



No 7 | December 2014



IRS AKTUELL

Newsletter for Social Science-Based Spatial Research

Historical Research in the Context of Spatial Social Sciences

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Historical Research in the Context of Spatial Social Sciences

By way of reconstructing past societal debates, historical research produces insights to the present and the future. Whenever we study past human action – for example in the fields of building and planning – numerous reference points to other social science disciplines will emerge. Embedding historical studies in current research on socio-spatial developments is an important feature of the IRS's work: historians collaborate with sociologists, geographers, planning and political scientists.

The development of European cities and regions varies significantly today. For example, while some traditional city districts experience massive development as politicians and urban citizens aim to preserve buildings, other areas become neglected. In each case, the long-term consequences of previous planning and investment decisions play an important role. For some time now, social science-based spatial research has rejected 'presentism' and has come to show increasing interest in long-term developments and their relevance for explaining current processes. This growing interest in historical processes has also become manifest within the wider public. "The preservation and reconstruction of buildings from previous eras – such as city castles – is only one among many indications for our present society's generally increasing appreciation of its historical fabric", says PD Dr. Christoph Bernhardt, head of the IRS Department for Historical Research.

IRS director Prof. Dr. Heiderose Kilper stresses that social scientists and contemporary historians working at the IRS cooperate to their common benefit (see interview on page 3): "The way our historians explore the history of urbanisation in the 20th century is clearly influenced by the IRS's social science perspectives." The approach of 'Historical Urbanisation Research' hence integrates the history of planning and contemporary history as well as theoretical approaches on institutions, net-

works and power. In particular, this research is characterised by the inter-linked development of both systemic and individual-biographical perspectives.

Since its establishment in 2012, the IRS Department for Historical Research has succeeded in distinguishing itself with this unique research approach. Time and again, historians have demonstrated their discipline-spanning potential. For instance, researchers have been involved in the DFG Graduate School "Kulturelle und technische Werte historischer Bauten" (Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings) at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg. In this programme, buildings and their material features are as important as engineering-related questions about research on the history of building. "We face the challenge of providing and consolidating our expertise at the intersection of research on cultural and technical history and we aim to make a contribution to wider debates", says Bernhardt.

This issue provides insights to the range of research conducted at the department – from the lead project's focus on urban spatial design, to the 'authenticity' of historical buildings through to the analysis of the rare and important sources in the IRS Scientific Collections. ■

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Prof. Dr. Kilper is director of the IRS and has made a major contribution to transforming the IRS Scientific Collections into an autonomous Department for Historical Research. Her research work focuses on spatial strategies of resilience, key figures in spatial development, governance and space, and cultural landscape research.



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Since 1998, PD Dr. Bernhardt has been employed at the IRS as a researcher and principal investigator. Since 2012, he has been head of the newly established "Department for Historical Research and Scientific Collections for the History of Building and Planning in the GDR". His research focuses on the history of 19th and 20th century urbanisation, the history of European cities, environmental history and the history of Berlin..



History as a Perspective within Urban and Regional Research

With its establishment in 1992 the IRS took over a substantial part of the archive belonging to the GDR's "Bauakademie" or, more precisely, its institute for urban planning and architecture. The archive was a scientific collection of the history of building and planning. With time the IRS has developed the photographs, plans and documents of its predecessor into the most important archive of its kind in Germany. That this collection would also be complemented by historical research at the interface to social sciences was by no means self-evident. In an interview, director Prof. Dr. Heiderose Kilper talks about visions and synergies for historical research at the IRS.

At the IRS, social scientists from various disciplines work together with historians. In what ways can these perspectives benefit from one another?

The IRS engages in a spatially rooted form of social research. Within such a context, the IRS Department for Historical Research – with its focus on contemporary history – is something special. At first glance, these are in fact two very different things. Taking a closer look, however, reveals a range of interesting overlaps. For instance, it shows that the ways our historians have explored the 20th century's history of urbanisation have been heavily influenced by the IRS's social-scientific perspectives. This specific social and political science-based entry-point to contemporary history becomes manifest when e.g. institutionalist

approaches are exploited to look at the biographies of GDR planners, or when the concept of path dependency is employed to study long-term urban careers.

Conversely, the historical perspective can often serve as a useful supplement to the research conducted by other departments. To give you an example, if you examine cultural landscapes, you will not be able to avoid dealing with the origins of informal institutions, identities and topoi. Cultural contexts of social action play a crucial role here. Likewise, IRS research on urban regeneration and institutional shifts in dealing with infrastructures have repeatedly benefited from historical approaches. Across all departments, IRS research is therefore characterised by a spatio-temporal perspective. In our opinion,

this is a unique characteristic of the IRS, which also rests upon the evidence that historical traditions of all kinds must be regarded as indispensable resources for urban and regional development.

Historical research at an institute for social and spatial research – how did this come about?

In principle, this development of a historic research profile began in 2007. The re-staffing of the IRS archives department with a historian and an archive expert initiated the professionalization of the scientific collections, which had previously been assigned to another research department. Hereinafter, digitalisation projects funded within the frame of the 'Leibniz competition' as well as work conducted as part of the task force 'Archives of the Leibniz Asso-

ciation' have both contributed to the archive's prominence.

The evaluation in late 2010 confirmed our conviction that a linkage between collection and research could provide an opportunity for honing the profile of the IRS. Back then, the evaluators proposed the establishment of a new historical department. Luckily, building operations at the new pavilion – which were made possible thanks to the federal government's economic-growth package – got going at the same time. At that point, historical research at the IRS made a great leap forward – both in terms of content and its location in a particular building.

Do sociologists or planners occasionally find their way to the archive to get inspiration for their research?

Yes, this does actually happen from time to time – and I am really pleased whenever communication reaches

ment "Regeneration of Cities and Towns" are planning to jointly organise an international conference on post-1945 urban regeneration policies. In doing so, they will explicitly interlink historical and contemporary approaches.

It seems the historians at the IRS are now well placed in networks – for instance by means of their involvement in a DFG Graduate School and a Leibniz research alliance.

The graduate school "Kulturelle und technische Werte historischer Bauten" (Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings) addresses both research objectives and scientific collections. For the IRS, it has therefore become an important element for developing cooperation with the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg. With a duration of four and a half years and containing twelve full-time positions, it is also clearly a big project. We can

In fact, the IRS is the only place where such a tight interlocking of social science research, policy consultancy and historical resources exists.

such a concrete level. For instance, the national contact point for urban redevelopment – which is located at the IRS – uses our scientific collections for its research on neighbourhood planning and currently assists with their transformation. Moreover, its research also includes the investigation of urban rehabilitation projects in the GDR. In fact, the IRS is the only place where such a tight interlocking of social science research, policy consultancy and historical resources exists. I have noticed that this is now opening up a new kind of approach to the GDR's history of building and planning, but also to urban development research in East Germany.

During the new research programme period 2015 to 2018, we will reach a new level of cross-departmental cooperation. For example, the Department for Historical Research and the research depart-

be proud of the fact that the IRS staff involved seized the opportunity to make a decisive contribution to shaping this research training network and, moreover, to supervise two PhD candidates. All this brings us one step closer towards our vision of making our archive materials available to research projects.

Head of department PD Dr. Christoph Bernhardt has made a major contribution to setting up the Leibniz research alliance "Historical Authenticity". He coordinates one of four thematic groups, all of which deal with the revaluation and reconstruction of historical, seemingly "originally preserved", urban structures and buildings in present-day cities. This shows that IRS research on contemporary history and the corresponding research topics are met with great interest in the scientific community.

The Department for Historical Research has existed for almost three years now. Would you say that the vision has been fulfilled?

We have been following the idea of bringing together research and archival collections in a social-scientific context for quite some time now. In fact, this idea was first raised as early as the IRS workshops on the history of building and planning in the 1990s. Once we take a look at how the department for historical research succeeds in filling this gap step by step, I think it is fair to say that we are well on the way. All this has worked out well not least because of the successful acquisition of third-party funded projects, the start of one lead project and several IRS-based dissertation projects. Taken together, all these factors made it possible to conduct systematic and well-founded research on this topic area while including archive resources.

What used to be possible only at specific times – for example by means of workshops or rather isolated papers in specialist journals – has become part of the department's high standard: creative research within a unique research environment. ■

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Urban pedestrian zone instead of flat countryside: Utopian draft drawings by Gerd Wesel for the "Zentrum von Ferdinandshof" (unfinished, 1968)

Historical Research on Urbanisation

Historical research on urbanisation with a concern for current developments, the examination of German cities and regions within a European context and an integration of the history of planning with contemporary history – these are the trademarks of historical research conducted at the IRS. Founded in early 2012, the IRS Department for Historical Research has consolidated this profile systematically: developing its core strength, i.e. the scientific collections on the history of building and planning in the GDR, while integrating both cultural and social sciences-based perspectives embedded within a wider framework of topics

Historical research on urbanisation is one of several possible varieties of spatio-historical research. Compared to research on the history of architecture or urban history, for example, it is particularly suitable for addressing a broad spectrum of problems of spatial development in an integrated way – ranging from questions related to single buildings all the way through to activities at the regional scale. For instance, a current DFG-funded project in the department on the former districts Frankfurt (Oder) and Karl-Marx-Stadt reveals that the development of small towns in the GDR used to depend heavily on their particular position within the hierarchy of district-related policies. As research on the development of the "automobile city" of Eisenach as well as on the architect Wilfried Stallknecht suggest, urban careers and the scope of action available to the relevant actors becomes visible only once we begin to

consider power of economic interests. The research conducted at the department for historical research is of wider interest, not least since it is located at the intersection of the history of planning and contemporary history, two

ning in Berlin and Paris) increasingly reveal the need for embedding these approaches within a broader institutional context. As head of the IRS Department for Historical Research PD Dr. Christoph Bernhardt points out, this

Traditionally, the history of planning has concentrated on drafts, plans, architectural personalities and award-winning projects. To fully understand these phenomena, we also need to take into account the institutional frameworks, available scopes of action and power relations in a systematic way."

areas still generally far apart. Traditionally, the history of planning has concentrated on drafts, plans, architectural personalities and award-winning projects. Today, however, research (e.g. the institute's recent involvement in research networks on the history of plan-

particularly applies to the "Fordist" 20th century with its interventionist state. "Another key component consists in the systematic analysis of how the population made use of urban spaces. This will help to reveal the acceptance or rejection of planning, while occa-

sionally throwing light on long-term changes in lifestyles and political attitudes.”

“In its research activities, the department has been following the development of urban and regional open space planning in both German states for quite some time now”, says Dr. Harald Engler, who is involved as a researcher within the current lead project. “Initially, research was particularly focused on projects on the reconstruction of recreation areas located close to the city as well as on holiday facilities. In doing so, we put into perspective common assumptions about open space planning in the GDR – especially in terms of the dominance of centralist planning and public utilisation – and managed to reveal the importance of informal networks and lines of action.” In the current lead project’s research, the planning of inner-city open spaces in both German states and their appropriation by urban populations takes centre stage. In terms of content, the researchers also adopt a broad perspective here. Apart from the history of building and planning, the project is also strongly characterised by sociological and cultural approaches, e.g. on the appropriation of spaces (see page 7).

Moreover, the members of the Department for Historical Research have repeatedly made attempts to shed light on individual biographies of architects and planners, including their networks and the scope of action available to them. “More than a decade ago, the much used encyclopaedia ‘Vom Baukünstler zum Komplexprojektanten – Architekten in der DDR’ (From Building Artists to Complex Project Planners – Architects in the GDR)”, which contained numerous short portraits, emerged from the scientific collections”, says Bernhardt. Later, it was followed by a autobiography on the working life of the renowned architecture critic Bruno Flierl and, more recently, a volume on the architect Wilfried Stallknecht written by Harald Engler. These works signify a lively ex-

change between archive and research, which has been increased since 2012. Biographies on “border-crossers” between the two political systems (like Egon Hartmann or Werner Hebebrand) are of special interest here and hence can be found at the heart of the department’s recent research works. Similarly, the conference series “Workshops on the History of Planning in the GDR” periodically adopts a biographical perspective to explore the activities of GDR architects and planners – and, on that basis, discusses their margin for manoeuvre as well as the limits on their ability to act within a broader context. As part of the scientific collections, two large digitalisation projects (Digi-PEER and DigiPortA) are currently generating comprehensive databases designed to render the biographies of architects and planners as well as the careers of places explorable in innovative ways (also online).

With its first lead project, the research department had already moved beyond the former scientific collections focus on the GDR. Today, it explores key processes of urbanisation in the GDR and FRG by means of an approach which adopts both a consistently European and international research perspective. In doing so, some surprising analogies have come to the fore – for example as regards the development of industrial construction methods, or the planning systems in the German Democratic Republic and France. At the same time, some unanticipated contrasts become visible, for instance those between housing associations in East Germany and Poland. To a particularly high degree, historical urbanisation research allows for both an analysis of individual cases from various spatial and temporal contexts and, furthermore, their critical assessment within large processes of development. Such work has become increasingly visible in international contexts, where members of the Department for Historical Research have recently become more and more active due to the IRS’s internationalisation strategy. ■

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Dr. Engler is deputy head of the IRS Department for Historical Research. His research work mainly focuses on the analysis of architects and their position in the GDR’s building industry, the institutional system of the GDR’s building industry, open space planning in the GDR, and social movements and building culture in the context of the peaceful revolution in 1989.



Berlin, 4 November 1989: 500,000 citizens take part in a demonstration in support of articles 27 and 28 of the GDR's constitution.

Open Space Design in East-West German comparison: Urbanisation Strategies between Authority and the Public Realm

In the IRS-funded lead project conducted by the Department for Historical Research (duration 01/2012 to 12/2014), the researchers involved approach the issue of urban open spaces from three directions. First, they analyse squares and pedestrian zones from an urban history and planning perspective. In doing so, they place particular emphasis upon examining the differing institutional systems of open space planning in the GDR and FRG. Second, the researchers scrutinise planning personalities and their networks. Related to this, they assess

the decision making power of individual planners and the conflicts among them or with other stakeholders (mainly politicians). "This perspective has been shown to be essential especially with regard to examining the relation between formal and informal processes and procedures in open space planning", says Engler. Moreover, he points out that draft plans as well as the projects finally implemented can often provide only glimpses of the overall picture. Third, the project also explicitly incorporates theories of authority and the public realm into the research agenda. In doing so, it deals with – partly competing – appropriations of open spaces, either by its users or the state.

Beyond everyday practices of recreational use, work on the appropriation of urban open spaces by city residents has recently gained unexpected relevance because of recent political events around the world, says principal investigator Bernhardt. "Why is it that particular centrally located urban squares – Taksim Square in Istanbul, Tahrir Square in Cairo, or Maidan in Kiev – have become a stage for fundamental political dispute? What are the roles of planning, social interaction and symbolic meanings here?" Indeed, there are undeniable parallels between the events that have occurred at the abovementioned places on the one hand and the occurrences in Leipzig or around Alexanderplatz in East Berlin in the autumn of 1989.

Above and beyond these high profile cases, the case studies have focused on the political instrumentalisation of urban squares by state power, assessing patterns of everyday use e.g. for the purposes of consumption or leisure activities. By looking at the example of Alexanderplatz (East Berlin) and Breitscheidplatz (West Berlin) it becomes possible to throw light on such processes. Further, specific attention is also paid to the rise of pedestrian zones, which increasingly began to dominate inner-city areas in both East and West Germany in the 1960s. In the context of this work, the highly contradictory role of the car-oriented expansion of European cities becomes evident. It is foreseen that this issue – currently being controversially debated – will become the subject of the department's next lead project.



Research Axis Cottbus/Erkner – A DFG Graduate School on Building History

With a festive ceremony in the presence of Brandenburg's minister for science, research and culture, Prof. Dr. Sabine Kunst, the first DFG Graduate School located at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (BTU) was officially inaugurated on 20 May, 2014. The DFG-funded Graduate School 1913 entitled "Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings" received 3.8 million euros for an initial period of 4.5 years. It aims to analyse the tensions between art, technology and society within a context of different temporal horizons and cultural circles. With its funding decision, the DFG thus acknowledges the research on building history at the BTU as well as the work conducted at the IRS Department for Historical Research and the Institute for Archaeology at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

The Graduate School's work will focus on individual studies on buildings and the processes of their construction and change from antiquity though to 20th century, in Europe as well as in the Middle and Far East", says Albrecht Wiesener, the programme's academic coordinator.

During the programme's duration ten doctoral and two postdoctoral researchers will cooperate closely with further associated PhD candidates, the funding applicants themselves, associated academics from renowned research institutions and universities, and numerous guest researchers to jointly promote their research on the historical and technical study of buildings. Research topics addressed by doctoral and postdoctoral re-

searchers range from clay-brick buildings in late Pharaonic Egypt, through medieval residential houses in Eberswalde to engineering-related research on urban planning and development in the modern era. The IRS is represented in the graduate school by PD Dr. Christoph Bernhardt (as the responsible applicant for funding) and Prof. Dr. Kilper (as an associated researcher). On 1 April 2014 the posts for doctoral candidates were filled by two young researchers whose work complements the IRS's research focus on the history of building and planning in the GDR. While Felix Richter's project deals with the socialist planned city of Hoyerswerda, Katharina Sebold examines the model-like reconstructions of city centres in relation to the exam-

ples of Bernau, Gotha, and Greifswald (see page 9).

Owing to their close connection to the IRS and the guidance from researchers employed at the Department for Historical Research, the doctoral candidates benefit from various forms of support – both with regard to conducting their archival work and the overall development of their projects. This, in turn, will help to strengthen the department's research profile.

Furthermore, the graduate school assigned to the BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg helps to connect research on the history of building and planning in Berlin and Brandenburg. The IRS researchers in-



Redeveloping Old Town Centres in Small- and Medium-Sized GDR Towns Built Using Prefabricated Components: The Examples of Bernau, Gotha, and Greifswald

At the heart of Katharina Sebold's cultural science-based dissertation project we find experimental planning and building activity in the East German cities of Bernau, Gotha and Greifswald during the 1970s and 1980s. On 2 October 1973 the SED's Central Committee decreed that building tasks in these towns were to be exemplarily developed and new design principles tested. The aim was to thereby develop knowledge for urban development and architecture conducive to a socialist redevelopment of old town centres in small- and medium-sized town centres. The plans introduced by the GDR Bauakademie

(Academy of Building) for the "reconstruction of historical town centres" provided for a mixture of maintenance measures, modernisation, redevelopment and demolition of old buildings, followed by reconstruction measures", Sebold points out. An essential objective of this construction initiative consisted in the technological development of large pre-fabricated panels useable for construction in historical town centres. In spite of pursuing similar goals and facing comparable challenges, each of the three towns eventually came up with different solutions.

With her comparative study of three towns, Sebold intends to point to the inconsistencies in the ideational and material appropriation of the late GDR's legacy as regards urban development. On the one hand, the value of individual heritage buildings and historical ensembles (and the aim to preserve these buildings) was repeatedly emphasised. On the other hand, the very principle of these measures consisted first and foremost in a comprehensive elimination of historical buildings. In the interests of maintaining original townscapes, some of the plans intended to preserve these structures - when possible at a relatively early point in time - while other plans only started to pursue this objective somewhat later as part of revised construction projects. Now, the new-built or reconstructed GDR projects of that time have become historical themselves. Once again, we are therefore faced with the question of how to deal with earlier urban development in our historical town centres of today.



The Planned City of Hoyerswerda-Neustadt. Ideal, Realisation and Transformation of a Socialist Town Complex.

From a perspective of political science and history, Felix Richter pursues his dissertation project on the genesis and transformation of specifically socialist urban traits. Taking into account early socialist social utopias, progressive Soviet concepts and actual realisations of new socialist towns and cities, Richter's work examines the concept of "the socialist city" in all its complexity and efficacy. This is done with regards to the example of the planned city of Hoyerswerda-Neustadt, which was built in the former GDR between 1955 and 1990. Departing from a multidimensional concept of the city, he

addresses the political, legal-administrative, spatio-functional, socio-spatial, and cultural dimensions of a "socialist model city". In doing so, his aim is to make use of the key concepts of "city" and "urbanity" in order to gain insights to the concept of "the socialist city".

Within the coordinate system made up of social utopias, concrete plans, deficient implementations and postmodern transformations, Richter focuses on the differences between aspiration and reality and on the contemporary understanding of construction projects. How can we define a "socialist city" in the first place? Is it to be regarded as a housing factory, a petit bourgeois promise of happiness, a place for producing a "new socialist man"? Was there any particular urban quality to this specifically socialist understanding of the city in the first place? In addition to the goals pursued by socialist urban development, Richter discusses the limits of economic and social planning with recourse to contemporary debates: to what extent has the social process of reception expedited a form of urban development in Hoyerswerda which deviates from original plans?

volved provide their expertise in multiple ways. For many other doctoral researchers dealing with recent questions on the history of building (e.g. the construction of the underground in Berlin), they are esteemed discussion partners.

“The commitment of these young researchers and the quality of their work already became apparent when they introduced their projects at the first semester’s lecture programme in summer 2014”, Wiesener sums up and adds: “The research training network’s success will

“The research training network’s success will have to be measured against the question of whether we will succeed in promoting expertise. Also, how can we further mutual understanding among our PhD candidates, working at the intersections between historical-cultural and technical-historical research, when the boundaries apparent between the disciplines have remained strong.”



Large Construction Site Cologne Cathedral, 1856



Large Construction Site Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, 2001

Since the colloquia envisaged as part of the graduate school face the challenge of covering the entire spectrum of research and dissertation topics, the applicants have come up with some interesting cross-cutting issues. For instance, they relate to the organisation and implementation of a large construction site from the ancient world to the modern era, dealing with cultural heritage under wartime conditions or the ambiguous ways in which buildings have been received over time. Along these lines, international colloquia will discuss the interdependencies between technical and aesthetic standards in the building industry, as well as the epoch-spanning attempts to categorise different forms of (serial) construction activities.

have to be measured against the question of whether we will succeed in promoting expertise. Also, how can we further mutual understanding among our PhD candidates, working at the intersections between historical-cultural and technical-historical research, when the boundaries apparent between the disciplines have remained strong. Some concepts have already become recognisable today, for instance, deliberate attempts to examine the role technical innovations have played in the cultural history of building. Such projects aim to bridge the existing gap and make a contribution to providing an answer to the graduate school’s key questions.”

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Felix Richter studied history and political sciences (Magister Artium) at the TU Dresden between 2005 and 2013. After a contract at the TU Dresden, he has been a researcher at the BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg since April 2014 and associated with the IRS as a doctoral candidate. His research focuses on the history of architecture, historical urban studies, socialist urban history and development.



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Katharina Sebold studied arts and cultural sciences in Bremen and St. Petersburg (Bachelor of Arts) as well as culture and history of Central and Eastern Europe in Berlin and Frankfurt (Oder) (Master of Arts). Since April 2014, she has been employed as a researcher at the BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg and has been associated with the IRS as a doctoral candidate.



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Albrecht Wiesener studied history and philosophy and is employed as an academic coordinator for the DFG graduate school “Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings” since April 2014. At the same time, he pursues his dissertation project “Städte bauen und Sätze bauen. Zur politischen Semantik und Erfahrungsgeschichte des Städtebaus in Deutschland nach 1945” (Building cities and sentences. On the political semantics and track record of urban development in post-1945 Germany) at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.



Bauhaus in Dessau

Longing for the “Original”

The Leibniz Research Alliance focused on “Historical Authenticity” in Cities and Regions

Original and fake, the “authenticity” of traditional structures of a building, writings and pieces of art, staging the past and reconstructing lost structures. These questions keep several academic disciplines busy, but likewise are of interest to politicians and – increasingly – a broader public. Should we preserve buildings like the “Dresdener Kulturpalast” (Dresden Culture Palace, which was built in the GDR era) in its original form as much as possible, or should it be completely redeveloped? Should we reconstruct city castles/palaces and, in doing so, accept the removal of other historical building structures in individual cases? How can we exhibit archaeological or museum “originals” in a sound way?



In 2013 a Leibniz Research Alliance was founded by 17 Leibniz institutes and four external partners to deal with exactly these questions. In compliance with the Leibniz Association’s strategy to showcase such consortia within the context of the large German research associations, the guiding question re-

garding the role of “historical authenticity” in societal conflicts was selected for funding. Since then, this issue has been dealt with under the guidance of the Centre for Contemporary History (ZZF) in Potsdam. Since the beginning, the IRS has actively contributed to this initiative. It has been in charge of scrutinising one of four thematic priorities, namely “Urban Landscapes as Spaces of Tradition”.

One of the guiding questions – the problem of whether to “preserve or reconstruct” – has no doubt been intensively discussed and examined by the discipline of historic preservation for more than a century now. Nevertheless,

substantial gaps in knowledge have remained, especially with regard to buildings that are not protected on historical grounds, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, or other urban ensembles. In a first step, the central working group on this subject led by PD Dr. Christoph Bernhardt, head of the IRS Department for Historical Research, has therefore developed an overview of the current status of research in various disciplines. In doing so, it aims to identify paradigmatic historical debates on the valorisation of building stocks in different eras e.g. in the post-1945 reconstruction era or in the context of urban renewal projects. In the past as well as the present, such decisions and debates (led by the

public as well as specialists) have been very important for both urban identity and marketing.

At a conference on the “Authentication of Urban Landscapes” held in Potsdam on 20-21 June, 2014, Bernhardt’s IRS colleague Dr. Andreas Butter demonstrated the fruitfulness of such an approach in a presentation on the city of Dessau. Butter pointed to the unstable and changeable economic dynamics that have affected the valorisation of historical building stocks (e.g. Bauhaus era or buildings from the National Socialist era) in Dessau since 1945. Moreover, he developed an argument about authenticity and highlighted its impor-

tant role in debates about urban images. Hanno Hochmuth’s (ZZF) contribution provided a completely different, more applied take on the topic in his presentation on tourist bus tours through Berlin.

Further presentations dealt with various UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Germany as well as in the Middle East. To be able to examine these and other questions more closely, the research association submitted a major application for funding in May 2014 as part of the Leibniz Association’s SAS scheme, and, in the course of this, developed a number of ideas for projects which are to be submitted to other funding initiatives. ■

CONTACT

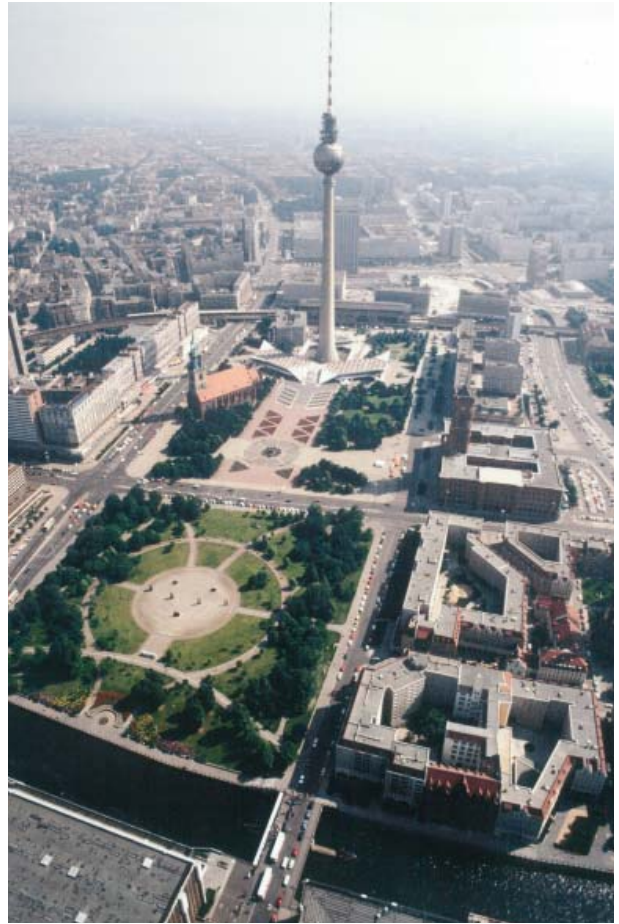


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Kulturpalast Dresden



Berlin, Marx-Engels-Forum

Image on the left, 1967/68: View from the Berlin TV tower in the direction of the GDR's foreign ministry and the state council building.

Image on the right, early 1990s: View towards TV tower and Alexanderplatz. The picture clearly shows that marked structural changes have occurred within one quarter of a century, e.g. the completion of the reconstructed Nikolai-Quarter and the Palace of the Republic. The latter has now been demolished and is currently being replaced by a reconstruction of the old Berlin City Palace.

The GDR Viewed From Above

When the IRS scientific collections presented pictures taken by aerial photographer Lothar Willmann (*1936), during "The Long Night of Sciences" in May 2014, this was met with great acclaim. The exhibition, which presented views of building complexes in Berlin, Potsdam and Dresden dating from 1964 until today and thus allowed for instructive before-and-after comparisons. The visitors' interest in these pictures is evidence of their quality and uniqueness. Willmann received multiple awards for his work. At a time when – due to their military relevance – aerial views were a particularly sensitive issue, he had been the GDR's only freelance photographer who was allowed to publish aerial photographs over the course of several years.

The idea for an exhibition prepared by Willmann and the IRS had emerged during discussions on the partial acquisition of his work by the IRS scientific collections. Even prior to German reunification in 1990, he had repeatedly cooperated with the GDR's Academy of Building and its institute for urban development and architecture – the predecessor of the IRS. For this reason, some of his commissioned works could already be found in the scientific collections' photographic archives. Due

to content reasons, Willmann has decided to hand over other parts of his works to the archive for geography at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL) in Leipzig as well as to the archive of the German Maritime Museum (DSM) in Bremerhaven.

The preservation of this important photographer's work is thus an example of the successful establishment of "collection through networks", i.e. a co-ordinated way of collecting works and es-

tates. Accordingly, the working group 'Archives of the Leibniz Association' has set itself the task to direct and develop such collections.

Broadly trained as a photographer and journalist, Willmann discovered aerial photography in the 1960s, when he still worked for the GDR airline Interflug. Despite the regulations for aerial photographs (which were strict almost everywhere in the world at the time), he was allowed to take pictures of some

East German cities for a promotional calendar – mainly because the airline depended on such activities for publicity abroad. Willmann's first photo book "Aerial Pictures from the GDR" (1968) was also produced for the foreign market. This shows that (at least under specific conditions) there existed a certain leeway for East German aerial photography – and Willmann became the pioneer in this field. In retrospect, he says it was fascinating to be allowed "to regard and experience the developmental history and social structures of cities and villages as part of their surroundings and to look upon them from different heights".

In 1968, Willmann started to work as a freelance photo journalist for GDR magazines. As a reporter, he travelled in several countries outside the Eastern bloc and took photographs of a broad range of subjects. He also remained active as an aerial photographer. For instance, he took aerial photographs on the issue of socialist urban development for the Institute for Urban Development and Architecture (ISA). Fur-

ther employers included the supervisory office for motorways and large industrial enterprises. From the early 1980 onwards, however, the National People's Army (NVA) no longer tolerated civilian aerial photographs. As a result, Willmann was prohibited from taking photographs from the sky. It was only after reunification in 1990 that he could resume work as an aerial photographer.

The aerial photographs handed over to the IRS scientific collections by Lothar Willmann are a superb addition to the existing collection– especially the aerial photographs of GDR development areas in the 1970s and 1980s. In many different ways, the new stocks also correspond with other parts of the archive's extensive collection, which altogether comprises more than 100,000 photographs and slides. For researchers, the archive will therefore provide an abundance of novel photographic sources, especially relevant to the topics of urban development and settlement patterns in the GDR or for researchers interested in the border area between architecture and urban development. ■

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Since November 2013, Dr. Drewes has been head of the IRS scientific collections. He studied modern history, literature and media studies in Braunschweig and Pécs (Hungary). In 2011, he obtained his doctorate (Dr. phil.) after completing his dissertation on the granting of noble titles to Jews in 19th century Europe.

More photographs can be found here

🔴🔴🔴 www.irs-net.de/ddr-von-oben



Dresden, Altmärkt, 1975

The development of the Altmärkt in Dresden reveals different phases of socialist town planning. The perimeter and block development from the Stalinist era are contrasted with modern solitaires such as the Cultural Palace. Only the Kreuzkirche (the palace ruins along with the palace's chapel, Zwinger Palace) and Semperoper, located on the banks of the river Elbe, qualify as genuine old buildings.



Berlin, Pariser Platz, 1990

As the photograph illustrates, vast open urban spaces emerged subsequent to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Since then, these new buildings at Pariser Platz and the so-called "Ribbon of the Federal Government" (Band des Bundes) with its striking buildings located within the government and parliament district have decisively shaped the face of this area.

News from the Institute

Labs as Interfaces for Innovation and Creativity Places of Innovation

Where do new ideas emerge? How do they develop into genuine innovations, and under what circumstances do they become economically viable? One of many possible answers to these ques-

event. "Berlin has a great interest in the innovative power of labs and would therefore like to support them in their role as new sites for economic development", says Schmidt.



tions is the so-called innovation and/or creative lab, geared towards experimenting with ideas, practices and tools (from hammers to 3D-printers). Self-employed persons and freelancers, but also large enterprises and research institutions have increasingly come to use such places for their creative work. In doing so, they create open spaces which allow for unorthodox ways of testing and experimenting.

Especially throughout the last 15 years these new places have emerged worldwide as points of intersection between the economy, academia and the creative and education sectors. At the event "Labs as Interfaces for Innovation and Creativity", which took place in Berlin on 23 June, 2014 experts from industry, media, politics, and academia discussed current trends, opportunities and risks connected to this development.

One year earlier, IRS researchers Dr. Suntje Schmidt and Verena Brinks presented a detailed analysis of the Berlin lab-scene and as a consequence also played a major role in preparing the

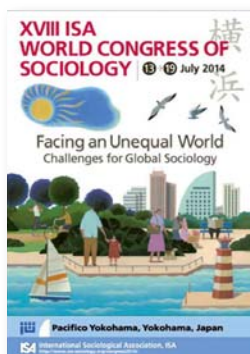
The event brought together people running labs, lab-users, public administration representatives and researchers. Beyond that, it was enriched by international participants from the renowned TED-Saloon. "We made use of this wide variety of participants to better identify the specific potential of labs and to find out more about the role they play for cities and the general economic interdependencies they create", Schmidt points out. In this context, it is controversial whether labs really create "spaces of collision", which help to fully exploit diversity and dynamics in order to implement novel ideas.

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IRS well represented at the 18th World Congress of Sociology



Under the heading “Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for Global Sociology” the International Sociological Association’s (ISA) 18th World Congress of Sociology was held in Yokohama, Japan from 13-19 July, 2014. Two IRS research departments took the opportunity to present their work to the global sociology community, identified as important to the IRS internationalisation strategy.

In Yokohama, the two research departments “Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development” and “Regeneration of Cities and Towns” presented IRS research on issues such as vulnerability and resilience, shrinking cities and socio-spatial disparities. Especially worth noting are the session “Disaster Vulnerability, Resilience Building and Social Marginality” and a workshop on “Shrinking Cities”.

The session was co-organised by head of department Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann, who provided an overview of the IRS perspectives on vulnerability and resilience to a top-class audience.

Dr. Anja Nelle had the chance to present research results from the department “Urban Regeneration” and experiences from the national contact point “Urban Restructuring East” (the latter of which is headed by Nelle herself) at a workshop on shrinking cities. In the course of this, it was shown that shrinking cities are a highly topical issue for both the Japanese research community and the ISA congress as a whole. The workshop took place in the run-up to the congress and was jointly organised by the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ) and the Yokohama National University (YNU).



IRS Contributions during the 18th World Congress of Sociology

Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann

Organisation of the session “Disaster Vulnerability, Resilience Building and Social Marginality” (together with Prof. Margarethe Kusenbach, University of South Florida, Tampa, USA)

Presentation “Local Perceptions of Vulnerabilities in Times of Climate Change. How the German Cities of Luebeck and Rostock Construct Potential Threats” at the session “Cities As Socio-Ecological Places: Global Risks and Local Vulnerabilities”

Presentation “Creatives as Urban Pioneers – Towards the Empowerment of Socially Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods” at the session “Culture, Arts and Politics”

Dr. Ralph Richter

Presentation “The Image of the City Between the Local and the Global” at the session “Urban Space and Global Cities”

Dr. Laura Colini

Presentation “Financialization in the Backyard: Shrinkage, Welfare State Restructuring and New Housing Investments” at the session “Unequal Cities and the Political Economy of Housing”

Presentation “Financing European Sustainable Urban Development: (un)Intended Policy Breakdowns?” at the session “Sustainable Cities and Social Justice”

Ulrike Milstrey

Presentation “The Socio-spatial Polarization of large Housing Estates in East German Shrinking Cities: a Governance Perspective” at the session “Shrinking Cities: Implications for Housing and the Built Environment”

Dr. Anja Nelle

Presentation for the workshop “Shrinking Cities” prior to the congress (jointly organised by the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ) and the Yokohama National University (YNU))

Presentation “Education As a Key to Tackle Inequalities in Shrinking Cities” at the session “Tackling Inequality in Shrinking Cities: The Role of Governance and Civic Society”



Innovation in Planning: How do new approaches emerge in spatial planning?

Four Approaches from the DFG-Project InnoPlan

A new DFG-funded research project with a particular focus on innovations in spatial planning began at the IRS in October 2013. Together with their principal investigators (who are based at the IRS and the University of Stuttgart), Daniela Zupan, Thomas Honeck, Franz Füg and Oliver Koczy examine the origins, trajectories and effects of novel approaches within four fields of action. At the same time, these sub studies provide the framework for the four researchers' dissertation projects. Now that the InnoPlan project has reached its mid-point (autumn 2014), it is time for an interim assessment.

What is the epistemological interest of the InnoPlan project?

Honeck: InnoPlan examines the origins and implementation of novel approaches in spatial planning. Based on four sub studies, each of which focus on different planning contexts, constellations of stakeholders, and maturity levels of apparent innovation, our aim is to elucidate the shared features of innovations in spatial planning.

What are the possible benefits for policy and practice?

Füg: We intend to help create a deeper awareness of the complex character of innovation processes and, on this basis, pursue certain goals: to allow people to better understand ongoing changes in practice and, second, to provide useful insights for policy-makers and practitioners on how to support and reinforce intended structural changes during the planning phase. To this end, we need to identify and present the differing starting



Field of Action I: Planning and Building of New Urban Districts

The study in this field of action is conducted at the department for local and regional planning at the institute for urban development, University of Stuttgart. The study explores the reorientation from functionalist modernism towards the compact and mixed city, which has mainly taken place in middle and western European countries over the last four decades.

Duration: 2013/10–2015/9

Head of Project: Prof. Dr. Johann Jessen

Project Researcher: Daniela Zupan



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points for various policy levels and topics.

Why do you place so much value on the concepts of 'innovation' or 'innovation in society'? What is special about this perspective?

Koczy: Novel processes and products in spatial planning can be defined as 'innovations' if they meet two conditions. They need to break with previous routines and – in spite of that – become established in practice, meaning that they are seen as an improvement by a majority of actors. The innovative character is hence defined by things which had actually been deemed impossible to emerge according to established rules. By this means, this concept reveals that changes occurring in certain policy fields do not necessarily have to be processes of mainly reactive and unintended change. Instead, they can be based upon learning processes and deliberately developed by certain actors.

What are the respective subprojects' research foci and in what way do they engage with innovation?

Zupan: For the last four decades, we can detect a break from traditional routines as regards the planning and construction of urban districts. Whereas urban expansion during the immediate post-war period and the 1960s /1970s were committed to functionalist modernity, more recently built urban districts have followed the

principle of the compact and mixed-use city. The project explores this shift in guiding principles in terms of innovation in urban development.

Honeck: If we take a look at research on intermediate use, the example of Berlin clearly illustrates that the creative appropriation of waste lands or unoccupied houses by civil society actors is at first regarded as illegal. This perspective however changed as soon as it became clear that these spatial pioneers trigger upgrading processes through their activities – and thus pave the way for developments which can ultimately be exploited for spatial planning purposes. A 2004 amendment to the German building code (Baugesetzbuch) helped to establish a legal framework with respect to these kinds of appropriations. Instead of merely tolerating them as 'intermediate uses', they can now be purposefully deployed and steered as an instrument in the course of planning processes. Today, intermediate uses have come to be used frequently and within very different spatial planning contexts. At the moment, the former Tempelhof Airport represents the most prominent example of this.

Füg: With regard to 'reflexive regional policies' as one field of action, I have observed a shift away from an investment-related and path-dependent form of regional development towards a path-shaping regional development based on learning processes. This becomes manifest in a reinter-



Field of Action II: Spatial Pioneers and Intermediate Uses

This subproject focuses on intermediate uses as an explicit planning instrument. Intermediate uses are temporary use agreements which usually occur at an interim phase between an area's previous and future valorisation, the most important prerequisite of which is a low pressure for exploitation on the property market.

Duration: 2013/10–2015/5
Head of Project: Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann
Project Member: Thomas Honeck

pretation of regional problems and a change of thinking as far as solution-making is concerned. This is a completely novel perspective on understanding the development of regions which has become increasingly popular.

Koczy: The new thing about neighbourhood management is its implementation of an integrative approach in urban planning, which brings together both different departments of public administration on a vertical scale as well as a multitude of civil society actors on a horizontal scale. By this means, this concept brings urban development directly to the neighbourhood and as such demands direct citizen participation.

What specific challenges are connected to research on such issues? What specific perspectives and insights can each of the sub studies contribute to the project as a whole?

Zupan: For the subproject 'Planning and Building of New Urban Districts' the relationship between 'passive' adaptation to overall societal transformations (i.e. change) and the opportunity to exert active influence (i.e. innovation) is of key importance. Urban planning is expected to satisfy a whole range of political, social, economic, ecological and creative requirements. For this reason, it presents a particular challenge to identify the role of active and targeted learning and negotiation processes in the course of the emergence and dissemination of innovations.

Honeck: Taking a look at intermediate uses, it is interesting that the social perception of spatial appropriation has changed in that it is no longer regarded as virtually illegal, but rather as creative. Even so, it is hard to empirically capture the phase of 'illegality', especially since data can provide information about this illegality in only an implicit manner. In fact, the illegal character of a certain phase is only framed in retrospect and indirectly in the context of a legislation amendment. Moreover, interim uses were at first applied under the transformation conditions of East German cities. Today, however, they have also become a planning instrument for prosperous cities. We therefore witness a movement of this kind of innovation towards places which actually do not offer any conditions that could be regarded as conducive to interim uses – for instance because they hardly contain any open spaces. It will therefore be interesting to develop an explanation for this.

Füg: What we call 'reflexive regional policy' is a combination of several ideas that have emerged from a multitude of research contributions and regional development programmes. As a consequence, we conduct comprehensive analyses of documents and interviews so as to be able to include as many influences as possible. If we are to understand the character of innovation, we realised that it is of crucial importance to analyse the interplay of implemented planning decisions, reflective research and the policy approaches required for implementing these measures.

Koczy: The application of integrated urban and neighbourhood development measures can be traced back to planning practices of the 1970s. The early phase was shaped by architects, urban planners, social and community workers, social pedagogues and many other civil society groups. Two main challenges of the project have therefore been a) to understand these very heterogeneous and often informal actor constellations and b) to assess the influence of different pathways in the establishment of institutionalised structures such as, for instance, the federal government and federal states' (Bund-Länder) programme 'Social City'.

The project work will be complemented by dissertations. What additional questions will they address?

Zupan: Given that the concept of the compact and mixed-use city has gained influence beyond central Europe, I would like to add an international perspective to the overall project. The dissertation project examines the emergence and spreading of this idea in today's Russia. It will take into account the actors involved and their goals as well as the channels for disseminating this idea.

Honeck: As a geographer, I am mainly interested in the spatial aspects of the spread of innovation. On the basis of the literature on urban policy mobility we can assume that – depending on the specific planning-related prob-



Field of Action III: Reflexive Regional Development

We refer to a governance regime as reflexive regional development if it promotes the capacity for innovation and adaptation and, as a result, enables new development paths. This can be achieved when regions become collective political actors who are able to reflect upon their own deficiencies and potential solutions to overcome them.

Duration: 2013/10–2015/9

Head of Project: Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert

Project Member: Franz Füg

lem and context – only parts of the concept of intermediate use have migrated to other places, where they were then complemented by novel, locally specific aspects. In my dissertation, I shed light on the agents of transfer within these processes and the ways they influence the progression of innovations by way of translating – and thus transferring – intermediate uses to new places.

Füg: The example of regional policies is of particular interest to me because I try to find out to what extent individual actors are able to actively shape key features of innovation processes. In other words, I am interested in the extent of their strategic influence. I would like to expose the relationship between policy-influencing social developments and key figures, such as policy entrepreneurs. In this way, I intend to build a bridge to political science or, more specifically, policy analysis.

Koczy: While neighbourhood management was first implemented in the field of social urban development, we can now also detect governance structures in other fields of spatial planning which display striking parallels with the integrated approach of neighbourhood management. In my dissertation project, I assess how these spill-over and learning effects of innovation have occurred in other fields of spatial planning.

Could you detect any parallels or recurring patterns of innovations and processes across the different fields of action?

Füg: Yes, we could – very marked ones, in fact! Even now, all four subprojects provide evidence that there are spaces whose specific character encourages and facilitates the emergence of particular forms of innovation. Apart from confining factors, site-specific problems and the associated opportunities are of importance here.

Koczy: What all four fields of action have in common is that their formation was first initiated by a crisis of existing structures and practices. It appears that a failure of present routines tends to create a climate which allows us to experiment with new kinds of ideas. At present, it still appears uncertain whether these experiments will prevail – as innovations – against the established system, or if we can expect them to disappear in the long run instead.

Zupan: Due to the shared spatial and temporal context, some overarching processes are relevant for all subprojects – as for instance the politicisation of planning which we have witnessed over the past few decades. Besides, we have also repeatedly encountered unexpected par-

allels in the form of certain debates and issues that play a role for all subprojects: post-Fordism, for example.

Honeck: During a first working phase, we recognised that specialised and public discourse is a precondition for turning new ideas into innovations. It is in the context of discourses that new ideas can spread and where new knowledge systems become established. Interestingly enough, we can detect such discourses across all four subprojects, namely those on planning sciences, planning practice, politics and public media. In this context, we found it fascinating to find that these four fields of discourse do not always have the same meaning within the four fields of study. Instead, each field of study seems to be characterised by its own specific discourse profile. ■

www.inno-plan.org



Field of Action IV: Neighbourhood Management in Disadvantaged Urban Areas

Neighbourhood Management describes a field of application for integrated processes of urban and neighbourhood development. It is characterised by a vertical integration of several policy scales (multi-level) and a horizontal integration of a broad range of actors beyond the political-administrative system (multi-actored). Integrated plans for action and development put an emphasis on concatenating investments linked with social measures.

Duration: 2013/10–2015/9

Head of Project: Prof. Dr. Uwe-Jens Walther

Project Member: Oliver Koczy

New Project:
Urban Rainwater Management
– from Niche to Mainstream

The international project “Urban rainwater harvesting from niche to mainstream: challenges and opportunities for planning (UrbanRain)” explores opportunities and challenges related to the planning of decentralised technologies of rainwater utilisation in major European cities.

Together with KTH Stockholm, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Newcastle University, the IRS research department “Institutional Change and Regional Public Goods” examines the circumstances under which socio-technical innovations made to keep back, drain away, and utilise rainwater have become widely established in urban spaces. Special interest is paid to policy

and planning-related processes at the interface between a) water management planning, b) infrastructure planning and c) urban planning.

The IRS is responsible for a Berlin case study dealing with the emergence and the potential of decentralised rainwater drainage in both new development areas and existing housing stock. Moreover, it will be involved in the case comparison between Stockholm and Barcelona.

The project is funded by the Swedish Research Council Formas and has a duration of three years (2014/07 to 2017/06). It is directed by the head of the IRS department, Dr. Timothy Moss, and conducted by Natàlia García Soler, who has just joined Moss’ department. ■

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Thorsten Heimann
Guest Researcher at the Polish Academy of Sciences



From 23 June to 2 July 2014 Thorsten Heimann (member of the IRS department “Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development”) visited the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) in Warsaw as a guest researcher. His stay was prompted by a research project jointly conducted with the academy’s institute of literary studies. This cooperation resulted from the research visit of literary scholar Ms Dr. Anna Barcz at the IRS in April 2014. In this research project, both institutions

join forces to find out more about the emergence of local knowledge on river flooding and the associated culture-specific practices in different Oder river regions. Heimann also used his research stay for formal and informal meetings with researchers from both the academy and the University of Warsaw. Together with Barcz, he gave a joint lecture at the Academy on “Cultural Constructions of Oder/Odra River Floods” to present the work of the IRS and his department’s research approaches.

Guest Researcher
Alina Brad



Alina Brad, doctoral candidate and lecturer at the University of Vienna’s Department for Political Science visited the IRS as a guest researcher from 4 to 29 August 2014.

At the invitation of the research department “Institutional Change and Regional Public Goods”, Brad used her stay at the IRS to work on her dissertation. In her doctoral project, she

focuses upon the spatial realignment of resource regulation in the context of palm oil production. Her empirical research is on Indonesia. Alina Brad has been a DOC-team-fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences since 2011.

Guest Researcher Dr. habil.
Hanna Mamzer



From 18 to 29 August 2014, the IRS invited Polish psychologist and sociologist Dr. habil. Hanna Mazmer to be a guest researcher.

Together with colleagues from the IRS department “Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development” she developed a research proposal for the German-Polish Research Foundation. Mazmer teaches and con-

ducts research on cultural and media sociology at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. Her interests involve above all the issues of identity, multiculturalism and intercultural communication.

IMPRINT

IRS aktuell No 7, December 2014
Newsletter for Social Science-Based
Spatial Research



IRS

Publisher:
Leibniz Institute for Regional Development
and Structural Planning (IRS)
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The IRS is member of the Leibniz Association.

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Layout: Henrika Prochnow

The contributions in this newsletter are a
co-product of Jan Zwilling and the reseachers
of the IRS.

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