Berlin's Urban Development Discourse

Symbolic Action and the Articulation of Hegemonic Interests[1]

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With the decline of the industrial sector in the late 1970s and the rise of the service industry as a crucial location factor, a concomitant change in the meaning of urban development has emerged. While the functionalist, modernist "Fordist city" was oriented towards providing the best possible infrastructure, hygiene and mass accommodation, as well as regulating conflicts and ensuring a social equilibrium, postmodernity has entailed a revision of these ideals. The focus now rests on the inventive presentation of soft location factors and the creation of exclusive places. Urban development has been superseded by an approach aimed chiefly at image creation by prioritizing aesthetics and culture in planning processes. As a result of overcompensation, architecture and the art of urban development regained their mystical aura, manifested in the ability to transcend the technical world. Highly valued "star architects" enjoyed favorable media coverage and thereby outshone the technocratic planners and social developers.

The competitive or even hostile relationship between these two disciplines, both of which deal with regional planning and urban design, is no where more evident than in the city of Berlin. It was in this city that the modern welfare system and archetypal regional services were "invented" at the turn of the 19th century and during the Weimar Republic. And it is here that the contemporary neoliberal drive for deregulation is most evident and the accompanying conflicts most pronounced. This is also because post-war reconstruction and urban development in the eastern and western parts of the city occurred in two distinct fashions, each a product of their respective political orders. These two worlds of architecture and urban development are both unique and rich in contrast, but also under threat from a small group of power-hungry actors. They exploit state weaknesses and attack these worlds as anachronistic by deploying

1 | Source: Hain. S. (1997) Der Berliner Städtebaudiskurs als symbolisches Handeln und Ausdruck hegemonialer Interessen. *WeltTrends* 17/1997, 103-123.

elaborate ideological arguments and intricate designs. They take issue with the burden of socialist urban development in what used to be East Germany but are equally opposed to the horrors of uncontrolled urban growth following a North American or East Asian pattern and brought about by a globalization in the interest of an educated middle class clientele. Instead, they favor establishing a "home city" inspired by the moderation and order inherent in Prussian classicism while also amalgamating the diversity of Berlin's cityscape. However, the characterless and monstrous architecture of Potsdamer Platz and the cold, exclusive architecture that defines the redeveloped Friedrichstraße, indicate that such flight to the comforting past is impossible. This is so because today's roving global capital has developed its own dynamics.

The case of Berlin is particularly important. Here the effects of contemporary global structural change are felt by two political cultures and numerous alternative and innovative milieus, while the to-ing and fro-ing of migrants, most of whom hail from what was known as the "second world," is also influenced. As such, this can be viewed as an open-ended experiment with an eastern and western dimension. Since last year fierce debate has ensued regarding competing actors and their visions of the city's future. More specifically, issues of interpretative authority, creative authority but also credit-worthiness were debated, although predominantly within the confines of the city itself. There is a vision that authority over the city shall be transferred from the state back to its autonomous citizens. It remains to be seen how this can be achieved, who should be granted authority under these conditions and whether such bearers of authority could "normalize" their own status without state backing. Taken together these questions form an Adriadne's Thread linking intricate discourses and heated debates within Berlin's political and public arenas.

Strategy No 1: Catch-up Modernization as a "New, Bold and Brutal Wilhelminian Period"

Until the fall of the Berlin Wall the city remained in de-facto quarantine. For forty years it held the unique status of a city on the front lines of the Cold War. Moreover, contradictory reconstruction in both parts of the city after the total destruction incurred during the war, and economic marginalization until the end of the Cold War, added to the uniqueness. It all ended with the joyous surprise of November 9, 1989. Before any city-wide planning law could be established, several vast estates in the City's possession, both within and beyond its confines, were sold off. "Like trump cards," to use one of Bourdieu's metaphors, economic actors initially possessed all the advantages. As developers lacked a clear sense of how much profit to expect from urban construction this allowed for wildly optimistic speculation. Some fantasized about Berlin becom-

ing a hub between east and west, a science metropolis, a stage for the Olympic Games, or a center for innovation in an era of communication technology.

When it was decided that Berlin would regain capital city status, developers began making grand calculations regarding future demand for living, hotel and businesses spaces. The city administration became caught up in this wave of euphoria and soon an overriding development concept was established: *catch-up modernization in East Berlin*.

"Compared to the western part East Berlin lags some 25 years behind in developmental terms. Figures given indicate that between 10 and 15 million square meters of gross office space exist. These are dimensions that can barely be comprehended. I like referring to Otto Steidle's Gruner & Jahr center in Hamburg to provide a comparison in terms of scale. It offers 100 000 square meters of gross floor space. Anyone can imagine what it would mean to build a complex 60 to 150 times this size. Entire office cities are needed in Berlin. This is a task of historical dimensions. The infrastructural deficit in the former GDR is too vast to publish if expressed in terms of investments or money and when compared to Western Germany" (Stimmann 1992).

Such speculation on nominal growth pressured politicians at the time and led to the collapse of a widely popular paradigm of the 1980s that championed "caution and urban repair." The then coalition government of the Social Democrats and Greens was, it was claimed, acting "contrary to economic developments" (Hans Stimmann) and represented an anachronistic "alliance of bureaucracy and biotope" (Hans Kollhoff). Its reluctance to embrace the large-scale initiatives of capital to drive urban construction was quickly attacked as "provincialism" (Ezard Reuter). Ultimately this caused its defeat in the subsequent elections. The victors in turn formed a grand coalition and abandoned all rhetoric of social and environmental protectionism. They expressly welcomed the global players to the city and encouraged their involvement. "Have we not waited forty years for this? [...] We cannot tame this tiger. Instead, we must ride him. We must not suppress but exploit these forces" (Hassemer 1991). Hanno Klein, the city administration's investor liaison, even went so far as to wish for a new "bold and brutal Wilhelminian period." On June 12, 1991, he was killed by a letter bomb, an as yet unsolved crime.

The necessary political debate on how the "normality of the Berlin Republic" (Jürgen Habermas) should find expression in the capital's architecture was postponed, as talk of the end of history, different utopias and overarching theories dominated. Initiatives to encourage dialogue and mutual understanding were overshadowed by the attention-grabbing political symbolism of events such as the veiling of the *Reichstag* by Christo, as well as the myriad of competitions and panel discussions. For seven years one competition and design event followed the next, each growing in size. The extent to which architecture

became spectacle and a site for exhibitions increased, too. Fabulous skylines, hip deconstructions, large-scale statues and monuments, picturesque or rational facades, super-charged notions of progress, populist motives and high-tech modernisms all came together and increased the euphoria further still.

Today observers are conscious of the fact that these architectural plans had a mesmerizing effect on the economy, politics and public opinion. The state managers of former GDR property and temporary owners thereof (*Treuhandanstalt*) had expected the value of their estates to rise exponentially. The state was deeply involved in gambling on real estate. Such grand architectural visions led to an exorbitant jump in the prices of inner city property (2,000 Euros/ m^2). It remains this expensive to today, despite the economic recession. The architectural imagery popular at the time raised expectations of high returns, and exclusively targeted large investors, while systematically disadvantaging local developers.

In setting the scene for Berlin's grandly fictitious future, the city's architects and administrators could draw upon the symbolic capital they had accumulated over time. Thus, there was a history of international construction fairs in the West (Interbau, IBA), as well as a tradition of state-run urban development in the East. This allowed contemporary architects and administrators to make use of the channels and techniques of communication that had proven helpful in the past. Moreover, competences acquired in the context of urban construction and refurbishment in West Berlin proved to be an asset. Urban construction in the context of the city's 750 year anniversary had been showcased and treated in a festival-like manner. After reunification this trend continued and aesthetic matters came to dominate the political agenda. Hereby a crop of planners and decision-makers gained substantial power, aided by their media prowess, and utilized it to ultimately monopolize legitimate symbolic power.

After a brief and open transition and orientation period, several local architects cemented the good reputations they had acquired for themselves over the past two decades. They did this by canonizing and categorizing their particular architectural style as *Neue Berlinische Architektur* (cf. Burg 1994). This also kept architectural newcomers at bay. The hegemonic architects of *Neue Berlinische Architektur* then continued to impact on, and ultimately conquer, the economic and political realm. They suggested prototype constructions to economic magnates in the context of feasibility studies and preliminary building applications that would secure approval. Given that many of these architects also worked for the state as consultants, jury members and evaluators, they simultaneously approved the suggestions they themselves had made. The urban and geographic structure of Berlin was thus determined by a select group of administrators and designers, who combined the metropolitan fantasies of the young architects with the hopes of the older architects who wished for a revived Prussian classicism (cf. Sewing 1994). This bastardization of New

York style skylines and the physical manifestation of minor Prussian virtues can be observed today at Potsdamer Platz and along the Friedrichstraße.

An Aspic-Preserved, Prussian-Style Manhattan Project

The lead designers of Berlin's new cityscape were driven by a number of factors. Among these were their shared understanding of urbanity, quality of life and social prestige, as well as the notion that Berlin should possess uniquely defining characteristics to bolster its global competitiveness. Consequently, they decided to "invent a tradition" (Eric Hobsbawm) of a particular architectural style, irrespective of the actual architectural plurality evident in the city. Thus it was claimed that contemporary construction in the city should conform to the architectural tradition of Berlin classicism. In a boldly meta-historical move the city's identity was linked to the (late) Prussian period. This strategy, regulated and approved by the building authorities, produced a cityscape that differed greatly from the low-density development that defined either sides of the city after the war. Instead, this new cityscape resembled a parade ground consisting of blocks and avenues. The resulting buildings were arranged sparsely and in orderly uniformity, with very little variation amongst them. None of the influential actors of the time were willing to abandon North American or East Asian models and to reject the notion that the 'European city' possesses a distinct urbanity.

At the same time, the city's construction policy was split over two rival administrative departments (Construction and Accommodation, Transportation and Urban Development/Environmental Protection) pursuing competing party interests. Volker Hassemer, member of the CDU and Senator for Urban Development at the time, established an internationally renowned commission tasked with discussing urban construction in Berlin and consulting political actors. This he did to "ride" the proverbial economic "tiger" and to acquire the requisite legitimacy. During his time in office this commission, the so-called *Stadtforum* (Kleger et al. 1996), undertook cooperative simulations and kept interested specialists informed on latest developments. Hans Stimmann, who was a member of the building authority that was led by the SPD, favored a different approach to Hassemer. Stimmann considered himself so powerful that he preferred to liaise directly with investors and architects and to make unilateral decisions on how to proceed in matters of urban development. While Hassemer at least listened to the critics of the *Stadtforum*, Stimmann instead favored the frequent *Architekturgespräche* that were more akin to presentations of selected projects rather than genuine debates. Participants had pre-defined roles, while Hassemer presented his design concepts from an elevated podium, talking down onto the auditorium.

Stimmann, supported by a cartel of architects, succeeded in restricting the height of newly built constructions and thereby at least ensured that the city's overall structure remained largely intact. Nonetheless, weaker neighborhoods were negatively impacted upon. In the district of Mitte alone over eighty registered and potentially historic buildings were knocked down, as their utilization of space was deemed inefficient.[2] From now on, future constructions would also have several floors below ground. Evidently, the regulatory framework established through the *Berlinische Architektur* served to minimize rampantly chaotic urban development by limiting the maximum eaves height and by controlling design issues and facade compositions. Together, these regulations formed a certain *genius loci*. Consequently, compositions of an aperspective or ambiguous nature, which are *the* epitome of enlightened, postmodern aesthetics, were shunned and strictly forbidden. Likewise, situationist and "green" conceptions were rejected. Stimmann, who served as the Senator for the building authority and considered himself the "aesthetic force of the political administration," set out to devise a new doctrine for urban construction, for which he was supported by his staff of sixty colleagues. The following quote from Stimmann expresses his new thinking well:

"I favor corporeal architecture and a Berlin built of stone [...]. My architecture must follow in the footsteps of Gilly, Schinkel, Messel, Mies van der Rohe, Taut and Kleihues [...]. The first requirement is that construction must proceed in block formation. Where ever I can influence architecture I want to advocate the following traits: order, Prussian aesthetics, sparse coloration, use of stone, a tendency towards straight rather than curvy compositions" (Stimmann 1993).

Sceptical and radical critics, brought together by the "dispute over Berlin's architecture," decried the building authority's provisions as conservative, reactionary and "neo-teutonic" (Klotz 1994; Kähler 1995). Beyond such ideological criticism, discursive and formal analyses indicate that matters of complexity reduction, tendencies to exclusivity and a fixation with surfaces could be observed in the context of the new construction doctrine. Moreover, this doctrine also comprised an outdated 19th century notion that systematically interlinked identity and aesthetics, art and life, as well as imagination, will and deed.

Even in its earliest days the *Neue Berlinische Architektur* was a fundamentally homogenous and exclusive architectural semantics that drew on the virtues

2 | There are three prominent examples of this assault on Berlin's historical buildings. The interior of the Wilhelmenian luxury hotel Esplanade was entirely discarded apart from the breakfast chamber, which, for the price of DM 2 million, was relocated to the Sony complex at Potsdamer Platz to suit modern-day hospitality requirements. Likewise, the former Zollernhof on Unter den Linden had to make room for the ZDF (TV) headquarters, and the Rosmarinblock on Friedrichstraße was also knocked down.

of idealism, order and the suppression of emotions. Initially, this universal code was applied only to a selection of construction projects that held a symbolic status. By 1996, however, a non-legally binding *master plan*[3] was published that sought homogenization on a grand scale in the "power center of Europe's most powerful nation" (Der Spiegel, December 2, 1996). Its aim was to unify territory and society, geographic and social space, aesthetics and life, as well as urban development and social policy.

Strategy No 2: "Conquering the City Center"

Berlin's grandly ambitious "Manhattan Project" has crashed somewhere within the Bermuda triangle of severe fiscal deficits, vast amounts of unused office space, endless construction sites and Berlin's postponed rise to capital city status. Huge, outsized building complexes and stand-alone super projects are the sobering outcome of this excessive speculation. They can be found throughout the city, detached from and foreign to their surroundings like stranded ocean liners. Contrary to expectations, nearby building lots failed to quickly attract further development and so these cold, Prussian island-like buildings, referred to by some as the "investors refrigerators," contribute to a certain peripherialization of the city center. A revived Wilhelmian period in Berlin has effectively failed to materialize. While the city center resembles an unfinished and vacant investment disaster, desperados, gamblers and the needy congregate at the city's "dangerous locations" (police terminology).

Partially compelled and partly supported by the waning interest of capital, the *Berliner Freundeskreis für Architektur* went all out (SenSadt 1997) with an urban development concept that was referred to as "critical to economic growth" (Hoffmann-Axthelm 1997). Meanwhile, Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm (referred to as the "grey eminence of theory and history" by Gerwin Zohlen) was promoted to chief planner by direct assignment from Hanns Stimmann, who himself now acted as State Secretary within the urban development department.

Hoffmann-Axthelm had published a report on the city center as early as 1991 in which he proposed its division into small allotted areas. This idea, however, was never implemented as both the municipality and the federal state supervisors of former GDR property (*Treuhandanstalt*) instead sold entire blocks

3 | Since its publication in 1996 it was in actually labelled *Planwerk Innenstadt.* Prior to publication, contributors and members of the opposition had however begun calling it the master plan (which is how the English language bible refers to the process of creation) in the context of confidential consultations. A paradigm shift can be observed from the principle of a target-oriented incrementalism towards a, albeit moderate, "godfather-like" totality.

of land. Even then Hoffmann-Axthelm recognized the sign of the times and urged for large-scale planning intervention:

"This concerns the type of city that is needed in the future. The calm time in which cities gradually grew at their own pace has passed; dark clouds now loom on the horizon. Options on the table for Postdamer Platz are applicable to all wealthy, industrial cities today" (Hoffmann-Axthelm 1996: 88).

Now that the city's grandiose development project is turning into a failure and the dominance of East Berlin's cultural community in the historical center prevails, Hoffmann-Axthelm is the man of the hour. Although he is neither an architect, nor an urban developer, the middle class clientele agrees with his credo. This broadly knowledgeable theologist acquired a solid reputation from years of stubbornly contesting building policies and engaging extensively in publishing. He is a symbol of a generation of bourgeois critics of modernization that were radicalized in the context of 1968. They instantly associate the construction of terraced housing with "social fascism," modern development plans with concentration camps, and assume that the omnipresent "big brother" is watching in the open cityscape.

In 1996 Hoffmann-Axthelm, who was now an official representative of Berlin's government, developed a radical redevelopment and settlement project for the eastern part of the inner city, one supported by Bernd Albers (and a team of planners focusing on the western part). This project was instantly hailed by some journalists as the initiation of an "epochal turning point" (Hartung 1996: 9). Hoffmann-Axthelm provided a plan for "how the West Berliners" could now finally "conquer the city's historical center," after having been prevented from doing so for forty years. The return to dividing predominately public property into allotments was undertaken to attract private investment into the city, as open spaces and transit routes were closely integrated in contemporary urban developments. It was intended that such public property would then be sold to small developers at a political price far below market value, upon which they would erect buildings in line with the traditional historical style. The wide streets so typical for the center of East Berlin, the recreational areas and playgrounds that were designated as green areas, and the cold-wind corridors so important to the inner-city climate, were all cleared for construction. This used up almost all undeveloped plots and greatly increased the density of the inner-city. The modern, post-war development structure that had defined the city was to be countered with spatial typologies and attacked with aesthetic notions derived from the 19th century. Existing, modern structures would thereby become functionally overshadowed, reduced in their substance and also subjected to more traffic.

Hoffmann-Axthelm's ideal city of the future is one that has returned to pre-industrial times. According to his nuanced anti-statist approach, the rein-

troduction of small allotments should function as a fundamental regulatory and procedural framework, aimed at addressing urban challenges by means of a desirable mixture and overlap, through a revived public space, and through decentralization and a local economy. Hoffmann-Axthelm advanced a program that he hailed as republican, emancipatory and supportive of economically autonomous individuals. This, he believed, would counter the continuous and implicit subjugation of citizens through the modern nanny-state and also contest the anonymity induced through large-scale societal structures. He sought to establish a modern Wilhelmenian era, in which middle-class entrepreneurs would develop the empty allotments of the modern city and thereby create a certain form of sustainable self-rule. This overlapping of social science and urban development theory assumes that the evolution of cities in the 20th century occurred in accordance with certain societal theories, rather than objective, economic circumstances. This approach thus presumes that modern and totalitarian planning ideologies must merely be deconstructed in order to ensure a return of liberalism.

Hoffmann-Axthelm's refers to Hackesche Höfe in Berlin as a beacon project through which the middle-class has regained its status and fulfilled its interests. He attests that here the lost physical sensation of confinement and synaesthesia are to be found, along with a reduction of stimuli, a functional mix and a down-to-earthness. This probably satisfied his self-image as a *flâneur*, aesthete and member of the intelligentsia. A similar improvement of a single building block in suburban Spandau, meanwhile, has produced a radical change in the surrounding neighborhood. In the space of just two years, the average income of these residents almost doubled, while the number of children living there halved. When confronted with these developments, Hoffmann-Axthelm retorts that "this is the sacrifice that simply must be made" for such beautiful surroundings.

The critics of modernization are rightfully credited with being the first to think about how the pictorial aspect of architecture and the overall appearance of the cityscape impacts upon city life generally. Yet, these concerns have now grown wildly out of proportion. Picturesque, old town scenery does not provide the necessary space for contemporary everyday life to unfold freely. The historical roots of a certain neighborhood are reduced to nothing more than a theatrical backdrop for tourists to congregate, where pastimes are pursued and state receptions held. Rabbits in the back yard, saddle manufacturers, shabby but cheap flats – all these would get just as thoroughly erased as in the orderly and loosely developed city of modern times. The post-modern city is under the lethal pressure of globally roving capital that seeks to acquire immobile riches. The demise of the city is akin to that of the polis of the "Athens Charter" and similarly exhibits a simplistic functionality and social interaction. Externally, the post-modern city upholds the appearance of urbanity. It returns to block

structures and boasts special facades at the "prime addresses." It was hoped that the middle classes, which had profited so handsomely from the redistribution of public land, would contribute to a "reforestation of urban bare spots" (Michael Mönninger) and a recreation of the "characterless and debris-ridden spaces" (Klaus Hartung) in their role as new settlers within the city. It was anticipated that this would create an appropriate setting for the "arrival of 80 million citizens at their new capital." This plan however requires the long overdue move to firmly establish the political *primacy of the city center,* as it has become obvious meanwhile that "urban tradition and urban democracy belong together, and that the neglect of some leads to the neglect of others" (Hartung 1996: 9).

This notion of reforestation in a social class sense defined the second phase of urban development in Berlin and was referred to as *sustainable* (rather than *catch-up*) modernization. While the new middle classes and the developers are regarded as pioneers of civil society, the original inhabitants of the city center in turn are dismissed as "implants of the socialist state," as "people with red party membership books" or as lachrymose losers (Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm).

Urbanity or Citoyen?

This power shift also manifests itself indirectly in the use of ecological terminology in official declarations. Before, such language was practically ridiculed. Similarly, those who had championed a reduction in pace and the preservation of existing urban structures, and who had been sidelined for these views during the euphoria of unification, now gained an audience. From 1993 onwards and against the backdrop of growing urban segregation and gentrification, their views proved accurate yet again. Crucially, the "critical wetlands" comprised of the "typical Berlin mixture of university environment and taz readership milieu" (Klaus Hartung) regained some influence, after having been previously marginalized and dismissed as provincial. Citizen participation increased greatly in the context of the "City fora from below" *(Stadtforum von unten)* in which Alexanderplatz and housing policies were debated, particularly so because many citizens from East Berlin joined these gatherings.

After the 1995 elections, Berlin's household troubles were gradually made public. From now on, this financial crisis had to be considered when ever city planners met.

"The root cause of this financial problem is the multilayered structural-change that has occurred. To solve this problem, the public household must be restructured. How can the state's share in spending be reduced? And how can tax revenues and expenditures be reformed without fundamentally harming social security and undermining societal harmony?" (Huber 1996: 18).

The solution to this debt problem and money shortage was and continues to be seen primarily in the wholesale privatization of state-owned capital and property, more specifically in the selling of public estates, businesses and services. Naturally, a pleasantly framed justification for this was at hand: "The term privatization is somewhat misleading, given that this represents a structural-change through which state ownership is transferred into a public ownership backed by civil law" (ibid.). Hereby, a crisis-induced necessity was eloquently rephrased and reframed as a virtue. Thus, the forced privatization of public property was couched in the language of a return to civil law.

Finally, it was elaborately suggested with the *Planwerk Innenstadt* that practically anyone (with a monthly income of roughly 5,000 DM) could in fact purchase a generous piece of land in the city center, albeit within the "tight time frame" prior to the arrival of the bureaucrats from Bonn and the next wave of foreign investments. The private property model was heralded as a form of "emancipation for those living in rented accommodation." The inventors of this innovative product deliberately targeted the double-income families in East Berlin, as well as wealthy residents of West Berlin gambling on the stock exchange. Thus, the accompanying rhetoric of the *Planwerk* shimmered in all the colors of the rainbow and should have drowned out any form of critique in its overdose of pleasantly vague ideology.

The opposition was not, however, lulled into sleep. Upon learning of plans to orchestrate large-scale demolitions in East Berlin, protest movements emerged that utilized both die tageszeitung and the district newspaper for the inner city Scheinschlag for their discussions.[4] This urban movement demanded specific opportunities for participation, rather than a city built in such a way that it "fulfills every citizen's desire for an appropriate, dignified environment" (Klaus Hartung), as the media campaign had proclaimed. Yet as soon as this opposition had voiced its criticism it was dismissed as a bunch of badly tempered losers: "Only if the Planwerk can overcome the self-righteous grassroots activists can the citizens of Berlin hope to settle amongst them in the unified capital" (Hartung 1996: 13).

This grassroots challenge, however, was reflected in other, wider debates elsewhere. The heated dispute in the great chamber of the State Council Building (*Staatsratsgebäude*) on November 29, 1996 was symptomatic of this overall debate. Therein, the existing cityscape was cherished as a product of foregone violence and destruction, as well as of mistakes and learning processes. It was regarded as characteristic and a reminder of forty years of global division and as such of aesthetic and historical value. It was deemed so valuable in fact that it outweighs Berlin's mythical past as a city built of stone. Moreover, it was

4 | Besides a series of articles on the issue of public space, taz and *Scheinschlag* together published an additional 12 page dossier on December 19, 1996, entitled "stadt. plan.Mitte."

argued that one must not wait for new, reputable urban citizens to settle, as a newly politicized citizenship already established itself publicly in the context of the watershed year 1989: "If the former state property of the GDR should be returned after 1989 to the citizens of the city, why not return this very property to those citizens who were involved in 1989?"[5]

The conflict of interests stems from the demands of two functionalist milieus, both of which claim to be treated as this new citizenry. After the self-referential notion "urban citizenship," coined by the *Planwerk,* was openly booed, a substitute was created. This urbanite, who resembles a kind of cosmopolitan cyborg, and sports a mobile phone and a recumbent bike, has been declared the new focal point of urban city life. Contrary to this notion of citizenship, a rather different, real, socially heterogeneous notion is put forward. It is an understanding of urban citizenship that is universally egalitarian from birth (Hannah Arendt), and adheres to the principle of the citoyen who proclaims freedom, equality and fraternity (Baule 1996: 98 f.).[6]

A small crop of no more than ten actors continue to dominate this discourse, simply because they hold key positions. This great dispute has meanwhile involved several thousand citizens and numerous experts also. Critical media coverage, however, remains an exception. Public critics of the *Planwerk* are *either ignored or explicitly brande*d demagogues or lachrymose Ossis (East Germans)[7] (cf. Hartung 1997; Hoffmann-Axthelm 1997). Civil society actors with an alternative mentality in turn demand greater fairness and equal treatment within the political realm. They increasingly refer to human rights discourses and speak for all those who are marginalized, suppressed and needy (cf. Rada 1997). Crucially, these civil society actors reject the formalistic planning policies and ritualized processes of participatory procedures. Opposition to these programs of urban segregation and disintegration will, to refer yet again to Pierre Bourdieu, depend fundamentally upon how objective such contestation can become.

Translated by "Truly Translated," together with Ben Restle

5 | Question from a student in the audience of the *Stadtforum* on November 29, 1996.

6 | See, for example, Bernward Baule: "The citizens of the GDR took to the streets with all those demands of freedom mentioned. They themselves fought for their individual freedom and their own, free democracy in a peaceful revolution. This remains their actual, mundane achievement."

7 | Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm: "The East Berliners do not consider themselves responsible – they have found someone else to blame for the changing circumstances. They can sit on the sidelines and complain. They do not carry responsibility for this capitalism."

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