic configurations, counter-hegemonic elements and temporal coalitions set by various arrangements between different private and public players. Apparently different forms of resistance are endorsed within this governance process as something "good" as they are transformed into adjusted modes of action or otherwise are doomed of being excluded. Yet, the case emphasizes the importance of a grand variety of non-violent forms of resistance for democracy and innovation, where all players are belonging to innovation friendly – open as well as effective – institutions, a reasonable amount of information and forms of cooperative involvement. With regard to the evolution of a satisfying participation process, cities are echoed to their specific ability of keeping their collective understanding and cultivation of democracy on time.

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