ÉTUDES URBAINES

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A Field Guide to Berlin

Designing teaching material for a field visit in urban studies

UNIL | Université de Lausanne
Institut de géographie
et durabilité

This field guide is part of a larger course that has been running since 2019. It has been designed specifically for this course. It is the outcome of updates undertaken over the years, reflecting the range of topics to be studied in Berlin and the expertise of the teaching team: Martin Müller, Nadja Imhof, Julio Paulos and Clotilde Trivin.

La série « Études urbaines » publie des rapports issus de recherches menées au sein de l'Institut de géographie et durabilité de l'Université de Lausanne. L'objectif est de rendre publics et accessibles des résultats de projets traitant de l'urbain sous ses différentes facettes.

A Field Guide to Berlin
Designing teaching material for a field visit in urban studies

This field guide is part of a larger field course called 'Urban Dynamics' (Dynamiques Urbaines), running in the third year of the Bachelor degree in Geography at the University of Lausanne. In this course, students are expected to define and realise for the first time a self-organised research project in groups, taking place in Berlin.

It starts from the observation that urban change is always subject to contestation and debate, and therefore to politics. We distinguish between big P Politics, that is, the institutionalised politics of political institutions, state actors, and officials; and small p politics, the politics of everyday contestations, solidarity, protesting and sometimes of simply acting in one way than another, that pervades Berlin.

It contains two field days in Berlin that students can undertake as a self-guided tour. Each day has four sites for which the field guide contains both background information, key concepts of urban geography, and questions that familiarise them with important debates.

Mots clés : field guide; urban dynamics; global city; culture-led urban development; urban nature; public space; local identity

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1.1 COURSE DESIGN

This field guide is part of a larger field course called 'Urban Dynamics' (*Dynamiques Urbaines*), during the third year of the Bachelor degree in Geography at the University of Lausanne. The course has been running since 2019 and this field guide has been designed specifically for this course. It is the outcome of updates undertaken over the years, reflecting the range of topics to be studied in Berlin and the expertise of the teaching team: Martin Müller, Nadja Imhof, Julio Paulos and Clotilde Trivin.

The table below summarises these developments and the contributions of the teaching team.

Year	Teachers	Contributions
2019	Martin Müller Nadja Imhof	Creation of the field guide: Day 1: A city between East and West: Berlin's political geography and large-scale urban projects. Visits around 4 sites: Reichstag, Embassies, Stadtschloss, Museum Island. Designed by Martin Müller. Day 2: Urban nature and experimental urbanism: parks, graffiti capitalism, bottom-up initiatives. Visits around 4 sites: Görlitzer Park, Blu Mural, East Side Gallery, Urban Spree. Designed by Nadja Imhof.
2020	Martin Müller Nadja Imhof Julio Paulos	Updates are made to Day 2: With growing focus on temporary and DIY urbanism, 4 new sites are added: Boxhagener Platz, Berghain, Bergmannkiez. Designed by Julio Paulos. Tempelhofer Feld is also added as a site to further explore urban nature, designed by Nadja Imhof.
2021	Martin Müller Nadja Imhof Julio Paulos	Updates are made to Day 2 to shorten it. 4 sites are selected between the existent visit sites: Görlitzer Park, Boxhagener Platz, Bergmannkiez, Tempelhofer Feld.
2022	Julio Paulos Nadja Imhof	5 optional visit sites were added at the end of the field guide to guide and inspire students during the rest of the field course. Designed by Nadja Imhof and Julio Paulos.
2023	Martin Müller Clotilde Trivin	Updates are made to Day 1: the site of the Tacheles is added to explore topics of commodification and atmospheres. Designed by Clotilde Trivin. The field guide is updated to make it more functional for students: the various introductory sections are revised and the key concepts discussed on each site narrowed down. Also, boxes are added for each site to provide an overview of key issues related to these concepts. Designed by Martin Müller and Clotilde Trivin.

1.2 WHY BERLIN ?

If there was one building to exemplify the changing fortunes of Berlin in the last century, it would be the Tacheles, a building situated in the district of Berlin-Mitte. Originally built as part of a shopping centre, it was partly destroyed during the Second World War, fell into disuse, was squatted by artists, recognised by the state and then, eventually, transformed into luxury housing and retail (see Day 1, site 4). Such was the transformation of Berlin as a whole, once at the centre of Europe, then destroyed, divided, reinvented and now at the danger of succumbing to the same consumerism that marks so many large cities.

Against this background, it is hard to imagine a better city than Berlin to illustrate many of the central concepts and ideas of urban geography today. The processes that characterise the German capital run the gamut of urban dynamics of cities in the world. From commodification to the commons, from informality to imagineering, from Kiezleben to global city competition, Berlin has it all. Unsurprisingly, there is an extensive academic literature on the urban transformation of Berlin that provides rich background reading ().

Berlin may no longer be as poor as in 2003, when the former mayor Klaus Wowereit made his famous dictum "arm, aber sexy" (poor but sexy). But it is still sexy. Little does one have to explain to students that Berlin is an interesting place to do a field trip. The city is young, vibrant, diverse, and still affordable for the student budget. It changes at breakneck speed. That it is less dominated by big business than other European capitals – Paris, London, Madrid – makes it affordable and foregrounds the political and cultural dimensions of the city. At the same time, its history, present at every step, allows retracing global and European history in one place.

1.3 FROM BIG P TO SMALL P POLITICS

This field guide starts from the observation that urban change is always subject to contestation and debate. In other words, it is subject to politics. Unlike in maths, there is no neat and elegant solution to urban challenges. Each response to a challenge starts with a process of negotiation, involving compromises and trade-offs. That is the stuff of politics.

We distinguish a big P Politics, that is, the institutionalised politics of political institutions, state actors, and officials. This is what one typically thinks of when one hears the world politics in everyday language. But there is also a small p politics, the politics of everyday contestations, solidarity, protesting and sometimes of simply acting in one way than another, that pervades Berlin. Take the case of memory. There are big, official memorials, say that of the murdered Jews of Europe, created by official decree. And then there are quotidian memorials, some officially sanctioned, such as the golden cobble stones (*Stolpersteine* in German) that commemorate the deportation of Jews, some not (such as the graffiti mural to Carlo Giuliani below).

Politics (with a big P) and politics (with a small p) are intertwined: big P politics may produce small p politics reactions, such as in resistance to political decisions. And small p politics may push big P Politics in certain directions, such as when pressuring to adopt or not adopt a law.

FIGURE 1. THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL IN BERLIN MITTE (PHOTO: JOJAN, CC-BY 3.0)

FIGURE 2. MURAL OF CARLO GIULIANI IN BETHANIENPARK (PHOTO: MARTIN MÜLLER, 2023)

1.4 LEARNING OUTCOMES

This field guide is part of a larger field course called 'Urban Dynamics' (*Dynamiques Urbaines*), running in the third year of the Bachelor degree in Geography at the University of Lausanne. In this course, students are expected to define and realise for the first time a self-organised research project in groups, taking place in Berlin. The pedagogical objectives are presented in the box below.

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge
- Knowing the urban dynamics of a city-metropolis such as Berlin
- Set up a research project from start to finish
    · Research and study the literature
    · Develop a research question
    · Define a research plan
    · Use qualitative and quantitative methods
    · Analyse and interpret data
    · Write up and present results

Skills
- Scientific autonomy in the preparation of a research project (preparation of Bachelor's thesis)
- Preparing and carrying out fieldwork
- Reading and interacting in foreign languages (German, English)
- Project management
- Apply theoretical knowledge to concrete case studies
- Scientific writing and illustration

The course involves three preparatory sessions over the course of three months in which students are accompanied in the development of a research question, a review of the state-of-the-art of the academic literature and a research design. They then spend four days in Berlin, two as a self-guided field trip with this field guide and two dedicated to data collection for their research projects. The final assignment is to build a website that communicates the results of their research projects in accessible but academic style, including references and methods.

1.5 ORGANISATION OF THE FIELD GUIDE

The field guide contains two field days in Berlin that students can undertake as a self-guided tour. Day 1 covers the big P Politics of Berlin in the city centre and its attempts to deal with memory and place itself in the network of global cities. Day 2 is dedicated to the small p politics of the everyday and to transformation processes in two residential neighbourhoods of Berlin – Kreuzberg and Friedrichshain – involving green spaces and material urban interventions. The intensity of the urban restructuring processes that unfolded over a short period of time post-1989 make Berlin an interesting case to look at the relation how the symbolic and the material are intertwined in urban politics.

Each day has four sites for which the field guide contains both background information, key concepts of urban geography (referred to in **bold** in the field guide), and a number of questions that students work on independently and that familiarise them with important debates and controversies as well as research methods. Debriefing points with instructors are scheduled after two sites to receive feedback on work related to the questions and be able to ask questions.

Monographs and edited volumes on Berlin

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2 WHAT HAPPENED SO FAR: BERLIN THE NEW AND OLD CAPITAL OF GERMANY

November 9th and October 3rd are two dates ingrained into German collective memory: on November 9th 1989 the Berlin wall was torn down, and on October 3rd 1990 the two Germanies were officially reunified. Ever since, October 3rd has been the German national holiday, even though for many November 9th remains the more symbolic date.

Berlin became the official capital of Germany in 1990, but the government and many of the ministries did not move here from Bonn until 1999. The decision to relocate the government to Berlin was highly contested: a vote in the *Bundestag* yielded 338 positive votes against 320 negative votes. The German government is now bi-locational, reflecting the strong federalism and decentralisation of the country as a whole: 6 of the 14 federal ministries (Education, Defence, Agriculture, Environment, Development and Health) are headquartered in Bonn, which is a five-hour train ride away. Also, the highest institutions of the Judiciary which are the Federal Court of Justice and the Federal Constitutional Court, are in the city of Karlsruhe in the southwest of Germany.

The move from Bonn to Berlin cost EUR 10 billion and was one of the largest projects of German reunification. It was followed by many large urban development projects that are designed to both memorialise the past and build the new Berlin such as the Reichstag, the new Potsdamer Platz and the Hauptbahnhof (main train station) where the North-South and East-West lines cross. In international politics and in popular perception, this move is successful, as Berlin is thought of as the centre of German power. Following reunification, Berlin's physical urban space and its political identity have been thoroughly transformed: sometimes still referred to as the "easternmost city of the West and the westernmost city of the East", Berlin also became a cultural and creative capital.


FIGURE 3. VIEW OF THE RESTRUCTURED LANDSCAPE OF THE CENTRE OF BERLIN (PHOTO: NORDENFAN, CC-BY 4.0)

3 DAY 1: THE BIG P POLITICS OF CITY-MAKING: URBAN MEGA-PROJECTS, CULTURE AND THE CITY

This day takes you around the centre of Berlin on four stops which allow you to consider the big P Politics of city-making. You will consider questions of **commemoration** at the seat of the German parliament, the Reichstag, and of **iconicity**, continuing further down along the embassies situated on the 'Unter den Linden' boulevard. In front of the reconstructed City Palais, Berlin's latest landmark and cultural flagship, you will weigh questions of **global city**-making and dwell on the merits and drawbacks of **culture-led urban development** on the Museumsinsel. You will wrap up by visiting the famous Tacheles, now turned into a residential and commercial development, to see how **commodification** of the arts is put to work in the urban space and how **atmospheres** are created.

Concepts: Commemoration – Iconicity – Global City – Culture-led Urban Development – Commodification - Atmospheres
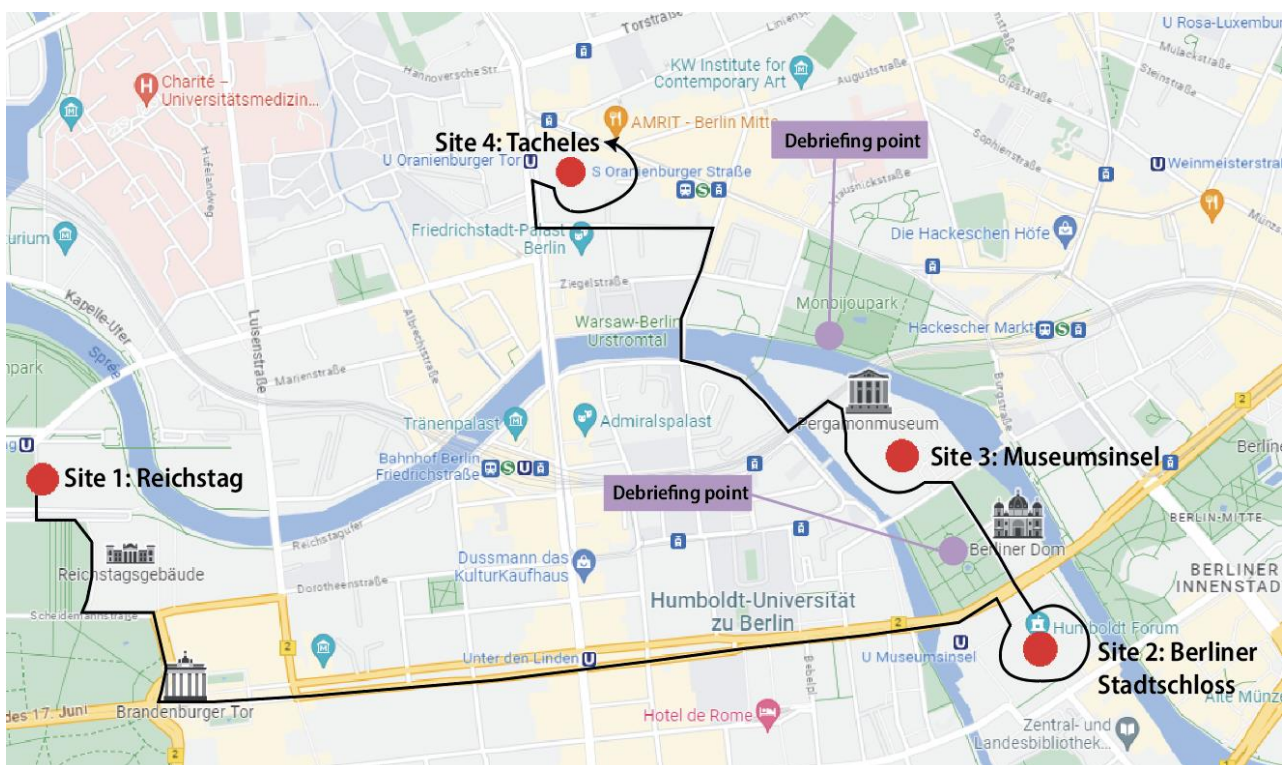
3.1 SITE 1. REICHSTAG: A HISTORIC SYMBOL IN URBAN LANDSCAPE

Concepts: commemoration, urban icons

Where? In front of the Reichstag building

The Reichstag is redolent of Germany's past. The establishment of the Second German Reich after the victory over France in 1871 occasioned its construction. Built in neo-renaissance style, it was not finished until 1894 and served as the seat of the German Parliament during the times of the German Empire and the Weimar Republic (1918-1933). Allegedly burnt down by the Nazis as a pretext for seizing power, it became the iconic image of Allied victory at the end of World War II.

Commemoration

Cities consist of layers of history that reference times past. What histories to remember, why to remember them and how to remember them is a political choice. It tells you much about what narratives cities and the authorities that govern them want to construct and promote about a city.

Are the dark spots in the past ignored or mentioned? Is commemoration spectacular (like the monument of the Soviet soldier, say) or rather inconspicuous and silent (like the golden pavement stones, the *Stolpersteine*)? Are there many different voices and histories that overlap (this is called 'polyphonous') or is there one dominant narrative that trumps others? Whose experiences are included, and whose are excluded? All this refers to a process of commemoration, the **politics of urban memory**.

History is more present and visible in Berlin than in many other cities. The city was the capital of the country that started the two world wars, it was the capital of power of Nazism, it was razed to the ground in 1944/1945, then divided by a wall and governed in two different economic and political systems that came head-to-head in this small space during the Cold War.

Most importantly, the stories a city tells about its past indicate where a city sees itself heading in the future.

Further reading
Latham et al. (2009: 186-194)

Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-V00397
Foto: o.Ang. | Juli 1946

FIGURE 4. THE REICHSTAG BUILDING AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR (PHOTO: BUNDESARCHIV, JULY 1946, CC BY-SA 3.0)

The Norman Foster re-design from the 1990s features plenty of glass and natural light, to emphasise transparency and democracy. The Reichstag has today become **a symbol not just of Berlin but of Germany** and of German reunification. It is featured in many brochures, Instagram posts and tourist guides. In this sense, it has acquired an **iconicity** way beyond the borders of Berlin.

Iconicity

Icon is the Greek word for 'image'. The term iconicity refers to the fact that some buildings or images become representative of a whole city or country. Think of the jet d'eau in Geneva or the Eiffel tower in Paris.

Iconicity has become particularly important in the age of mass media, and even more so in the age of social media. Today, everybody can produce images with the tap of their finger and let them circulate around the world on YouTube, Instagram or other platforms.

Cities often seek to exploit this in a politics of iconicity, where they attempt to send certain messages about a city to recipients.

It is, however, difficult to build and control iconicity. The messages that a building or image sends can be subverted or contested in a social media space where today everybody participates in image-making, not just a select few.

Further reading
Sklair (2017)

Questions

(1) What kind of commemoration does the Reichstag engage in?
   a. What are spectacular, what are less spectacular elements?
   b. What narrative of Germany do you think that commemoration wants to tell?

(2) Imagine you want to do a research project on the following question: *How is the Reichstag iconic of Berlin?*

   a. What methods would you choose to answer this?
   b. Why?

Key references

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Iconicity continued...

Embassies, too, can be powerful materialisations of iconicity. The German word for embassy, 'Botschaft', means 'message'. Embassies therefore often send messages. As you go to site 2 (Berliner Stadtschloss), keep an eye out for the many embassies and the kind of icons they are.

Go past Brandenburg Gate and down "Unter den Linden" (*Under the linden trees*). It is the central representative boulevard in Berlin, linking the Reichstag with the former City Palace over a distance of about 1.5 kilometres. On your way down pay attention to the different symbolic materialisations of power you encounter, and especially keep an eye out for the different embassies, for example:

- French and US embassies on Pariser Platz
- UK embassy, just around the corner in Wilhelmstrasse
- Russian embassy, at 'Unter den Linden'

FIGURE 5. UK EMBASSY IN BERLIN (PHOTO: JEAN-PIERRE DALBÉRA, CC-BY 2.0)

The UK embassy occupies the site of the former embassy building until World War II. It was designed by Michael Wilford and Partners and opened in 2000. Its modern look has received much praise and was widely seen as promoting the UK as "cool Britannia".

As we head further down "Unter den Linden", we pass a number of cultural mega-projects, dating to the 18th and 19th centuries (remember that Berlin became capital of the German Empire in 1871 and before was the capital of the state of Prussia). We swing by the Comic Opera, the State Library, the main building of the Humboldt University and Berlin State Opera.

Founded in 1947 and directed by Walter Felsenstein, the Komische Oper Berlin achieved worldwide recognition as the birthplace of modern music theatre. The simply designed facade, the modern foyer and lobby are from the reconstruction of the building in the 1960s. They stand in stark contrast to the neo-baroque interior, which was largely undamaged in World War II.

FIGURE 6. KOMISCHE OPER BERLIN (PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA COMMONS, PUBLIC DOMAIN)

3.2 SITE 2. THE BERLINER STADTSCHLOSS (CITY PALACE): A CULTURAL MEGA-PROJECT

Concept: global city

Where? In front of and inside the "Stadtschloss/Humboldt-Forum", at the end of "Unter den Linden"

The City Palace used to be the dominating building in Berlin-Mitte. It was heavily damaged by Allied bombing during World War II and then blown up in 1950 by the Communist Party to make way for the Marx-Engels Square to use for marches and demonstrations. In 1973, the GDR constructed the Palace of the Republic (Palast der Republik) on the area, the building housing the parliament of the socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR). It was demolished in the early 2000s, after toxic levels of asbestos were discovered in the building. (Consider the politics of commemoration here, as compared to site 1.)

FIGURE 7. PALACE OF THE REPUBLIC IN THE 1970S (PHOTO: PETER HEINZ JUNGE, CC BY-SA 3.0)

After intense discussion and an architectural tender, the German Parliament decided to reconstruct the City Palace in large parts, following a project by architect Franco Stella (Italy), for a total of some EUR 680 million. Opened in 2021, it now houses the Humboldt Forum, a large museum and exhibition space which aims to be a centre for world culture, notably non-European art, following the spirit of brothers Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt (the latter a noted geographer!). Sometimes seen as an equivalent to the British Museum (or the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris), the Humboldt Forum has ambitions to be one of a small number of universal museums in the world.

The Humboldt-Forum has been described as *the* cultural mega-project in the heart of Berlin and a new magnet for tourists and locals alike. It therefore continues a worldwide trend of building large cultural facilities with international attractiveness, known as **cultural flagships.** It represents one attempt of Berlin at aspiring to the status of a **global city.** While it cannot rival with other European capitals in economic power, Berlin certainly aspires to become a cultural global city.

> **Global city**
>
> Global city is a term coined to describe cities that are command and control centres of the global economy. This is where the movers and shakers of global capitalism are located.
>
> Traditionally, London, Paris, New York and Tokyo have been considered global cities. They are now being rivalled by cities from large emerging economies, such as Mexico City, Shanghai, Sao Paulo and Mumbai.
>
> Cities often want to become global cities so as to attract economic capital and acquire more prestige. Elaborate rankings have emerged over time that rank cities according to their economic power. Berlin is only considered a "Beta" global city and ranks behind Munich in Germany. It is considered about as influential as much smaller cities such as Auckland, Barcelona, Bogotá and Beirut.
>
> **Further reading**
> Brenner & Keil (2006)

Global ambitions, decolonial imperatives...

The Humboldt-Forum is free to enter. Do have a look inside. Pick up some leaflets on the Forum and the exhibitions (e.g. on "Global Berlin"). If you have time, visit one of the free exhibitions to get a better feeling of how Berlin envisions to position itself as a cultural global city. While intended as a cultural mega-project, it also faces significant controversy, particularly about the provenance and expropriation of the exhibits, sometimes acquired under dubious circumstances. Protest groups criticize that the Humboldt-Forum exhibits the booty of German imperialism, therefore continuing in its wake.

Controversy around the Humboldt-Forum: "like Chernobyl"

A whole new cultural district is being created in the very heart of the city. It represents an approach that brings together diverse cultures and perspectives and seeks new insights into topical issues such as migration, religion and globalization... The Humboldt Forum creates spaces for encounters and exchange...

Humboldt-Forum 2019: website

"In July 2017 Bénédicte Savoy, one of the most prominent art historians in Germany, resigned from the scientific advisory board of the Humboldt Forum because, according to her, it did not engage sufficiently with the colonial origins of the prospective collections. Savoy topped off her gesture of protest with an interview in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in which she compared the Humboldt Forum with the reactor catastrophe in Chernobyl. The collections of the Humboldt Forum represented "300 years of collecting activity with all of the nastiness and hopes that are bound up with it. That is us, that is Europe. One could imagine so much if it wasn't all buried under this lead, covered like nuclear waste just so that no radiation leaks out. The Humboldt Forum is like Chernobyl." Savoy's criticism met with great public resonance. It became the starting point of a gradually growing controversy, which has accompanied the Humboldt Forum project for about ten years. It reached its preliminary peak in November 2018 when Savoy, together with the Senegalese publicist Felwine Sarr, commissioned by the French president, suggested new rules for dealing with the colonial collections of French museums and demanded restitutions."

Thiemeyer 2019: 975-976

Questions

    (1) What makes a city a global city....
          a. What could be criteria that make a city a global city, other than the economy?
          b. To what degree is Berlin a global city?
          c. How desirable is it for cities to become a global city?

(2) Many cities around the world aspire to building mega-projects.
   a. What are other urban mega-projects you know that are currently ongoing?
   b. Why do you think cities build mega-projects?
   c. What are the drawbacks of such a strategy?

(3) Once you have looked inside....
   a. Who are the main actors behind the Humboldt-Forum and what does that tell you?
   b. What kind of image of the city is produced through the Forum and its exhibitions?
   c. What elements make the Humboldt-Forum a global cultural flagship? What not?
   d. How is an attempt to critically reflect on colonialism present (or not) and how does it relate to the ambition of being 'global'?

Key references
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Grodach, Carl. 2008. "Museums as Urban Catalysts: The Role of Urban Design in Flagship Cultural Development." *Journal of Urban Design* 13/2: 195–212.
Parzinger, Hermann. 2015. "Humboldt-Forum: A New Centre for Art and Culture in Berlin." *Science First Hand*, 3/42: 56–77.
Thiemeyer, Thomas. 2019. "Cosmopolitanizing Colonial Memories in Germany." *Critical Inquiry,* 45/4: 967–90.

FOR SITES 1 and 2: after lunch at 13:30 and 14:00 on the lawn of the Lustgarten park in front of the Stadtschloss

Bad weather location: in the lobby of the Humboldt-Forum (where the cash desks are).

13:30	14:00

This table is used to schedule the debriefing with the different groups: for example Group 1 and Group 3 will meet the teachers at 13:30 while Group 2 and 4 will meet them at 14:00.

3.3 SITE 3. THE MUSEUMSINSEL: A CULTURAL DISTRICT

Concepts: culture-led urban development, tourist class

Where? On the Museumsinsel and in the museums (where accessible)

The Museumsinsel is the largest concentration of museums in Berlin, with five art museums featuring mostly the development of European art and its roots in the Near East. It is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The Museum Island Master plan

"Between 1823 and 1930, a unique ensemble of museums emerged on the Spree Island. The UNESCO, in its reasoning for including the Museum Island Berlin in the World Heritage List, describes it as the most outstanding example of the concept of the art museum that owes its origins to the Age of Enlightenment.

The Museum Island was designed by some of the most eminent architects of their time – Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Friedrich August Stüler, Ernst Eberhard von Ihne and Alfred Messel. Each of the five museums is an individual building that blends in harmoniously with the overall picture of the island.

In the context of the Museum Island Master Plan, further buildings will be carefully added to the historical ensemble. Just as in former times, world-famous architects such as David Chipperfield are in charge of this today. The realization of the building projects in the context of the Museum Island Master Plan rests with the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning."

"The Museum Island Berlin was included in the UNESCO World Heritage in 1999. Being one of Berlin's main attractions, it is visited by about three million people each year. These two aspects have been taken into account in the Museum Island Master Plan which was agreed upon in 1999.

The island, which is located on the Spree River and measures about one square kilometer will be developed into a modern museum complex. At the same time, the unique, historically grown ensemble of architecture and art will be preserved. All measures are being taken in close coordination with the authorities in charge of the protection of historic buildings and monuments. It is expected that the Museum Island Berlin will be completed in 2025/26 in accordance with the Master Plan."

Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz 2019: website

Similar urban concentrations of museums (often known as arts and cultural districts) can be found in many other cities and are becoming an increasingly popular model of urban development (e.g. the MuseumsQuartier in Vienna, Parc de la Villette in Paris, Platform 10 in Lausanne, etc). These districts are meant to create a new, sophisticated, and dynamic image of the city and attract tourists and investments in the global competition for cultural and financial capital. This strategy is called **culture-led urban development.**


Culture-led urban development

New museums, concert halls and festivals… have you ever wondered why many cities around the world seem to be investing so much in culture in recent years? Just think of the iconic images of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg.

This is part of a larger trend called culture-led urban development in which cities use cultural institutions and events to make themselves attractive to new urban dwellers and the creative class. Often, these initiatives are a response to deindustrialisation (and the resulting brownfield spaces) and to suburbanization, which resulted in people leaving the city centres.

As the symbolic economy has become more important over recent decades, so has culture as a means of branding a city and creating a cool, creative, or classy vibe.

Further reading
Evans (2003) | Colomb (2012)
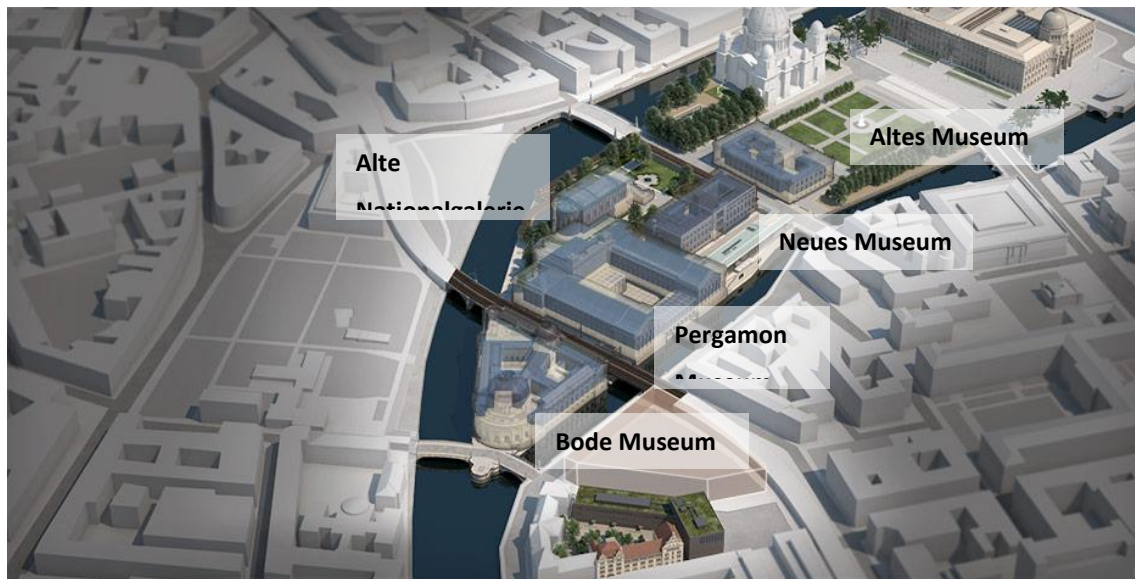
Model of the five major museums of the Museum Island

Revenons successivement sur les trois projets que vous avez évoqués : les travaux de réhabilitation sur l'île aux Musées sont loin d'être achevés. Quelle est votre stratégie pour ce site pendant la phase de rénovation ?

Les grands chantiers sur l'île aux Musées nous posent naturellement un problème, car nous avons moins de visiteurs et les recettes issues des billets d'entrée sont très importantes pour nous. Avant sa fermeture, le musée de Pergame accueillait à lui seul 1,5 million de visiteurs par an. Actuellement, deux tiers environ de sa superficie sont inaccessibles, pourtant nous enregistrons encore 800 000 visiteurs par an et les gens font la queue pour entrer. Nous avons donc pris la bonne décision en ne le fermant pas complètement, même si c'est une solution toujours compliquée d'un point de vue logistique. Nous allons édifier un bâtiment temporaire en face du Bode-Museum. Nous réinstallerons dans ce « Pergamon-Interim » le panorama de Pergame qui s'est trouvé un temps sur le parvis du musée de Pergame.

Quand ouvrira-t-il ?

Nous souhaitons l'avoir achevé l'année prochaine. En 2018. L'année 2018-2019 sera importante, parce que la galerie James Simon, le nouveau bâtiment d'accueil sur l'île, sera aussi terminée. Les travaux au musée de Pergame vont malheureusement durer encore longtemps. La prochaine étape concernera la promenade archéologique, c'est-à-dire la connexion souterraine entre les différents musées. Avant la guerre, ils étaient reliés en surface par des ponts. Nous finirons par la réfection générale de l'Altes Museum de Schinkel. Nous ne cessons de repousser ce projet à cause de sa complexité. Certaines mesures ont déjà été prises : l'escalier extérieur a été restauré, la rotonde a été refaite à neuf il y a quelques années. Mais nous voulons retrouver largement l'Altes Museum tel que l'avait conçu Schinkel et le relier à la promenade archéologique. La moyenne de notre budget construction est actuellement de 130 millions par an, répartis entre la totalité des chantiers. Tant que le musée du XXe siècle et la première tranche de travaux du musée de Pergame ne sont pas terminés, nous ne nous attaquerons certainement pas à l'Altes Museum. Pour résumer : c'est un projet sur plusieurs générations.

From: Parzinger & Meunier 2017: 194-195

Questions

(1) Observe the space for 10 minutes: What social groups are here? What are they doing? How are they using the space? Draft a short observation grid (grille d'observation) below.

(2) How do you assess culture-led urban development more generally?
   a. What are opportunities associated with this kind of urban politics?
   b. What are problems?
   c. How would you approach culture-led urban development if you were an urban decision-maker?

Key references

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3.4 SITE 4. THE TACHELES: COMMODIFYING CULTURE

Concepts: atmospheres, commodification

Where? In front of the former Tacheles and around the new urban development project

The Tacheles was one of the many abandoned or empty spaces that were characteristic and symbolic of the urban space and culture of Berlin. After the Berlin Wall came down in November 1989, a subculture which had its main focus on autonomy, spontaneity and improvisation arose in the former East Berlin areas Mitte, Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain. Artists from all over the world used the plurality of available free spaces to put alternative lifestyles to the test.

On February 13th 1990, three months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a group of artists takes over an abandoned building on Oranienburgerstrasse, in the heart of Mitte, in Berlin's former Jewish ghetto. To commemorate this past, they name this building the Tacheles, which in Yiddish means "to speak clearly, without pretences, in a direct way". After resisting tentative evictions, the artists formed an association, opened workshops, and renovated the building using the materials that they found around, especially metal scraps.

FIGURE 8. THE TACHELES AND ITS BACKYARD IN 1995 (PHOTO: DREAM RUNE, CC BY-SA 3.0)

The building was designed in 1907 as part of a department store, then became a Nazi administration building. Between 1943 and 1945, during the allied air raids, the building was hit by bombs several times and got partly damaged, but not completely destroyed. After 1948, one side of the building was still used for many different purposes, but the other side was slowly torn down, step-by-step, as the East Berlin government had no funds to restore it properly. Meanwhile, the remaining wing became a storage for building material. The very last structure still standing was planned to be demolished in April 1990.

The Tacheles is recognised by politics in 1993: the cultural center is protected from police raids, it benefits from funds from the Senate for Cultural Affairs and is even visited by the Rita Süssmuth, the President of the Bundestag. The tension between the recognition of the building by official urban politics and the development of a space of alternative culture grows and mirrors the tensions between the artists of the Tacheles. The "Ossis", hailing from East Berlin, are firmly opposed to the commercialisation of art, whereas the "Wessis", from West Berlin, argue for the opening of the cultural center to tourists and media for more visibility. During that time, the Tacheles gains international recognition and is considered a cultural icon, attracting an increasing number of tourists.

With the wider transformation of Berlin-Mitte and the increasing value of the land, the parcel of 3 ha of the Tacheles belongs to the Federal state and is under growing development pressure. Despite significant local resistance (actions, petitions, alternative consultative projects etc.), the land of the Tacheles is sold to the private investor Fundus in 1997. The redevelopment project "AM Tacheles: Stadtquartier am Tacheles" is revealed in 2003 and is still under construction today. This new neighbourhood complex will comprise luxury apartments (the exact replica of a luxury residence in Upper Manhattan), offices, shops, restaurant, hotels and parking lots, as well as two small squares to host concerts and shows during the summer. The Tacheles has become a trendy brand name and the artistic has undergone complete **commodification.** Boris Grésillon writes: « C'est bien la preuve que du projet alternatif de départ il ne reste que le nom ; mais un nom utilisé, dévoyé, vidé de sa substance. »

Commodification

Commodification means turning something into a good which can be marketed, sold and privatised. The history of capitalism is also a history of commodification where an increasing number of originally common resources (water, land etc.) have become commodified.

Art has become a recent object of commodification. Originally often created for people's enjoyment, there is now a global art market that is worth several billions of dollars. Art has also become an object of investment and asset for wealthy people.

The commodification of art is very present in urban spaces, where art can be used to increase the value of buildings by adding a bohemian touch or attract a wealthy clientele into spaces of consumption.

Further reading
Scott (2001)
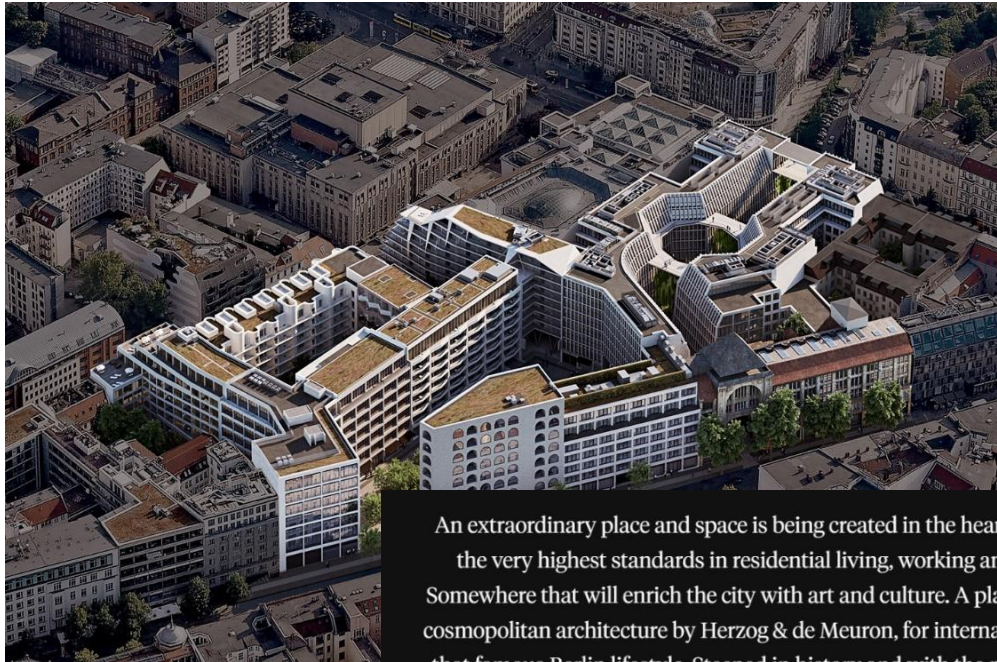
An extraordinary place and space is being created in the heart of Berlin. For the very highest standards in residential living, working and shopping. Somewhere that will enrich the city with art and culture. A place for stunning cosmopolitan architecture by Herzog & de Meuron, for international class and that famous Berlin lifestyle. Steeped in history and with the promise of even more still to come.

The most exciting urban planning project in the metropolis.

You can now walk around the new urban development project and pay attention to how the histories and meanings of this space are visible or not and have been commodified or not. Feel how AM Tacheles plays with **atmospheres** to appeal to all sense of the human body.

Atmosphere

Atmosphere is not just an everyday term, but also a technical term in urban geography. It refers to how human bodies are affected by the lived experience of material spaces – by air, light, sound, scent. Atmospheres therefore have a material quality and arise from the interaction of bodies and spaces. They are also ephemeral and fleeting.

Urban atmospheres are born in the crisscrossing of multiple sensations.

Jean-François Augoyard

Atmospheres are important in cities because they influence how we feel in the urban space. Do we feel threatened or at ease? Relaxed or tense? Does an urban space excite us, or is it dull?

But atmospheres can also be manipulated to put us into a certain mood or disposition, without us even noticing.

Further reading
Michels (2015) | Gandy (2017)

Questions:

(1) How and where is the former Tacheles still present in the urban development project? Make a list of the different places and ways you encounter it.

(2) How do you feel when walking around this project? How do you think other people might feel here? Perform a sensitive mapping (cartographie sensible) on part of the Tacheles to back up your argument.

(3) Imagine you want to do a research project on the following question: How does the redevelopment project of the Tacheles transform the space and atmosphere of the neighbourhood?

    a. What methods would you choose to answer this?
    b. Why?

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Sandler, Daniela, 2016. *Counterpreservation: Architectural Decay in Berlin since 1989.* Cornell University Press.

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FOR SITES 3 and 4: at 17:00 and 17:30 on the lawn of the Monbijou park in front of the promenade by the Spree.

Bad weather location: under the arch of the Forum an der Museumsinsel (on Orianenburger Str.)

17:00	17:30

4 Day 2: Urban Nature and Experimental Urbanism

Themes: Public space, Urban nature, Local identity, Housing, Consumption

Bicycle Tour: Görlitzer Park – Boxhagener Platz – Lunch – Bergmannkiez – Tempelhofer Feld – Picnic

This day will take you on a four-stop journey through ordinary spaces in Berlin's changing neighbourhoods, allowing you to engage with the small-p politics of city-making. In Görlitzer Park, you will reflect on issues of planning and appropriation of **public and recreational spaces.** In the vibrant neighbourhood of Friedrichshain, around Boxhagener Platz, you will explore how **landscapes of consumption** can foster certain atmospheres and local identities, and participate in the politics of urban transformation. You will continue to think about senses of belonging and **local identities** in Bergannkiez, with a particular focus on infrastructures and practices of **mobility.** Finally, you will visit the famous Tempelhofer Feld, the former airport and largest green urban space in the world, to approach **urban nature:** how it is invested by various meanings and imaginaries, and how it is part of contested urban policies.
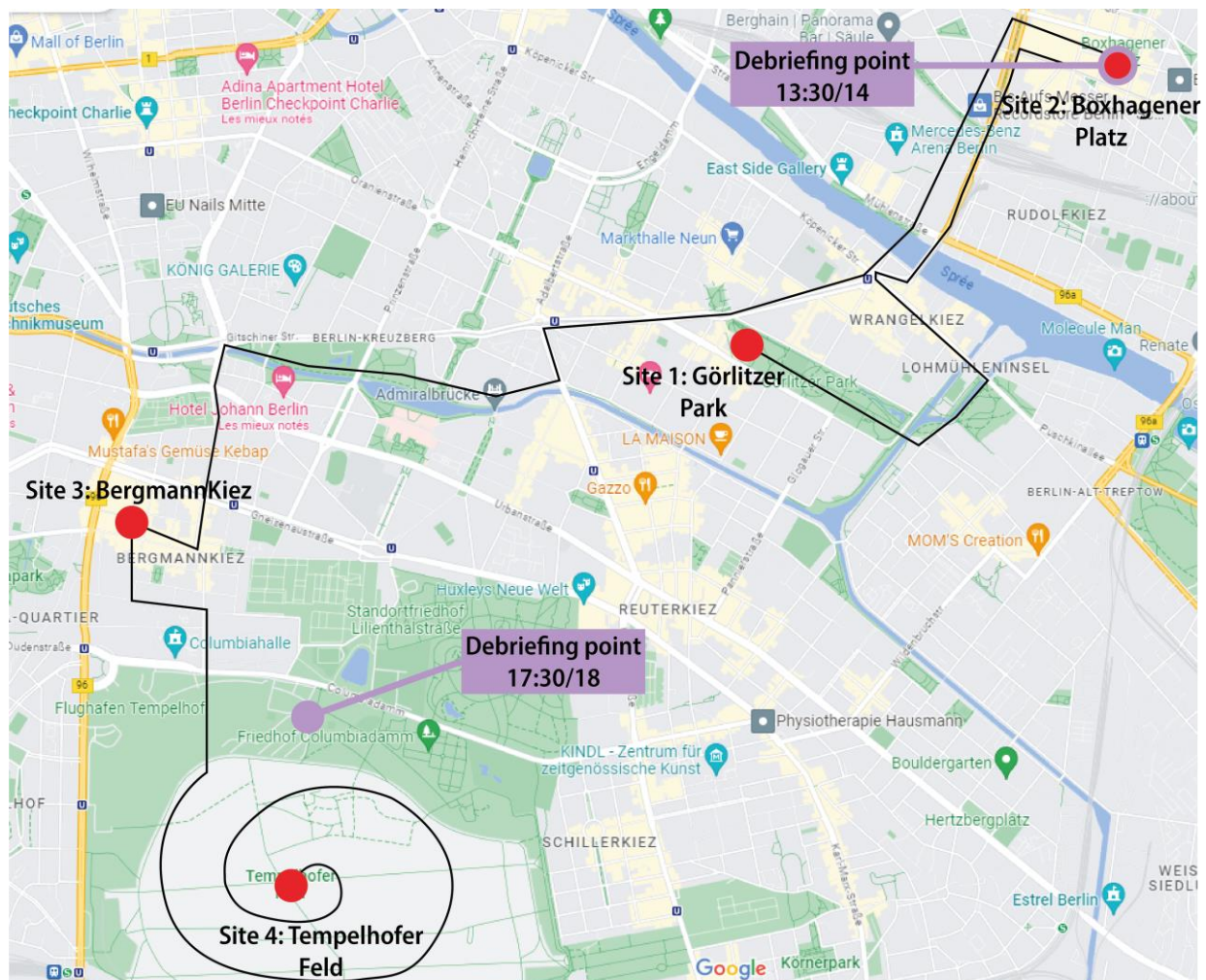
4.1 Site 1. Görlitzer Park: Reclaiming public spaces

Where? Towards the west entrance at the Pamukkale Fountain

Concepts: Public space, recreational space

How it all started

Before being a park, this space was a train station: the Görlitzer Bahnhof. The station survived the Second World War almost unscathed, but the Cold War led to its downfall. The already half-demolished station was definitely abandoned because of the proximity of the Berlin wall, which cut off the tracks in the East of the park, on the Northern side of the Spree River. In 1957, the main building of the train station was demolished and most of the rubble used to rebuild Berlin.

FIGURE 10. GÖRLITZER TRAIN STATION AND BROWNFIELD IN 1987 (PHOTO: ROHRENSEE, CC BY-SA 3.0)

Damaged by chemical waste and rusting car wrecks, the area decays more and more over the years and is rotting away. Some plants and trees start to grow. The residents use the area as a wild rubbish dump, waste oil septic tank and dog toilet. In order to cross the park from North to South, people had to go underneath the area through a 180-meter-long pedestrian tunnel. This tunnel soon becomes famously known as the "piss tube" because of its smell. Remnants of the tunnel have remained in today's crater.

How to make a park

In 1980, a neighbourhood association and committed residents began to clear out the park and work on the neglected property. There were many complications: greasy waste oil in the groundwater and a contaminated soil testify to the industrial exploitation of the property. Half a meter of soil contaminated with chemicals was removed and replaced with fresh fertile soil. After further measures to improve the soil, the old railway station was slowly turned into a park, a **public space** for the neighbourhood. A children's farm was created in the park: now a rooster crows in the neighbourhood, and the city children marvel at pigs, donkeys, and goats. Planted with native and not very demanding plants, the small **recreational space** in the heart of Kreuzberg slowly turned into the park that it is today.

Pamukkale Fountain

The story of the Pamukkale fountain is tragic. The fountain was intended as the heart of the park and as a gift to the numerous Kreuzbergers of Turkish origin. The replica of the famous sinter terraces in Turkey was completed in 1997 - and broke down in the same winter. The limestone used for the structure wasn't adapted to the cold and wet winters of Berlin's continental climate. It was damaged so badly that the entire complex had to be fenced in and remained closed for ten years before being mostly torn down and only partially renovated. Today only the concrete steps remain.

The Görlitzer Park today

The people of Kreuzberg got the park they needed and which they had been demanding for decades on the grounds of the old Görlitzer railway station.

Today, drug dealers are standing at the entrances of the park and along its main paths, whispering their merchandise: "Hi, boss, all right? Do you need anything?" Many visitors like to sit on the remains of the Pamukkale fountain or get a drink in the beer garden, the former office building of the train station. Others like to use the big crater to read, chat, and hang out together. Next to it, the Turkish families are having a barbecue. The "Nobles of the Görli", a group of drinkers, reside in the small woods facing Liegnitzer Strasse and comment loudly on what is happening in the park. Further to the East lies the children's farm. It still does an important job for the many Kreuzberg children whose families cannot afford a holiday in the countryside.

Public space

Defining a public space can be challenging, which is why it is often thought of in contrast to private spaces: public spaces are freely accessible to everyone. Another feature of what makes a public space can also be who owns the land: the state or private companies. A street, a square, or a park are commonly thought of as public spaces. But when the sidewalk is too narrow for parents with prams or inaccessible for people with impaired mobility, is the street still public? Or if a park is privately owned and security guards are hired to ensure that only certain people can enjoy it, is it still public?

These examples show that spaces can be more or less public, but also how a private space can appear public (like the Sony Forum at Potsdamer Platz). This means that space is not public by nature, it is made public by people, their practices and the meanings they give to it, for instance through the appropriation of space. This raises questions about the design of public spaces and the design of cities more broadly: for whom do we make the city? The design of public spaces is inherently political and can contribute to making cities a more equitable place: public spaces play an important role in spatial (in)justice.

Further reading
D. Mitchell (1996)

However, the park is not green everywhere or all year long. In summer, the grass burns quickly, turning the park into a dusty steppe. The apples trees that have been planted are of little help in greening the park. Those who know the area from the eighties will always see Görlitzer Park as a Kreuzberg success story. Despite its growing popularity, some still see the Görlitzer Park as the underdog among the Berlin parks - a space that can be ugly, dirty, neglected and even dangerous. If many avoid the park because of this, others love it exactly for the same reasons: for its rugged charm that makes it a heart of Kreuzberg 36. Today, it seems that the popularity of the park keeps growing but that it is losing some of its rugged charm.

Recreational space

Recreational spaces in cities refer to places such as parks, cinemas, or stadiums where people can carry out activities in their free time, whether physical activities, entertainment purposes, or stimulating their creative development. Recreational spaces are designed to promote certain uses and practices: for example, parks are sometimes divided into different spaces with fences or infrastructure to separate spaces for physical activities, resting, walking etc. At another level, the planning of recreational spaces in the city can also allow their (in)accessibility, orient their frequentation etc.

Recreational spaces share common points with public spaces: they are not recreational in themselves but made so through the practices or meanings that are given to them. There is increasing recognition that enhancing green, public, and recreational spaces in cities can participate in making cities more sustainable, more liveable, and more equitable. This necessitates approaches to recreational spaces that take into account infrastructural needs, socio-spatial equity, and the possible uses they offer.

Further reading
Wolch et al. (2005)

Questions
(1) As you slowly make your way through the park from West to East, take notes of what you observe.
   a. What kind of park users do you see? What are they doing?
   b. What kind of installations and features have been installed in the park and who do they target?
   c. What kind of nature do you encounter?

(2) According to you, is this park a public space? What makes you think this?

(3) Given the dirty and dangerous reputation of the park some years ago (as described in the field guide), what are the factors which could explain the evolution of the park?

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4.2 Site 2. Boxhagener Platz: Consuming urban spaces

Where? Boxhagener Platz, Boxi

Concepts: Consumption, food geographies

Boxhagener Platz or *Boxi,* as it is called by Berliners, is a 'colourful pocket' in Friedrichshain known for its bohemian culture. With its cool cafés, theatres, and vintage stores, the Boxi neighbourhood attracts artisans, cinephiles, outdoor lovers and young families who contribute to a unique melting pot atmosphere.

Markets of all kinds are key figures in and of contemporary cities as they constitute **urban consumption spaces.** Often celebrated for their nostalgic flair and ability to travel across temporalities and spaces, food and flea markets have transformed from places of commerce and exchange into drivers of urban culture and place identity. Boxi's weekly food and flea markets are not only a tribute to the neighbourhood's roots, but also an immortalisation of the local vibe, with local artists selling their bohemian creations. Everything, from antiques to art, is meant to reflect the local atmosphere. In the context of a rapidly globalising world, the symbolic value of these markets lies in the experience of authenticity they offer, in the way they represent a local form of urban culture.

FIGURE 13. WOCHENMARKT IN BOXHAGENER PLATZ (PHOTO: FRIDOLIN FREUDENFETT, CC BY-SA 4.0)

In urban spaces that are considered vibrant, there is a growing enthusiasm for food: food is not only a product but it becomes an experience. A rapid rise in the number of "ethnic restaurants" or of "typical local cuisine" reflect the search for experiences of authenticity. This process of **foodification,** where historic city centers turn into a food-dominant consumption space,

transforms neighborhoods into stages for short-lived urban experiences. The popularity of mobile vendors and 'street food' activity in many cities is another example of this phenomenon.

With these evolutions of urban consumption landscapes, city inhabitants are appropriating and shaping urban spaces in new ways in order to cope with a situation of cultural instability and globalisation. This leads to performative uses of places, which in turn feed into the promotion of consumption cultures that are increasingly part of global identities. In the search for constant authenticity and self-identity, cities are fuelled by a symbolic economy in which culture becomes a commodity. The branding of certain identities and the modelling of certain consumption landscapes is not only an urban strategy to attract and recognise a certain community, it is also an urban strategy make invisible and displace certain populations, cultures and practices.

Consumption and food geographies

David Harvey has shown how, in order to create new means of producing and absorbing capital, urban governance has become preoccupied with finding new ways of stimulating local development and job growth. This has led to the centrality of consumption spaces in cities and their increasing spectacularisation (shopping malls, markets, restaurants, shops, cafes, etc.).

The role of food in the urban retail landscape is underlined by a growing number of studies showing that food offers are linked to urban policies and the broader transformations of cities (e.g. touristification, gentrification, etc.). Indeed, these consumption spaces can promote a sense of vibrancy, authenticity and uniqueness through material designs or atmospheres that are designed to further attract certain people and/or capital.

Analysing food landscapes can therefore reveal things about their environments: for example, the average prices in restaurants can indicate socio-economic levels, the diversity of culinary offerings can indicate designed atmospheres and identity discourses, the clientele can indicate the target population for a neighbourhood. These food landscapes can also be an effective way of understanding or predicting the evolution of neighbourhoods.

Further reading
Bourlessas et al. (2022)

(1) Draw a map of the food geography around Boxhagener park. The elements to include in it and the form of the map are up to you, but some elements that you could pay attention to are the number of restaurants, the types of cuisine offered, the prices etc.

(2) To what extent is this square a consumption space? To what public do you think it is addressed? What does this tell you about the neighbourhood and its socio-economic development?

(3) In what ways are the parks and neighbourhoods in Boxhagener Platz and Görlitzer Park similar/different?

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FOR SITES 1&2 after Lunch, at 13:30 and 14:00 at Boxhagener Platz

13:30	14:00

4.3 SITE 3. BERGMANNKIEZ: POLITICS AND PRACTICES OF LOCAL IDENTITY

Where? Bergmannstrasse, Chamissoplatz

Concepts: Local identity, mobility

Kiez is a German word that refers to a city neighbourhood and that is mainly used in Berlin. Other cities like Vienna or Zurich use words like *Grätzel* or *Kreis*, these specific terms have local social and cultural meanings: they signal **local identities.** They differ from the standard German word Viertel for a neighbourhood in the sense of "where one lives", one's "quartier". Rather than mere terms, such descriptions stand in for a whole lifeworld in the respective cities: if residents or people refer to 'their' *Kiez,* they do not only mean the physical area itself, but also refer to the local community's practices of identification.

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Local identity

Identity has a double meaning: it can refer to those aspects that make a place identifiable or unique, but it can also refer to the way in which individuals or groups identify with a place. The architecture, infrastructures, spatial practices, or atmospheres are all elements that can both define a city or neighbourhood as unique and allow its inhabitants to identify with it.

At a global level, studies have argued that standardised approaches to planning and the increasing commodification of urban spaces have led to the proliferation of shopping malls, glass high-rises or chain restaurants, and ultimately to the loss of local urban identities. On the other hand, competition for investment and branding has led to a renewed interest in local difference.

Local identity is not something that can be achieved through design and planning alone, as it relies on people feeling the authenticity and uniqueness of a place, rather than seeing it as engineered for that purpose.

Further reading
Evans et al. (2011)

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Bergmannkiez has become increasingly popular over the past decade. The urban experience and identity of the neighbourhood is centred on other cultural forms and consumption habits. Public life is driven by coffeehouses and a variety of cross-cultural food offerings. Often portrayed as a unique corner, tourists praise its Parisian charm, cafe-lined streets and historic covered market.

In 2020, the district decided to redesign Bergmannstrasse by introducing temporary 'shared space' zones. For example, parking spaces were transformed into small parklets for recreational use. Some of these elements were also targeted at issues of **mobility:** painting yellow dots on the ground were designed to force cars to slow down and the cycling lanes were protected from the rest of the traffic by the parklets. After a year of experimenting with recreational street furniture and shared street concepts, the municipality decided to go back to normal. Indeed, many of these temporary urban elements disappeared because they didn't have the intended results.

FIGURE 15. FORMER RECREATIVE PARKLET ON BERGMANNSTRASSE (PHOTO: FRIDOLIN FREUDENFETT, CC BY-SA 4.0)

What local identity for Bergmannkiez?

The Bergmannkiez is an area that appeals to a certain type of population. It contrasts with the more fascinating, but often understood as crazy, everyday life that Berliners call their kiez. The Kiez conditions a particular sensibility that is in many ways inextricably linked to how individuals see themselves as part of a community or neighbourhood. With its high concentration of bars, restaurants and cafés, Bergmannkiez is less a residential area or a reference point for its landscapes of memory, underground or left-wing political scenes.

However, it shows how an everyday urban environment has evolved over the years, not only mixing cultural practices, but also seeking to identify active tools to improve the urban environment by promoting compact, walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods with identifiable characteristics (architecture, color codes, consumption landscape etc.).

Der Berliner Kiez der Zukunft? Neue Bergmannstraße in Kreuzberg nimmt Gestalt an

Wer hat Vorrang auf den Straßen der Stadt? Diese Frage ist auch in Berlin heftig umstritten. Nun setzt Kreuzberg einen „geschützten Zwei-Richtungs-Radweg" um.

As illustrated by this newspaper article from the Tagesspiegel, the identity of Bergmannkiez is also built around its ambitious mobility policies. The article writes: "Whether boulders, green dots on the street or so-called parklets: traffic experiments in the Bergmannkiez have provided a lot of conversation in recent years. Now there may be a sequel: After around a month of construction, work on a "protected two-way cycle path" on a section of Bergmannstrasse is due to end this week."

FIGURE 16. SCREENSHOT FROM THE WEBSITE OF THE TAGESSPIEGEL. "DER BERLINER KIEZ DER ZUKUNFT", 19/07/2021. (HTTPS://WWW.TAGESSPIEGEL.DE/BERLIN/NEUE-BERGMANNSTRASSE-IN-KREUZBERG-NIMMT-GESTALT-AN-8000302.HTML)

Mobility

Mobility is a key component of cities, but also a prerequisite for meeting basic human needs. Work, education, social activities: all these require regular journeys. In the last few decades, the negative effects of mobility, such as congestion, accidents, air pollution, noise, and the resulting health implications, have become particularly evident in cities.

In Berlin, The Berlin Mobility Act was adopted in 2018 and two of its most important measures are to re-design dangerous junctions and to create safe bicycle lanes along all main roads.

Urban planning can have a significant impact on the means of transport people choose, the distances they travel and the associated environmental and health impacts. Urban mobility objectives aim to improve the quality of life in cities and limit greenhouse gas emissions from transport by promoting active mobility solutions such as walking and cycling. The challenge of developing transport systems that are safe, accessible, inclusive, affordable, resilient and zero-emission is not easy.

Further reading
Bierlaire et al. (2017)

Questions

(1) What types of urban politics can you see when you observe the neighbourhood? To what extent do you think they contribute to urban mobility goals?

(2) Do you think that broader sidewalks and more pedestrian areas would enhance the quality of city life? Consider this critically.

(3) How would you define the local identity of Bergamannkiez? Its atmosphere? Its population?

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4.4 Site 4. Tempelhofer Feld: Urban nature(s)

Where? At the South-side of Stadtacker

Concept: Urban nature

FIGURE 17. MAP OF TEMPELHOFER FELD

Tempelhofer Feld is the largest inner-city green space in the world, a 380-hectare open space with a 6-kilometre-long cycle path. It used to be an airport which closed in 2008 and opened up in 2010 as public area for Berliners and tourists alike. There are many different interest groups fighting for their own agenda: More forest! More housing! More park features! The building of the airport opened in 1923 and had a history of opening and closing before definitely closing in 2008. Since the city has extended as far as Tempelhofer Feld, the space was no longer suitable to function as an airport: 380 hectares have become free in Berlin. Berliners demonstrated and demanded that the site not be used as a building site, but as a free and open space. Tempelhof was finally opened to the general public on May 8th 2010, under the name "Tempelhofer Freiheit" ("Tempelhof Freedom").

Enough space for everyone?

The Tempelhofer Freiheit project has been a resounding success, with the site once again being completely transformed to revitalise its importance to modern Berlin. Yet, despite its popularity, the debate on the future of the space is far from over. The Berlin Senate is responsible for the official plans, but there are also a number of private initiatives staking their claims. With no independent body to mediate the planning, this conflict of interest has made it impossible for everyone to agree on a coherent structure for the site.

A citizens' initiative "100% Tempelhofer Feld" was created in 2013 and aims to keep the field as a park. They won a referendum in 2013 in the state of Berlin: they argued that the field was an important symbol of Berlin's history and that the park should therefore be preserved. But in 2018, sparked by the shortage of affordable housing in Berlin, the debate over the park began anew, just five years after the referendum. Every year, 60,000 new people move to Berlin, and rents are constantly rising. Parliamentary groups, investors and various sections of the population all say that social housing needs to be built on the edge of the park. Needless to say, the proponents of the referendum strongly disagree.

Urban nature

The Tempelhof Airport is part of the *Wildes Berlin* documentary about urban nature in Berlin. The field has created a very interesting urban ecosystem through a unique combination of human intervention and nature. Because the open space is one of the most popular features of Tempelhof, people have been interested in keeping the grass low and have brought in sheep to do the job for them. Low grass happens to be the perfect environment for the Feldlerche (Sky lark, Alouette des champs). This rare bird was then listed as a protected species, and now the practice of "keeping the grass low" has become part of the protection scheme for this bird. Another example is the intensive urban gardening on the outskirts of Tempelhof: many insects, especially butterflies, benefit from the variety of plants combined with the open space. They also provide good food for birds.

Urban nature

The urban and the natural or rural have long been seen in opposition to each other, but this nature-culture dualism is now being widely challenged. For example, studies have highlighted how most of the natural landscapes we encounter have been shaped by humans, or how nature is constitutive of cities (through rivers, trees, animals and more).

Urban nature can be thought of as the biodiversity of plants and non-human animals in cities. Urban nature includes not only recreational areas, green streets, roof gardens or community gardens, but also common, invasive, and sometimes undesirable types of nature (weeds, wastelands, rats, etc.). Much of urban nature is unnoticed and unknown to many of the city's inhabitants even though they sometimes are more adapted to the city as we are.

Studies of urban nature have questioned why some nature is valued and some is not, pointing to the construction of knowledge about nature and opening up possibilities for alternative politics for its preservation.

Further reading
M. Gandy (2022)

Allmende-Kontor community garden

The Allmende-Kontor was created as a common space that reflects the diversity of urban gardening, but with the aim of sustainable gardening without the use of poison or money. The Allmende-Kontor garden on Tempelhofer Feld has become a contact and networking point for interested people from all over the world. With its workshops on plant dyeing, composting or biological mouse control, followed by picnics, the Allmende-Kontor became a place of learning and living for everyone. The community garden enables people without a garden of their own, especially from the "poorer" parts of Neukölln and the surrounding areas, to garden in an intercultural way, to get out into the fresh air and to learn with all their senses: to feel the excitement of gardening and the peace of digging in the soil. The project aims to encourage this kind of action and the creation of similar gardens elsewhere in Tempelhof, Berlin and beyond.

Stadtacker

Stadtacker is a combination of art and community gardening. Each year, formerly unemployed people with backgrounds in the arts, horticulture and crafts spend several months developing the art and the garden according to the motto "diversity instead of monoculture". The works of art integrated into the Stadtacker focus on natural processes and their significance for humans. The project draws attention to the most prominent feature of Tempelhof Airport, the 'steppe', with its high levels of solar radiation and constant wind. The Stadtacker attracts Berliners and tourists alike and is a popular place to meet and discuss art and gardening.

Questions:

(1) Take photos of the different types of nature that you can find in the park and of what it is that makes this park a space of urban nature.

(2) Based on your photos: how is the nature in your photos similar or different to the types of nature you usually see in the city? What can you learn from your photos about the definition of nature in geography?

(3) Tempelhof is a very controversial space in Berlin: how would you position yourself in the debate between urbanising the park and preserving it? Make a decision and list your main arguments for that decision. Discuss your decision and arguments with other members of the group.

Key references:

Dixon, Terrell, ed. 2002. *City Wilds: Essays and Stories about Urban Nature.* Athens: University of Georgia Press.

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Harrison, Carolyn, and Davies, Gail. 2002. "Conserving biodiversity that matters: practitioners' perspectives on brownfield development and urban nature conservation in London." *Journal of Environmental Management,* 65/1: 95-108.

Liebeck, Matthias, Esau, Katharina, and Conrad, Stefan. 2016. "What to do with an airport? Mining arguments in the German Online Participation Project Tempelhofer Feld." *Proceedings of the Third Workshop on Argument Mining (ArgMining2016).*

Rosol, Marit. 2010. Public participation in post-Fordist urban green space governance: The case of community gardens in Berlin. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 34*/3: 548-563.

FOR SITES 3&4 between 17:30 and 18:00 at the South-side of Stadtacker in Tempelhofer Feld

17:30	18:00

5 ENGLISH/FRENCH DICTIONARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS AND CONCEPTS

ENGLISH	FRENCH

6 OPTIONAL VISIT SITES

6.1 SITE 1. EAST SIDE GALLERY – "GAZING ON COMMUNISM"

Concepts: art, commons, memorial

"*The East Side Gallery is a special place, where art has become the expression for a unique point in time of the history of a separated Germany. It is a meeting point that talks about an old Berlin and a new Berlin, a separated and a unified Germany.*" ("East Side Gallery Berlin," n.d.)

The Eastside Gallery is the largest outdoor gallery in the world. It is a collection of 106 paintings by 118 artists from 21 different countries. Originally painted in February 1990, this 1.3 kilometre stretch of wall, built along the banks of the River Spree, gained such popularity that it was declared a historical monument at the end of 1991. The East Side Gallery is now one of the main attractions for tourists wanting to 'see communism', and some of the murals have become iconic visual landmarks in the Berlin landscape.

Graffiti has a special cultural and historical significance in Berlin, where the wall has been described as "the world's largest canvas" (Craw, Leland, Bussell, Munday, & Walsh, 2006, p. 423). In a sense, the East Side Gallery celebrates graffiti's place in the urban landscape. Graffiti is an act of resistance against the urban landscape, and yet the East Side Gallery is now a permanent monument. However, unlike the anarchistic wall art that developed naturally (and illegally) on the West Side of the Wall before 1989, this open-air "visual soundbite" is actually a highly regulated space, with the site of the art carefully organised and structured - each artist allotted a specific section of the wall.

Time, tourism, traffic and 'wall peckers' have all taken their toll on the East Side Gallery. Renovations began in 2008 in preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Wall. Two thirds of the paintings are badly damaged by erosion, graffiti and vandalism. Full restoration, particularly of the central sections, was planned for 2008 and completed in 2009. The restoration process was marked by a major conflict. Eight of the 1990 artists refused to repaint their own paintings after they had been completely destroyed by the restoration. To defend their copyrights, they formed the East Side Founders' Initiative with other artists whose images had been copied without permission during the restoration. Today, just a decade later, the East Side Gallery looks almost exactly as it did before the costly and elaborate renovation. The park along the River Spree looks neglected: the grass is dry and there is broken glass and rubbish lying around. Vandalism seems to have increased, with people writing on the paintings in broad daylight. Chewing gum and stickers are stuck to the wall as if it were an empty canvas.

6.2 SITE 2. URBAN SPREE AND RAW AREA – THE LAST BROWNFIELD OF FRIEDRICHSHAIN

Concepts: experimental urbanism, Do-it-yourself (DIY) urbanism, bottom-up, alternative, urban culture, urban utopias

TAKE A WALK AROUND URBAN SPREE AND TRY TO COVER THE PINK POINTS MARKED ON THE MAP.

Urban Spree is an art and culture house on the RAW (Reichsbahn-ausbesserungswerk) site in Berlin-Friedrichshain, dedicated to urban culture with exhibitions, artist residencies, events and DIY workshops. The 1700m² site also includes an art shop and a beer garden.

The Urban Spree was officially opened in 2012 by French artists Pascal Feucher and Nicolas Defawe. The site of the current Urban Spree was previously used by underground techno clubs, but had been empty for several years before the project began. Half of the RAW space is now used for various activities within the Urban Spree project. To the east, the RAW is still largely made up of a number of neglected and underused buildings. It is currently under discussion for redevelopment with many ideas from different sides: from apartment buildings to park areas to office buildings, many things have been proposed.

Part of the Urban Spree's infrastructure are the artists' residences. There are both permanent and temporary studios and guest studios that have been set up to support artists and contribute to the creation of art directly in and around the Urban Spree. In return for the residencies, the sponsored artists are involved in the design of the house and run workshops where the Urban Spree public can get creative, such as a sign painting workshop. Many of the artists are long-term residents, while others visit and stay temporarily.

In addition to the artist residencies, the Urban Spree Art Residency format is offered at irregular intervals, allowing guests of the Urban Spree to have a direct insight into the artistic process over a period of time and to participate in the final product. The Urban Spree Art Residency ends with the opening of the exhibition and thus lives from the blurring of boundaries between public and private, inside and outside.

The Urban Spree is the venue for various festivals such as the Pictoplasma Festival, the Krake Festival or the Berlin Graphic Days. Occasional film screenings, dinner events and food festivals also take place. For its third anniversary in December 2015, Urban Spree launched the vegan hot drink Winterspree in cooperation with the beverage company Ostmost. Berlin-based Ostmost produces juices, spritzers and cider from apples grown in regional orchards. Nine individual labels for the drink were designed by artists.

The Urban Spree for citizens

For most locals and tourists, the Urban Spree is a place to go out and have fun in the evening. A combination of art space, nightclub and outdoor drinking spot, Urban Spree is always full of people and paint of all colours decorating every surface. The outside of the building is repainted as the theme of the current exhibition changes, and is usually designed by the same artist or studio of artists that the exhibition is about.

Often referred to as a subculture haven, Urban Spree is the place for hipsters and alternative culture alike. There is an open-air summer theatre, lots of bars and clubs, a pool bar and even an old tower converted for climbing.

6.3 Site 3. Berlin Underground – Re-use, raves and alternative scenes

Concepts: nightlife, underground scene, music

Berghain – *Nomen est Omen*!

Berghain is a cultural phenomenon that extends far beyond the secretive, sex-fuelled world of Berlin's techno scene. The vibrant scene is associated with an unmistakable sound, atmosphere and way of life. Berlin techno is more than just a collection of heterogeneous nightclubs, it is the expression of a progressive musical development. Constantly reinventing itself, the scene combines musical sub-genres with cultural backgrounds, political activism and social conditions.

Berghain is a way of life. If you ask its disciples, Berghain is more than that. It's a religion, a cult. Berlin's most infamous club is celebrated. The temple of techno is known for its industrial sound, unadulterated freedom and is arguably the birthplace of EDM*. Monotonous beats, industrial textures, dark rooms and the occasional flashing light. Not only do Berghain disciples fetishise all kinds of freedom, the scene is known for combining thumping music with sexual exploration. Berghain's appeal lies in its enigma: an unpredictable and volatile dance atmosphere, fuelled by drugs and partygoers who push the boundaries of urban society.

But you might ask, what is so urban about this scene? The answer is simple: everything! It is the repurposing of industrial buildings or brownfield sites. It is the reinvention of melancholic pasts, the peculiarly rough aesthetics and freedom expressed in its most raw forms. Party as an urban lifestyle.

What is called 'Berliner Luft' here is not just an alcoholic beverage. In reference to it, Berliner Luft stands for the idea of unfocused gatherings. An accumulation of people, moments and networks that acknowledge the atmospheric qualities of places, buildings and reuse.

The scene has a long history, dating back to the urban transformations that took place after the fall of the Berlin Wall in the early 1990s. Vacant buildings, a flourishing art scene and political activism were once the tone of the scene. Known as 'temporary autonomous zones', underground techno is part of a wider guerrilla movement that seeks to destroy the establishment through anarchist forms of action: chaos communication, reclaiming the streets, squatting, graffiti, etc. Much inspired by the Situationists and other groups of poetic terrorism, techno was particularly present in the Berlin underground. Just as Detroit's urban heritage is shaped by jazz music and post-industrial decline, Berlin's grassroots political movements have not only established an

underground scene or defined a particular subculture, but also a lifestyle heritage in constant reinvention.

Berghain, KitKat or Tresor? The rise of new autonomous zones
I prefer Holzmarkt, Sysiphos or about:blank!

Different clubs do not only mean different locations or musical genres. While most of Berlin's techno clubs are geographically located near the Spree, in what is commonly called East Berlin, they play different music and attract different crowds. All these clubs are difficult to get into. This exclusivity is heavily criticised. But secrecy is not only part of the scene's need to protect itself from tourism and other capitalist practices, but also to protect the solidarity of its inner circles.

Less politically active today, the scene reflects and fights other issues that are very relevant in contemporary urban societies: racism, fascism, heteronormativity, etc.

6.4 SITE 4. YAAM – A RESILIENT CULTURAL SPACE

Concepts: *bottom-up, African culture, alternative*

"And ever since the Yaam has been an important part of Berlin's leisure culture. Whether for a basketball tournament, Reggae concert, African dinner, or simply to meet people, the Yaam has been considered as the multicultural meeting point for anyone in any life situation. In the summer, it is the best location to chill-out. This year the Yaam is moving to a new venue at the Schillingbrücke." *(visitBerlin)*

YAAM (Young African Art Market) is a recreational and cultural space for the Berlin alternative scene. YAAM is a club, beach bar and art gallery founded in Berlin in 1994. Originally, YAAM was a non-profit organisation set up to support people with a migrant background, especially migrants from Africa. YAAM gives this population the opportunity to practice a profession, engage in various sports and activities, and provides medical, dental and legal assistance to those who need it.

The years following the fall of the Berlin Wall have left their mark on the urban landscape of the German capital, leaving empty spaces and buildings, especially in the eastern part of the city. These empty spaces have been a blessing for the art galleries, urban gardens, clubs and bars that have flourished in these unused spaces. The occupation of these spaces, however temporary, was subject to legal uncertainty in the 1990s and 2000s in the city of Berlin. Unable to respond to the vacancy of these sites, the city set up a system of temporary use so that the vacant sites would not lose their land value and at the same time give the city a positive image. This was also due to the increasing number of illegal uses of vacant land and buildings, such as squatting. So the city set up a system based on the signing of renewable three-month leases between the two actors (landlord and tenant) until one of them withdraws.

The YAAM is a good example of these temporary uses and the legal and political issues involved. Although always located between the districts of Kreuzberg and Friesdrichshain, the political and economic changes in the city after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 forced YAAM to move to different locations five times in 25 years.

6.5 SITE 5. HOLZMARKT – TRAJECTORIES OF AN EXPERIMENTAL MARKET

Concepts: consumption space, public space, alternative space, creative district

There is a long history to the Holzmarkt: 300 years ago a marketplace for the timber trade, today an experimental laboratory for alternative urban development. In between, gasworks, rubbish dump, wasteland and techno club. This place has seen many things.

Today, "Holzmarkt 25" is a cooperative designed to resemble a neighbourhood on the River Spree. The aim of the organisers is to create and maintain a place that is different and yet remains the same: an open bank with an urban village and, in the middle, a marketplace in the best sense of the word. It is a place of work and leisure, exchange and debate, fun and tranquillity. Holzmarkt is a place for people from the neighbourhood and from all over the world. Lively, green and creative - never finished, always in the making.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many factories were closed and left empty. In this historic state of emergency, Berlin's creative class found a particularly favourable environment in which to flourish. It didn't take long for artists to start appropriating abandoned buildings and land (brownfields) - typically in the East - to turn them into spaces for culture, or more precisely for 'counterculture' or 'alternative culture'.

In the German capital, local and international artist communities gathered in the city centre to experiment in the broadest sense, both culturally and in terms of urban planning, and to claim a certain "right to the city". In the 2000s, the concept of the 'creative city', a city strongly oriented towards the creation and promotion of both mainstream and alternative culture, became part of Berlin's marketing strategy and was used by the tourism department to market the city internationally. It is from here that former mayor Klaus Wowereit will describe Berlin as 'poor but sexy'. At the same time, the Berlin Senate is introducing a policy to promote the creative industries.

Holzmarkt fits into this context of cultural development. It is a project of experimental urbanism in the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg: the area where the village of Holzmarkt is located used to be a military site, on the banks of the Spree on the side of the GDR (German Democratic Republic). On this abandoned site, originally covered with gravel, sand and grass, a techno club, Bar25, was built. After its closure in 2010, the site was purchased in 2012 by a Swiss pension fund, the Abendrot Foundation, which subsequently retained ownership of the site and granted a renewable 50-year building lease to the members of the Holzmarkt cooperative, the former collective of Bar25.

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