

Figure 40: View across 4OFT Brewery and The Dusty Knuckle Bakery towards the Eastern Curve Garden community project, rear of Sainsbury's supermarket and new residential developments, Dalston, London 2016

IV. Intersecting Conflict and Change

“[...] I can see no limit to the amount of change, to the beauty and infinite complexity of the coadaptations between all organic beings, one with another and with their physical conditions of life [...]”

Darwin, Charles (2008 [1859]) On the Origin of Species, Oxford, p.84

“The members of a plant community adapt themselves to one another as all living things adapt themselves to their environment, but there is no conflict between them because they are not conscious. Competition takes the form of conflict or rivalry only when it becomes conscious, when competitors identify one another as rivals or as enemies.”

Park, Robert and Burgess, Ernest (1921) Introduction to the Science of Sociology, Chicago, p.507

1. Positional Maps as Analytical and Heuristic Device

1.1 Intersecting Conflict and Change: Approach and Methodological Framing

The following analytical stage comprises the intersecting of the two strands of enquiry into architectural and urban narratives of conflict and change. With this operation I seek to establish a high-density construct that adds a new layer of research precision and depth to the analysis. At the core of the intersectional operation is the positional map. The map is based on Adele Clarke's methodological framing and draws from the practical examples discussed in the 2005 introduction to situational analysis (Clarke 2005, pp.125ff), as well as the edited volume "Situational Analysis in Practice" (Clarke, Friese and Washburn 2015, pp.177ff). I have discussed the specific capacities of mapping earlier, proposing that mapping, diagramming, and drawing are well established practices of analysis, knowledge production and knowledge distribution in architecture and urbanism. Applying a social science mapping instrument to architectural and urban research problems means connecting to – as well as extending – the analytical and representational mapping repertoire in architectural and urban research. In the following, I sum up the basic methodological assumptions of positional maps, together with the adaptations proposed for the map's use in the analysis of architectural and urban narratives of conflict and change:¹

1. "By focusing on the *full range* of articulated positions, positional maps assist analysts in seeing complexity, variation, and **controversy and division** where once only binaries and/or longstanding, oversimplified divisions may have appeared. This often enables analysts to see established lines of controversy and division in fresh ways." (emphasis in the original in italics, Clarke, Friese and Washburn 2015, p.177)
2. Hence, positional maps are **analytical heuristic devices** that can help us see things differently. It offers an analytical "**space between**" (ibid., p.127).
3. Positional maps make it easier to "[...] see that which one does not expect [...], grasp or understand" (ibid., p.127). They allow researchers to temporarily **step outside research routines** and research identities to assume a **different perspective** (ibid.).
4. Positional maps **counteract centralising and stereotyping** tendencies in analysis (ibid., p.126).
5. In positional maps we can show positions of **dominant** concepts along **marginal** ones that tend to be overlooked in their shadows.
6. Positional maps may raise our awareness of positions not taken in the field, which Clarke refers to as "**silences**" (ibid., p.126).
7. According to Adele Clarke, positional maps can be developed from "a range of **discursive materials** gathered through fieldwork, participant observation, interviewing, texts, and documents of various kinds, including websites, for example." (Clarke 2005, p.177)

1 For this purpose, I have added my own emphasis to the text. Emphasis in the original is in italics.

8. In our case, the discursive material is from **narratives**, in which articulated concepts, statements, design projects, images, interventions, and other architectural and urban works are combined.
9. Each architectural and urban narrative under study is linked to one or more specific concepts of conflict and change. A **concept is understood to represent the position(s) taken in the narrative**.
10. Positional maps **can deal with conditions of openness** – in line with the premises of qualitative research – and, in doing so, they reduce the risk of analytical bias and premature closure.
11. “**Emphasis is on the map** rather than particular positions.” (ibid., p.126)

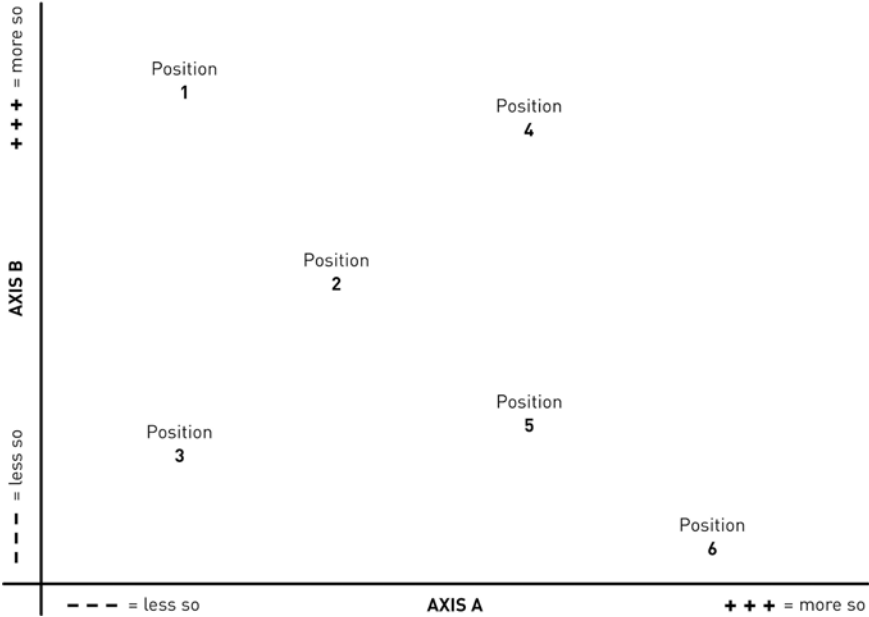
As stated earlier in the analysis, narratives change and travel in time; they form coalitions and dissolve to form new coalitions; they embody changing practices, interpretations, images, meanings; they change through being re-narrated. As a consequence, temporality enters the mapping and has to be addressed. Rather than working with a series of positional maps that seek to map positions at different time intervals, or working with an animated digital interface, the idea is to show all positions in a single map, irrespective of when they entered the architectural and urban discourses. I have chosen this alternative, for we can then see how the concepts of all narratives under examination are distributed within the discursive field, and how they relate to each other. Furthermore, the positions identified in the narratives have their peaks and troughs, and it would be difficult to determine their effective theoretical lifespan. Once they are articulated, positions in architectural and urban narratives may become materialised and institutionalised, thus being effective for extended periods of time. The naming of the concept will in most cases allow its adequate location within the history and theory of architecture and urbanism.

Although authors' names are provided for the majority of concepts in the proposed map to facilitate their identification, the single position should not be understood to 'represent' the author(s) in the map. In line with the assumptions of situational analysis (Clarke 2005, pp.126f), the position has to be seen as part of the broader discourses on conflict and change. A position that is articulated in public is available for appropriation by others. The understanding here is that the sharing and debating of concepts makes them a common good. Concepts may be adopted by different groups, professional, non-professional or institutional, in their own ways of working with conflict and change. Accordingly, a key assumption of positional maps is that “individuals and groups of all sorts may and commonly do hold multiple and contradictory positions on the same issue.” (Clarke 2005, p.126) In our case, the architectural and urban disciplines use many of the assembled concepts of change simultaneously, together with all other actors that work with them.

1.2 Setting up the Positional Map

So far, the analysis has concentrated on the identification and interpretation of domain-specific narratives that have informed, and continue to inform, the conceptualisations of and discourses on conflict and change in architecture and urbanism. In keeping with the intended openness of the research process, the selection and inter-

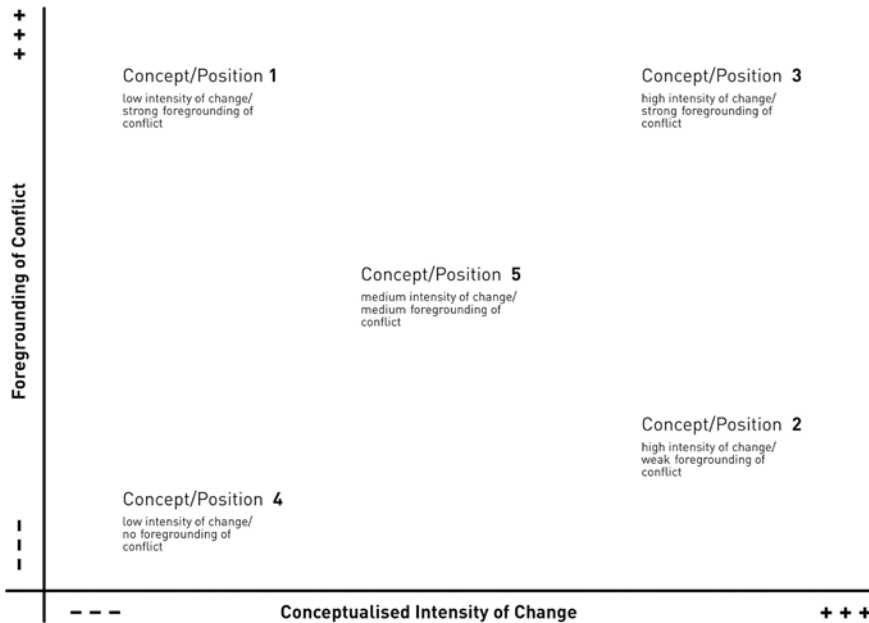
Figure 41: This figure shows an “[...] Abstract Positional Map that portrays positions on a particular issue in the larger specific situation of concern. There are two main axes, and an infinity of positions is possible. The analyst tries to lay out the axes in terms of ‘more versus less’, if this seems to work.” (Clarke 2005, p.128). Figure adapted from Adele Clarke (ibid., p.129).



pretation of narratives evolved as per the adapted iterative-cyclical research model of GTM, which does not start with a predefined population in the empirical field, a hypothesis that is to be verified, or a systematics based on fixed and exhaustive categories. Its preliminary outcome is a series of key concepts, or positions, that are embedded within architectural and urban narratives on conflict and change. Each narrative holds one or more positions that can be placed in a positional map.

The positional map discussed in this chapter grew over time. I do not provide a detailed account of the positional map’s evolution, but my discussion of the narratives and their thematic clustering give a general idea of the production process. I introduced the positional map to the research process at an early stage, so that the map could act as memoing device and inform the theoretical sampling process. By means of accommodating positions in a step-by-step process that ran in parallel with the analysis of the narratives, the positional map provided a general overview of the concepts discussed so far, guidance about where – and how – to search next, and finally evidence of saturation. Hence, the diagram functioned as “operational visualisation” (Strauss 1987, p.143) during the analytical process. The map integrates all individual concepts within a single, open field of positions. However, there is no final version of the map. Despite the level of detail and saturation it has acquired, the positional map is by methodological necessity always in a work-in-progress state. While up to this point the main interest has been the single narrative and the positions within them, the overall positional map is now shifted into the focus.

Figure 42: Abstract Positional Map showing different positions, defined by axes 'Intensity of change' and 'Foregrounding of conflict'.



On the positional map, two axes define the field of intersection. In line with Clarke's conceptualisations, there are no numerical values assigned to them. The tendencies +++ 'more so', respectively --- 'less so', provide orientation and relational precision as well as the desired degree of looseness. The locations of positions, therefore, are indicative only and should not be mistaken for fixed points within a coordinate system. The horizontal axis defines a continuum of intensities of change, according to the conceptualisations in the narratives. The axis begins with very low intensities of change and gradually moves to higher and the highest intensities of change. The vertical axis defines a continuum for the foregrounding of conflict in the narrative. Narratives of change that do not foreground conflict are positioned on the lowest level along this axis. Positions with a strong foregrounding of conflict range at the top. In the narrative material, a strong foregrounding of conflict usually goes hand in hand with the explicit addressing and theorising about conflict, as well as with assigning to it a constitutive role in the conceptualised condition of change.

1.3 Approach to Interpretative Issues and Difficulties in the Positioning

Having set up the basic structure of the positional map, a series of issues arise from assembling and placing individual positions. Among the concepts that I have analysed in the overall process are four which seem to define extremes – not in the sense of a single position but rather in the sense of defining a perimeter that runs parallel to the axis. Christopher Alexander's "frictionless coexistence" (Alexander 1964) represents a kind of change in which conflict is absent. There are no inharmonious movements, struggles that consume energy, or forms of attrition. Frictionless means, quite literally,

that neither speed nor intensity of change make a difference. In the mode of “frictionless coexistence” conflict does not co-constitute the unfolding of change. It is in this sense a positional exception, because our previous discussion of conflict and change suggested that conflict and change tend to be mutually related to each other. Hence, I propose Alexander’s concept is aligned with the horizontal axis, extending across the full continuum. There is no foregrounding of conflict throughout the concept, irrespective of the intensity of change. Conversely, in Lefebvre’s concept of contested urban centralities (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]), conflict is defined as basic urban condition. It prevails in the urban across all possible intensities of change. I allow this concept to extend across the upper section of the positional map, representing a strong foregrounding of conflict for all conditions of change that are associated with the concept. The next in the line of special positions, utopianism, is linked to the highest intensity of change, where it is understood as the striving for the ultimate ‘other’. In terms of conflict, however, the level of foregrounding may vary. Some utopian models are based on gradualism, which is free of conflict, others on radical rupture and change. Utopianism, therefore, covers the full continuum in the foregrounding of conflict, ranging from weak to strong. Finally, obsolescence can be understood as the ultimate failure to accommodate (further) change. If a space, situation, or structure is obsolete, it has ceased to participate in change. If defined in this way, it represents the lowest intensity, or zero intensity, of change. Practical limits to this interpretation occur, for instance, when a condition that is defined as obsolete by some may still be useful to others. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the analysis, we can say that the concept of obsolescence occupies the position with the lowest intensity of change. Like utopianism, it may be associated with different levels in the foregrounding of conflict, ranging from zero to the strongest level. From this I distinguish the concept of planned obsolescence, which is connected to cyclical renewal and therefore to a higher intensity of change.

The next issue arises in terms of the positioning process itself. For most concepts, a straightforward guess as to the approximate position can be made. The difficulty starts with the fine tuning. For this task, the idea of connected anchor points, as outlined in the methodology section, and the interpretative use of ‘conceptual proximities’ help to determine the final location of a position on the map. For example, adaptability and flexibility are closely related concepts, which implies – as a starting assumption – that they are located in proximity to each other on the map. Their first and provisional positioning is based on the assumption that both positions stand neither for zero nor for radical intensities of change, suggesting that we place them somewhere in the middle of the horizontal axis. Historically, flexibility is understood to have gained theoretical significance in modernism – suggesting a position close to other modernist positions. In order to determine their relative position to each other, further assumptions are necessary. As flexibility engages with predefined problems, while adaptability consciously takes into consideration the creative capacity of users and occupiers to deal with situations of change, and therefore of conflict, I have assumed the foregrounding of conflict in the concept of adaptability to be higher if compared to flexibility; I have also assumed the intensity of change to be potentially higher in the concept of adaptability, due to its avoiding of pre-determined fixations. The positioning of flexibility and adaptability in the map serves as an example of the scope of factors that are typically considered in the fine-tuning. The same kinds of difficulties – and movements to overcome them – apply to all other positions on the map. However, bearing in mind

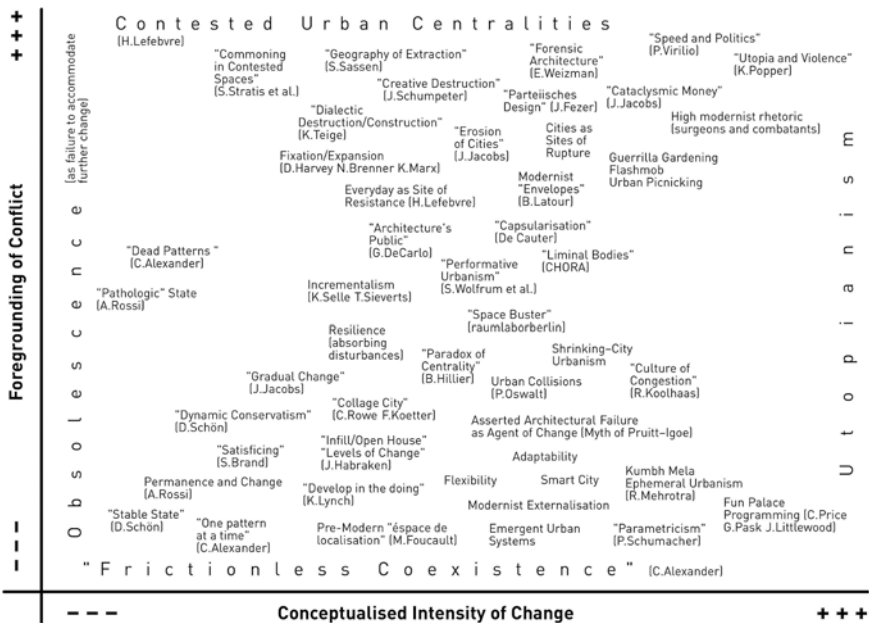
that we are working within a malleable construct, there are methodologically intended limits as to the fixation of positions. A degree of ambiguity will remain. Likewise, some positions seem to have a greater degree of fuzziness in themselves than others. For example, the concept of change associated with the “space buster” (raumlaborberlin 2018) may be working with a strong foregrounding conflict in one particular urban space (e.g. the blocking of a residential street in the UK²), and in another situation it might be emphasising joint action, play, and the act of coming together, which seems to suggest a weaker foregrounding of conflict.

Further difficulties arise because the positions refer to change on very different scales. Urban practices of “guerrilla gardening” (Awan, Schneider and Till 2011, p.152), or certain kinds of “liminal bodies” (Bunschoten, Binet and Hoshino 2010 [2001]; Jungfer and Masuyama 2013) are based on small scale interventions that generate high intensities of change, which are typically limited to a small area. If considered at an urban scale, they could be almost invisible. To avoid concepts that operate on large scales from dominating the map, I have assumed intensities of change to be relative to scale. It is not the absolute intensity and effect of change that matters, but the intensity relative to the scale to which the concept relates. Methodologically, this is based on the idea that in positional maps “the goal is to *represent the positions articulated on their own terms.*” (emphasis in original, Clarke 2005, p.126) Further issues arise in terms of multiplicity and variation. Narratives change upon being re-narrated, for which reason different versions of the same narrative may occur. Moreover, a specific urban issue may be the subject of more than one narrative. In this instance, the positions and concepts used in each narrative are likely to be different. For example, the positions taken by officials and authorities in the discourse about urban renewal are likely to be different to the positions of communities who are affected by its consequences, for example by cataclysmic change and problems of individual and collective coping. In antagonistic situations, each perspective is likely to work with its own narratives, concepts and positions. Narratives may seek to achieve interpretative authority over an issue as part of a controversy. The non-critical modernist position, for instance, reduces and simplifies conflict to a set of technical problems that can be ‘managed’ and ‘solved’ by specialists. This position is subsumed in the concept ‘modernist externalisation’. Conversely, modernist-sceptical positions seek to bring the contradictions of the modernist approach into full view and work with a strong foregrounding of conflict. I have assigned to this position on modernism a higher level in the foregrounding of conflict, subsumed in the concept of modernist “envelopes” (Latour 2008, pp.8f). Similarly, the concept of gradualism occurs in different narratives and therefore in different positions on the map. As argued earlier, narratives do political work and compete with each other. For the same reason alliances are conceivable. Narratives may share concepts and positions with each other.

Finally, the relationship between ‘intensity of change’ and ‘foregrounding of conflict’, which is represented by each position, should not be understood as cause-effect relation. While in some narratives this connection is made, the positional map is explicitly

2 In this instance raumlaborberlin was working with the ‘kitchen monument’, the cousin of the space buster.

Figure 43: *Intersecting the narratives of conflict and change. Work-in-progress positional map showing positions taken in different architectural and urban narratives.*



not about identifying causality in single concepts. A strong foregrounding of conflict in a concept does not mean that conflict is seen as the 'cause', the 'result' of, or 'precondition' for a given intensity of change. The level of foregrounding indicates the degree of the articulated visibility of conflict in the concept, its general argumentative consideration and integration, its being emphasised.

2. Conceptual Voids at Low and High Intensities of Change

2.1 Observing the Overall Pattern of Positions

With all individual positions in place, we can now proceed with the analysis of the overall pattern in the map. We notice that the positions are not spread evenly across the field. There are two voids in the pattern, together with a zone of higher density running from bottom left to top right between them. The first void indicates that there are few positions that combine low intensities of change with a strong foregrounding of conflict. Likewise, the second void indicates that there are few positions that combine high intensities of change with a medium foregrounding of conflict. The diagonal is the area in the positional map in which the foregrounding of conflict is directly proportional to the intensity of change. Low intensities of change occur in combination with a weak foregrounding of conflict in the narrative, medium intensities of change with a medium foregrounding of conflict, and high intensities of change with a strong foregrounding of conflict. The proportional relationship seems to correspond with everyday experience, which lets the pattern appear 'natural'. In this sense, the map

exposes a potential source of bias. Simply because some of the concepts seem to suggest that the higher the intensity of change, the higher the conflict involved, does not mean that this is ‘naturally’ so. Architectural and urban narratives are constructed. They serve humans in their conceptualising, communicating, generating, or controlling of processes of change. In this sense, there is nothing natural, or pre-given, in the implied proportionality. The pattern in the positional map mirrors, first of all, the proportionalising tendency that seems to reside in the conceptualisations and interpretations of change.

For now, it has to remain open whether the tendency could be related to aspects that are located in social processes, in human behaviour, psychology, or in the dominant mechanisms through which humans manage change. In the course of enquiring into the response of large organisations to change, and their efforts invested in retaining their existing structures, theories and technologies, Donald Schön observed that “social systems resist change with an energy roughly proportional to the radicalness of the change that is threatened.” (Schön 1971, pp.38) This and other, similar observations may provide clues as to possible, more fundamental, explanatory models to the questions raised by the observed tendency.

The gradual emergence of the two voids during the analytical process resulted in the intensification of research efforts in these areas. This was supported by extending the field of enquiry to include narratives of specialist discourses, as well as narratives that are rather remotely related to architecture and urbanism. The setting-up of the positional map as work-in-progress research instrument facilitated the adding of positions on a trial basis, to see how this would influence the pattern. Some of the concepts that have not made an appearance in the previous discussion of narratives of conflict and change fall in this category, for instance the Kumbh Mela religious gathering as conceptualised by Rahul Mehrotra in “Ephemeral Urbanism” (Lepik, Giustina and Ursini 2017), or “guerrilla gardening” (Awan, Schneider and Till 2011, p.152), flashmob, and urban picnicking (Haid 2013). Further positions entered the map while working on the case study element, for example Donald Schön’s “stable state” (Schön 1971, pp.9–30) and “dynamic conservatism” (*ibid.*, pp.31–60)³. Despite my attentiveness to the issue in theoretical sampling, the voids continued to persist and became characteristic of the positional map. The later additions reinforced the pattern that was already visible, rather than changing it. The substantial number of concepts identified, coupled with the analytical sensitivity of theoretical sampling, led me to assume that further additions were unlikely to change the core message of the map. In line with the methodological propositions of GTM and SA, I interpreted this as a sign of saturation (Clarke 2005, p.108, p.135).

3 Donald Schön’s concepts are discussed in more detail as part of the construction of the Redundant City concept.

Figure 44: Positional map showing the void at low intensities of change.

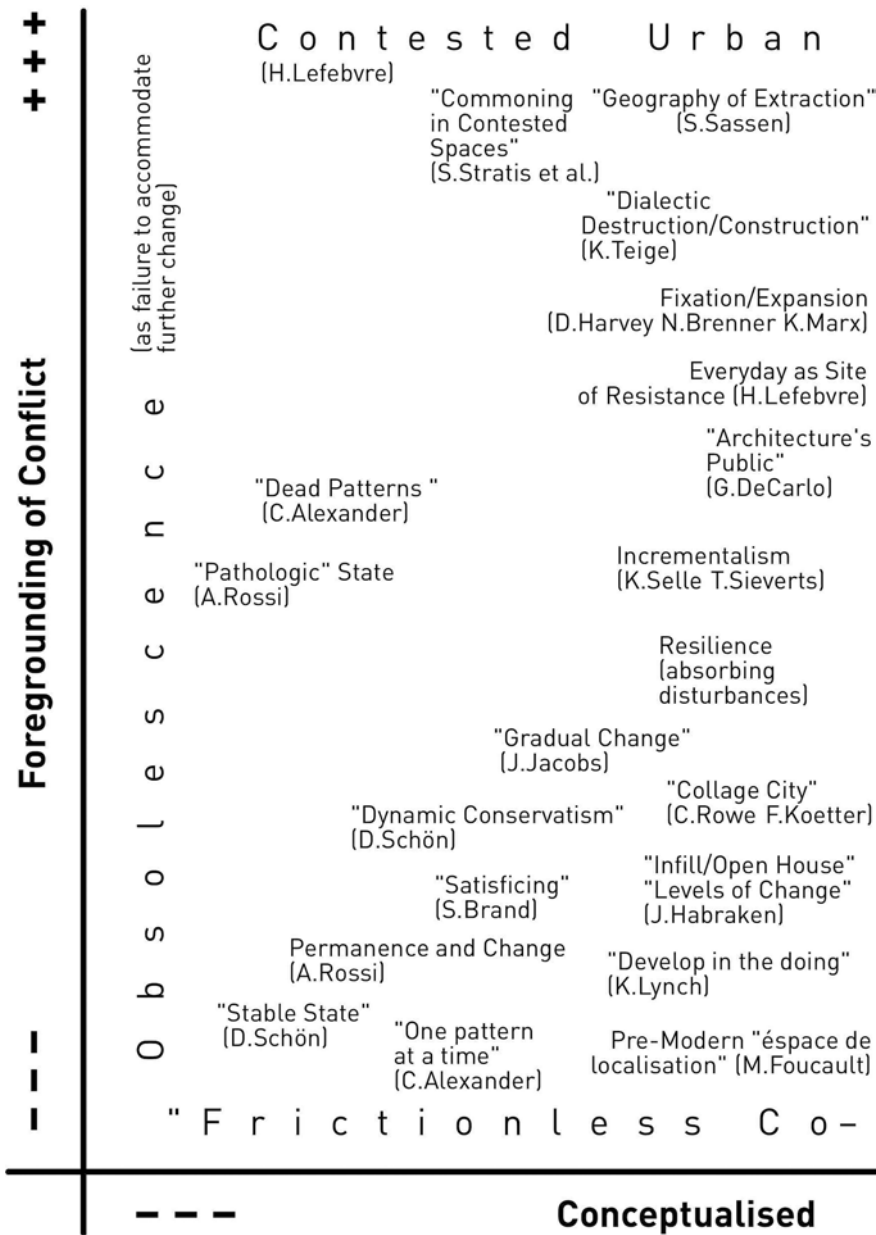
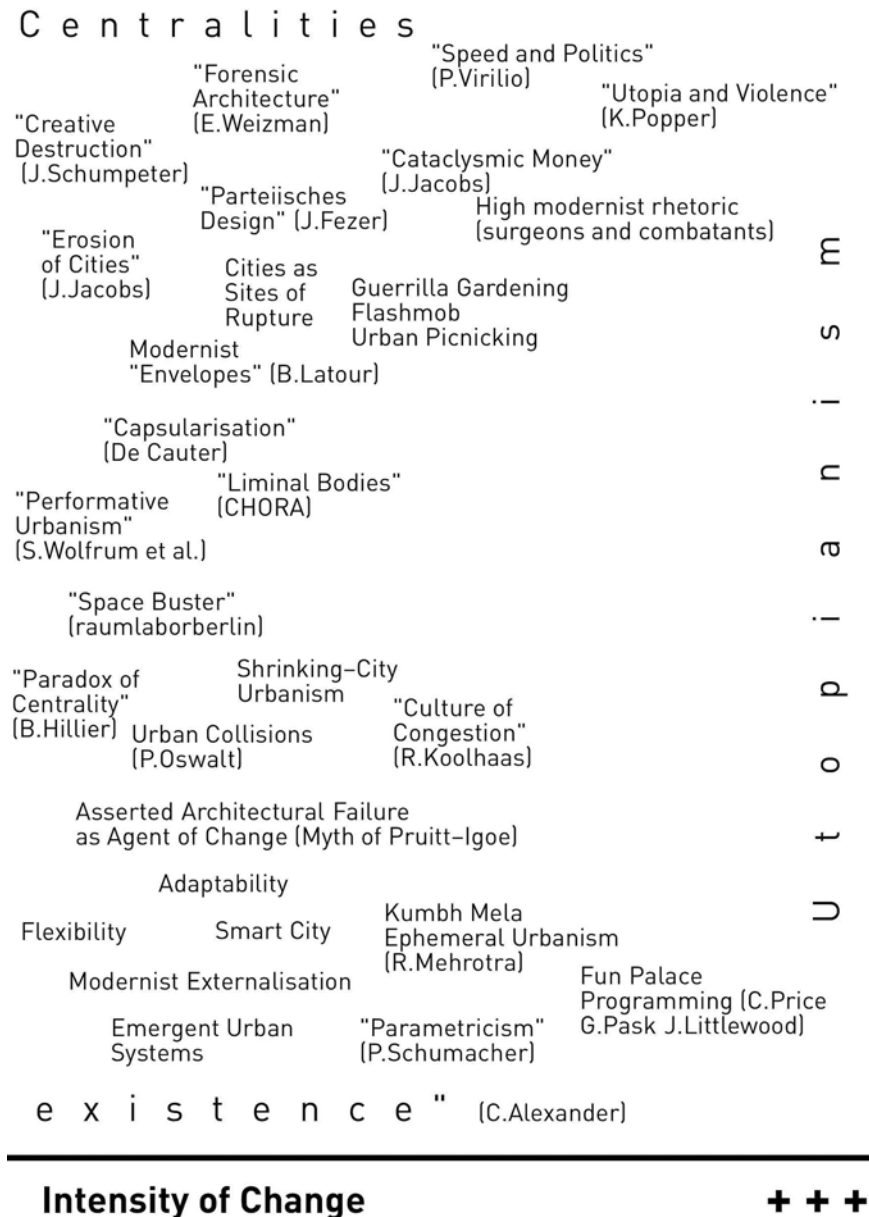


Figure 45: Positional map showing the void at high intensities of change.



2.2 Why There Should be More Concepts For Low and High Intensities of Change

The justification of why there should be more concepts in the regions of low and high intensities of change is at this stage limited to a few remarks. The positional map will continue to evolve and serve as a heuristic device in the research process, whereby further issues are clarified. The observation of asymmetric urban change, in particular in the Parkstadt Bogenhausen housing estate, defined the point of departure for this research project. In specific ways situations of asymmetric urban change tend to be related to low and high intensities of change, as well as to conflict. On a more general level, we could say that fast urbanisation and high intensities of change are characteristic of many regions of the world. Conversely, a broad range of urban phenomena operate on the basis of low intensities of change. This is the case with sites that are disconnected from economic dynamics or other facilitators of change, but also for sites where divergent intensities of change produce conditions of asymmetry. As in the Parkstadt Bogenhausen housing estate and its neighbouring areas, situations which follow different trajectories of change may coexist side-by-side. Different kinds and intensities of change are often neighbours.

Since the dissolution of the modernist paradigm of unlimited growth led to the insight that urban problems cannot be approached through growth-based scenarios alone, conceptual alternatives to high intensities of change have gained in significance. The concepts of incrementalism and process-based development have informed planning discourses as part of the restructuring of de-industrialised areas and inner city situations (Selle 1994; Ministerium für Landesentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt 2010). They are also seen to be useful in the understanding and enabling of the multiple small-scale adaptations that occur in dispersed urbanised areas (Sieverts 2003 [1997]).

Furthermore, the challenging of modernism's protective "envelopes" (Latour 2008, pp.8f) has brought to full view the consequences of a politics of externalisation of conflict. Conflicts of all kinds are being publically addressed in digital networks and the media. Information about conflicts is supplied and exchanged globally. Access to this information has become part of everyday routines. Consumers are increasingly aware of the effects their choices have for other places. Cities continue to be sites where controversies over conflicts are fought out in the open. Cities themselves are the concern of many controversies. The flow of private capital into the housing market, the redistribution, accumulation and extraction of capital investment have changed the social and material landscapes of many cities (Harvey 2001; Sassen 2014), asserting their role in processes of conflict and change. Concepts about agonistic forms of conflict have raised the awareness of the kinds of conflict that are difficult if not impossible to reconcile (Mouffe 2013) and have informed new conflict-centred approaches to designing, for example Jesko Fezer's "Parteiisches Design" (Fezer 2018). This is paralleled by the growing interest in ideas like urban commons or the ethical question about the nature and the possibilities of a good life in the city (Stavrides 2016; Ott 2018). Cities are contested zones in contemporary urban struggles (Stavrides 2010; 2018; Stratis 2016; Kling and Jungfer 2018).

However, as we have seen in the analysis, the theorisation of conflict in architecture and urbanism seems to be strangely underdeveloped for conditions of low and

high intensities of change. Moreover, many concepts in architecture and urbanism are theorised in such a way that they do not directly relate to the social or political. The keeping separate of material and social worlds and the anxious maintaining of disciplinary boundaries makes it difficult for concepts to travel and connect. This results in the exclusion of issues and the difficulty the disciplines have contributing their spatial and other specialist knowledge to public urban debates. In this situation, rather than insisting on the disciplines' expertise in 'problem solving' according to their own narrowly defined terms – which all too often has resulted in disappointment and frustration – the disciplines could put greater emphasis on their expertise in the detecting, identifying, and spatio-temporal analysis of conflicts and conditions of change (Kling and Kurbasik 2018). The knowledge produced in this way could be shared and debated with others to inform collective processes and matters of urban concern. The goal would not by necessity have to be a solution, but maybe just further steps in effecting change. The growing awareness of situations of conflict, the growing significance of process-led and collectively negotiated change, demand new conceptual approaches to conflict in architecture and urbanism. Understandings are required which go beyond the idea of conflict as temporary condition that disappears with conflict resolution. Stronger levels in the foregrounding of conflict could extend the repertoire of conceptualisations in architectural and urban theory, analysis and practice. The integration of alternative approaches of conflict could provide new possibilities for connecting to other concepts and practices, including those of other disciplines.

3. Preliminary Findings

The intersection of architectural and urban narratives of conflict and change has generated the following observations:

1. The **positional map** has produced a new level of **integration** and **conceptual densification** in the research process.
2. We see how positions about change are **distributed** in the positional map according to intensity of change and foregrounding of conflict, and how they **relate to each other**.
3. The positions are **not spread evenly** across the field. We can observe **two positional voids** in the pattern, together with a zone of higher density running from bottom left to top right between them, indicating a **proportionalising tendency** in the distribution.
4. There are a **limited number of positions** that combine:
5. **low intensities of change with a strong foregrounding of conflict**
6. **high intensities of change with a medium foregrounding of conflict**

Based on these observations and our above discussion, the following propositions can be made:

1. The theorisation of conflict in architecture and urbanism seems to be **strangely underdeveloped for conditions of low and high intensities of change**.

2. The growing **awareness** of situations of conflict, the growing significance of process-led and collectively negotiated change, seem to **demand new conceptual approaches** to conflict in architecture and urbanism.
3. Many concepts in architecture and urbanism are theorised in such a way that they **do not** directly **relate to the social, or the political**.
4. Disciplinary thinking and the keeping separate of material and social worlds makes it **difficult for concepts to travel and connect**.
5. This results in the **exclusion of issues** and the **difficulty the disciplines have contributing their spatial and other specialist knowledge to public urban debates**.
6. In this situation, rather than insisting on the disciplines' expertise in '**problem solving**' according to their own narrowly defined terms, the disciplines could put **greater emphasis on** their expertise in **problem detecting, identifying, and spatio-temporal analysis**.
7. **Stronger levels in the foregrounding of conflict** could **extend the repertoire of conceptualisations** in architectural and urban theory, analysis and practice.
8. The **integration of alternative approaches of conflict** could provide new possibilities for **connecting** to other concepts and practices, including those of other disciplines.
9. The knowledge produced in this way could be **shared and debated** with others to inform collective processes and **matters of urban concern**.

With these considerations, observations and propositions in the background, the void and its adjacent concepts in the region of low intensities of change defines the site for which I propose to develop a new concept of change in the next stage of the enquiry.

