Master Thesis

Being Alternative: Social Embeddedness of Grassroots Sustainability Culture in Berlin

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Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

In partial fulfillment for the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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Budapest

June, 2012

Abstract

In this thesis I explore grassroots projects framed within the culture of sustainability in Berlin. Defined as a cultural shift towards ecological and social activism the proliferation of sustainability projects accounts for, I argue, articulation of the 'actually existing neo-liberalism' in the city, and, at the same time, for its contestation. Inquiring into this ambiguous nature of the sustainability culture, I trace back its connection to urban movements and subcultures in Berlin and its role in discursive production of the city through representations of Sustainable/ Creative/ Social Inclusive City. In doing so, I apply qualitative methodology, while using three analytical concepts: community, self-reliance and creativity.

Key words: sustainability culture, community, creativity, self-reliance, neo-liberalism

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INTRODUCTION: CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND "ACTUALLY EXISTING NEO-LIBERALISM"

In this thesis I explore the grassroots sustainability culture in Berlin in regard to its embeddedness within the 'actually existing neo-liberalism' (Brenner & Theodor, 2007). By introducing a qualitative analysis on grassroots-based projects/initiatives, I argue that although contesting the profit-driven urban development, 'workfarist' urban governance and, having a strong anti-systematic orientation in general, they actually articulate 'the sustainable city', as one of the representations on the neoliberal city (Hubbard & Hall, 1998). In this way the grassroots sustainability culture becomes unwillingly incorporated into the new urban politics (Cox & Mair, 1988; Kirlin & Marshall, 1988; Ancien, 2011) by advancing discourses of community, creativity and self-reliance. These three discourses represent a conceptual overlap between the contestation and the articulation of neo-liberalism, as they contextualize activities of the grassroots sustainability initiatives, structure their agendas, and at the same time construct what Helga Leitner calls "neoliberal subjectivity" (2007). The grassroots sustainability culture in this way partakes in "the politics of neoliberal urban representation" (Rossi & Vanolo, 2012).

The culture of sustainability is commonly defined as a "cultural shift towards social and environmental activism" (Parr, 2009, p.15). There are two general approaches in the literature on the culture of sustainability: greening mainstream economy and grassroots sustainability movement (Davies, 2012). The former elaborates on sustainability as a technological innovation of the mainstream business, and it is more concentrated on the developed states and more advanced economies (Davies & Mullin, 2011). The latter expands on it as a way to build social capital through community development and civic engagement, presenting it as a subsection of a social economy and social entrepreneurism (ibid). Further, grassroots sustainability is usually analyzed by applying the 'niche approach' which argues that grassroots are niches for

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technological and social innovations (Davies, 2012). Another approach follows the 'actor-network' theory, where the grassroots are analyzed through partnerships with different agencies and socio-economic structures, seeing it as always embedded in a wider societal context, supported and framed with the institutional solutions and the political system.

In the everyday parlance, the culture of sustainability refers to a variety of collective and individual, private and public, profit and non-profit oriented acts and communicated representations aiming at 'making things better'. It delivers on social, cultural, economic, ecological and political causes of the necessary social change in a globalized world. The culture of sustainability embodies effects of global flows of capital and information on the micro scale, and as such also shows the input of civil society as a local response —new social movements and grassroots initiatives (Parr, 2009).

The empirical focus of this thesis are the grassroots activities, chosen with their reference to what Leitner et al (2007) identify as "contesting polyvalent socio-spatial practices", as they contest neo-liberalization and profit driven development and governance by their agendas and by their appeal for the alternative, and by zooming into the small scale. By definition, polyvalent socio-spatial practices are variety of contestations which include "nonprofit institutions and alternative media engaged in developing and promoting alternative non-neoliberal forms of knowledge; attempts to advance non-capitalist and non-neoliberal economic and political relations [...] and individual everyday practices to undermine and belittle neoliberal norms" (Leitner et al, 2007, p. 15). They are oriented towards the re-imagination of both urban space and urban life.

On the other hand, and this is the crux of this thesis, these polyvalent practices can be also regarded as "forms of neoliberal socialization'", as a "non-market cooperation between

social actors" established and fostered in the present urban context (Gough, 1998, p. 405). As a form of neoliberal socializations, grassroots projects partly fulfill, in a self-organizing manner, socially-oriented functions which once used to be a domain of the urban government. They do so through community development programs and through the care after neighborhood. The sustainability projects also help to inject the local creative capacity into the domineering city image, by making local artistic and innovative social solutions more visible, fitting them into the general representation of the creative city (Landry, 2000). In this way they also add to the urban entrepreneurialism (Hubbard& Hall, 1998).

In their incentives for a more sustainable urban life, the grassroots occasionally use the tactics which are by no means strategies of the new urban politics—zoning, gentrification, and secluding into "gated communities" (Smith, 1996), articulating the neo-liberalism in the city. As a value-laden set of practices, the grassroots sustainability culture provides alternative paths of development, initiating bottom-up urban (re)development, and also circumscribes liminal space where urban pioneering as contestation coevolves with the neoliberal strategies of urban governing.

Through out this thesis I develop an analysis and a critical review of grassroots projects/ initiatives in Berlin by building an argument based on the Rossi & Vanolo's (2012) triad of urban politics (government/representation/contestation), with special attention to the politics of representation. I aim to show how the grassroots sustainability culture is embedded into the neo-liberalism of the city, how it articulates it, and how, in a reverse process, it gets utilized by the 'new urban politics' in shaping the adequate representation of the city as sustainable/creative/social one. To achieve this, I analyze the data with their reference to the concepts of community, creativity and self-reliance only to account for this embeddedness. To

elaborate on the idea of urban contestation and its cooptation, I trace back the connection of the contemporary sustainability culture to the urban movements and subcultures in Berlin from the 1970s and 1980s and investigate how informal and anti-systematic urban practices get incorporated into the neoliberal representation of the city.

The rest of this chapter describes the methodology I used to research the questions and introduces the compact literature review on the neoliberal city, sustainability culture and urban movements and grassroots. The second chapter presents the social and spatial background of the sustainability projects in Berlin, and connects them to a wider context of urban movements and subcultures. The last chapter outlines the analysis of the field work data, by applying the three concepts.

I Plan of the Present Research, Methodology and Conceptual Framework

1.1 Literature Review

This part of the chapter contains a compact literature review on the neoliberal city, sustainability culture and urban and localist movements in order to situate the thesis in a wider intellectual debate. The goal is to bring together three sets of scholarship which synergy can articulate the problematique outlined in this thesis. For that reason I look into the critical scholarship on neoliberal city and its politics of representations. I connect this literature with the one on sustainability culture, as a discourse which has been incorporated into the representational forms of the neoliberal city. The last literature I use is the one on localist movements and grassroots, to account for the cooptation and embeddedness of the contestation within the new urban politics. I argue that these three groups of work can be used together to fill the gap on how the informal and anti-systematic practices in the city get co-opted into the neoliberal discourse, by constructing a desirable representation of the city.

1.1.1 Neo-liberalism and the City

Starting from the 1980s, urban scientists have been indicating towards the paradoxical nature of the modern city. On one hand urban development brought new cityscapes and glass-and-steel buildings, cleansed downtowns and gentrified areas, but on the other side the decay accompanied by the social polarization took place. (Hubbard and Hall, 1998; Zukin 1991; Smith, 1996) The spatial changes revealed a more substantial social change, related to the political economy of a contemporary city, and to the new urban politics, suggesting a change towards entrepreneurialism, and abolishing of the welfare provision. (Hubbard & Hall, 1998).

The literature on the neoliberal city emerged in the late 1980s and developed a plethora of theories and concepts (Ancien, 2011, p. 2477), for example growth urban entrepreneurialism theory (Hubbard & Hall, 1998; Harvey, 1989); coalitions theory (Logan & Molotch, 1987; Gotham 2002); private-public partnerships (Moszoro & Gasiorowski, 2008; Barnekov et al, 1989); urban governance (Pierre, 1999; Goodwin & Painter, 1996); urban revanchism and theory of the revanchist city (Smith 1996; McLeod 2002, Van Eijk, 2010). They all presuppose the leading role of capital and economic interest in shaping the urban politics, and therefore in determining the path of urban development. This new urban politics is of a more entrepreneurial type, as opposed to the one of a managerial type— welfare oriented urban politics.

The entrepreneurial city is yet another representational form of the neoliberal city, distinguished by a shift from provision of welfare to provision of economic growth, and by a cooperation of the city-state with the private sector (Hubbard & Hall, 1998). In the entrepreneurial city managerialism has been overcome by entrepreneurialism, enabling the private sector to act. This type of a city environs a range of spatial transformations, such as gentrification and use of symbolic economies (Zukin, 1989); suburbanization as defragmentation of the city center and urban sprawl (Hayden & Wark 2004; Garreau, 1992); inter-urban competition (Leitner & Sheppard, 1998) and inner-urban fragmentation (Smith, 1996; Davis, 1990). This inevitably leads to the social transformation and emergence of new urban identities. One of the persistent critiques arguing against the excluding nature of new cleansed public spaces in the entrepreneurial city poses the question of justice and right to use the city, as the question of the citizenship in the urban space (Purcell, 2003; Lefebvre, 1996; Holston, 2008)

Another important feature of the entrepreneurial city is an emphasis on city branding, and a controlled process of creating a suitable image or representation of the city. The literature on

city branding defines it as a strategic, conceived and controlled process of building and/or maintaining the identity of the city in order to increase its potential for attracting investments, tourists and innovation. City branding techniques aim to communicate a distinct quality of the city and to make it competitive on the post-industrial global stage. This process demands a programmatic, interdisciplinary and expert-led approach, where nothing is left to chance. Having these features, city branding is conceived both in literature and in practice as a top-down approach (Hall & Hubbard, 1998; Anholt, 2005; Gudjonsson, 2005; Donald & Kefman, 2010). Certain authors have indicated towards more creative branding strategies that would include the sense of a place, as a unique and grassrooted conception of spatial experience. (Massey, 1994).

The literature on the neoliberal city and on its representational forms do not explain how others are included in the image production, what happens to those who contest the representation, what are the strategies for translating them into categories which sustain the chief urban representation. This translation and tactics of discursive inclusion are expected to exist, as contestation is a dialogical process, which includes action and reaction, challenge and assertion.

1.1.2. Sustainability and the City

Sustainable development is a narrative of the postindustrial society. Development could not stay sustainable by aiming at the fullest capacity of economic production and social benefit in the present and also keep it going in the same pace for the future. Once the future was perceived as a critical--as most likely bond to fail-- the problem of sustainability posited itself as the main problem of the contemporary world. The common denominator for all the streams of deliberation on sustainability issue is a prospect of crisis, whether understood in ecological, societal or economic sense. This prospect of crisis sets milestones for collective visions, and puts in motion an agenda for much needed social change. Deliberation on and struggles over

sustainability are seen at best in cities which serve as a scene for restructuring and reassertion of development.

Sustainable development was established as a theoretical concept and an activation plan in 1987, when the World Commission on Environment and Development introduced the Brundtland Report[1]. Five years later, at the Rio Conference, a move was made towards "the achievement of Brundtland's aims" (Kirby et al, 1995, p. 1) issued the Local Agenda 21, which determined sustainability in terms of assessment and various sets of standards for the already initiated activities towards a social, economic, and political change of the present society[2].

Sustainable development today structures a framework in which governments collaborate with public and private development agencies, and it makes part of a political agenda for the social action. The term has a wide and flexible usage, which makes some of authors to consider it devaluated (Kirbey et al, 1995, p. 1). The most widely accepted and used definition of sustainable development is the one given in the Brundtlandt Report: "Sustainable development is the one which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs." (Brundtland Report, 1987) The centrality of this statement is given to the people, emphasizing their needs, and not emphasizing the environmental

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[1] Officially known as World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), the Brundtland Commission's mission is "to unite countries to pursue sustainable development together". It was named after the chairman of the special commission on sustainable development, Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former Prime Minister of Norway , who was appointed by Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary General of the United Nations, in December 1983. The goal of setting this commission was "to rally countries to work and pursue sustainable development together." The Brundtland Commission officially ceased to exist in December 1987 after producing the Brundtland Report in October 1987. Instead of this commission, another body took place--Center for Our Common Future. (Report on the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, 1987)

[2] Local Agenda 21 is a "local-government-led, community-wide, and participatory effort to establish a comprehensive action strategy for environmental protection, economic prosperity and community well-being in the local jurisdiction or area". It integrates "planning and action across economic, social and environmental spheres". It presupposed "full community participation, assessment of current conditions, target setting for achieving specific goals, monitoring and reporting". (local Agenda 21, 1992)

protection (Kirbey et al, 1995, p. 2). It accentuates the importance of intergenerational continuity, and underlines human needs, entrenching the relation of people towards the surrounding nature, which primarily serves a basis for resources.

The so-called 'crisis of sustainability' is in a direct connection with the post-industrial world. The vision of the future and the vision of human destiny are created out of deliberation on sustainability problematique (Pirages et al, 1996). Those visions and deliberations are what entail social agendas for different societies and what makes social change attainable. Sustainability issue is a framework and a paradigm for re-evaluating the present state of a society and the course for future actions (Ibid). Pirages (1996) differentiates between "two faces of sustainability problematique": the one which looks outwardly, attending the issues of environmental preservation and limits of growth; the second one is oriented inwardly, "to assess and preserve, wherever possible, many of the ideals of the existing sociopolitical system" (Pirages, 1996, p. 10). Sustainability makes a basis for re-evaluating and reintegration of those social arrangements which were once deemed non-functional, but which role has changed as the pressing needs for the alternative solutions took place. Sustainability culture, therefore, does not call upon complete erasure of existing social practices; it is a politics of reflection on the ongoing systems of value and a determination to find those niches in society which can maintain development.

Sustainability culture, as "a shift towards social and environmental activism", is considered coexisting with the logic of late capitalism (Parr, 2009), for its "productive force comes from how it generates economic values as well as political currency." (Parr, 2009, p. 4). When it comes to cities, the culture of sustainability promotes those social, political and economic values that integrate the new urban politics with its delegation of the welfare services

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to the private-public and grassroots initiatives. Along the same lines, once informal aspects of the city gets (re)incorporated into the urban texture under the banner of self-relied communities.

The culture of sustainability produces images and representations which in the end constitute a city brand. Eco-hipness and the pursuit for the alternative render the sustainability culture as a powerful source for urban entrepreneurialism, easily incorporated into various city representations: sustainable city, creative city, green city, good city. The proliferation of the city representations where the sustainability culture partakes constitutes the "discursive production of the city" (Ancien, 2011, p. 2483). This includes the "entrepreneurial and civic boosterism discourses developed by local-growth coalitions' (ibid**).**

Further, in this discursive production of the city, politics of scale (Swyngedouw, 1997; Delaney and Leitner, 1997; Cox & Mair, 1998;) accounts for the embeddedness of urban development sequences and projects into a wider network of relations and institutions. The basic line of politics of scale is that "the standard categories of local, national and regional politics make little sense on their own" (Ancien, 2011, p. 2486). The politics of scale can be useful for elucidating on public-private partnerships and coalitions as dimension of urban governance, where the global flow of capital introduces new players on the local level.

Grassroots sustainability is usually in the literature connected with the idea of innovation and creativity (Landry, 2000; Davies, 2012). Some other authors refer to it as alternative paths of development (Hess, 2010), or the no-growth pathways (Scott-Cato, 2009). The field of investigation on grassroots sustainability enterprises has emerged as a response to the shortcomings of the green economy discourse (Davies, 2012). Green economy stream was criticized in the literature predominately because of its emphasizes on "technical and financial rather than social and political.'" (Davis, 2012, p. 2). For those limitations a new field of

research has emerged, concentrating on those activities that not only "seek positive environmental and economic gain […] but also moderate attention to broader social considerations, normally (but not always) within a prescribed geographical area or local" (ibid).

Grassroots sustainability projects are usually analyzed in their relation to specific activities, and with that reference they are grouped in a few bigger groups: community based waste-management (Myers, 2005; Forsyth, 2005; Luckin & Sharp, 2003; Davies, 2009); low impact development (LID) and sustainable housing (Pickerill & Maxey, 2012; Winston, 2010; Seyfang, 2004;); biodiversity conservation initiatives (Gooch & Warburton, 2009; May, 2008; Barkin, 2003) ; community's self-established currency system (Dauncey, 1988; Seyfang, 2004); urban agriculture (Baker, 2004; Mathey, 2000; Rosol, 2012).

There is also a line of the literature dealing with the question of assessing and measuring the sustainability impacts in form of the social capital, local economic development and ecologic preservation (Davis & Mullin, 2011). This approach "tends to capture those aspects of sustainability which are most difficult to quantify" (ibid, p. 43), as such it is put in a perspective of politics of growth. The departmentalization of the grassroots sustainability projects in literature blurs the common thread of all the project and initiatives, namely that they make part of a cultural shift which is partly dependent upon a global unsustainable development, and partly on a specific urban political economy.

Marit Rosol's article (2012) on urban gardening initiatives in Berlin also deals with the governing context of grassroots projects, following the same line of argument as this thesis attempts, that a shift in neighborhood initiatives happens as neoliberalizing governance advances. In doing so, she is tracing back their history and development across twenty-year time span, identifying an increase in the emergence of this kind of initiatives, and takes into

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consideration the governing context before and after the wall. She understands the urban gardens to be a form of public spaces which changes within the urban context and new forms of governance. Her main argument is that " the process of neoliberalising the city that not only entails the entrepreneurial strategies, but also in which civic engagement gains importance as a substitute for welfarist functions of the local state" (Rosol, 2012, p. 125). I follow this same line of argumentation, but I aim to expand it by going beyond urban gardening and by including more versatile projects, only to account for the common denominator of what enables those different projects to articulate neo-liberalization, and how they get incorporated in the urban governance. I see the urban sustainability actors as multifaceted ones—as contesting agents, and as supporting agents; as articulating and articulated.

1.1.3. Grassroots and the City

The literature on social movements is abundant and continuously proliferating. For the sake of a focus in this debate, it is useful to categorize urban social movements in at least two groups: the one which identifies the "right to the city" demands and the other one labeled as cosmopolitan activism (Leontidou, 2010). The importance of Henri Lefebvre's concept of 'the right to the city' (Lefebvre, 1996) is that he gave to the question of social justice a spatial form, providing a discourse for the right-claiming in relation to the city: who has the right to the city, who has the right to make and create the city and to use it, to gather in it, to renew it and to redefine it. During years, and thanks to the activism around the world, the 'right to the city' became an effective slogan used for all kinds of demands where the social production is coupled with spatial production, extending the meaning of Lefebvre's concepts beyond cities, further to villages and other spatial forms (Marcuse, 2009), and becoming a formative basis for multiplying grassroots initiatives.

The dependence of the grassroots initiatives on the urban policies was firstly shown by Castells (1977), who indicated towards an observable change in their organizations and demands. During the 1960s urban movements were about having a bigger power in shaping urban politics (Castells, 1977). In the 1970s urban movements were concentrated around particular issues, and became more diversified (ibid). What is important, Castells identified the proliferation of the neighborhood-based movements and so-called "self-help activities of the community" which he described as becoming "more distinct from the grassroots protest organization and is a far cry from political struggles pursuing the dream of a new metropolitan area." (Castells, 1977, p. 424).

The importance of this division lies in the underlying assumption that the dynamics and possible shifts and changes in the organization, political activism and goals of urban movements are in the tight relation with how cities are governed. The more recent piece of work focusing on the same problematique is illustrated in Lila Leontidu's (2010) analysis on urban movements in Southeast Europe with reference to the "globalization, democratization and Europeanization" (Leontidu, 2010, p.1180). She argues that before these processes took place in this part of the Europe, the grassroots mobilization was marked by the north-south division in terms of the economic development. The right to the city motivated movements managed to blur this line, as an answer to the wider "socio-political transition" (ibid).

The issue of sustainability and grassroots' cooptation can be exemplified by the experience of the squatting movement in West European countries. Squatting is seen in the literature as taking place within the opportunity structure, meaning taking advantage of the abundance of available space and housing arrangements. It has also being framed by specific nature of the urban governance (Pruijt, 2003; Kallenberg, 2001). Hans Prujit (2003) explores the connection between effective squatting (sustained squatting) and the nature of urban governance

and argues that the dynamics of squatting and its embeddedness in the city, contribute to the good, " lively, low-income, people friendly city" (Pruijt, 2003, p. 2). He further argues that the effective squatting as a means for achieving a livable city can lead to integration or repression, and further analysis two types of integration: institutionalization and co-optation. Institutionalization of an urban movement means its establishment within a clearly defined terms and patterns of behavior, resulting in the loss of movement's identity (Pruijt, 2003, p. 2). Cooptation means that "co-opting organization embraces some ideas from the movement, while redefining problems in such a way that solving them does not threaten its own stability." (ibid, p.3) This assumes shaping a framework in which the movement can persist, but as a utilized agent, rather than challenging and contesting.

These lines of literature can shed light on the alteration of urban movements and grassroots initiatives in regard to the socio-political context of a city. What it misses out is the explanation of the way movements articulate the socio-political context in return; it presupposes one-way process where only movements get altered, rather than examining how urban movements' dynamics shape the urban context. Combined with the theory on the neoliberal city, this gap can be elucidated upon—by understanding exact paths of incorporation and cooptation, as a two-way process.

This thesis brings together three sorts of scholarship that have not been brought together in the research on the neoliberal city. It offers a qualitative exploration of grassroots culture of sustainability (as four-pillared by culture, society, economy and ecology), as a spatial and social practice of making the city, and it situates it in a wider contemporary context. The importance of researching the culture of sustainability is that it reveals dialectics of politics of scale. The local level absorbs global flows and renders them more specific, contested and translated into local

narratives. As Merrifield (2002) emphasized, "the truth about the cities must be conceived from bottom upwards, must be located and grounded in the street, in urban public space." (Merrifield, 2002, p. 14) The culture of sustainability is a global phenomenon, but its implication with the 'actually existing neo-liberalism' is a consequence of localization, and the impact of the local on the global scale.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

This study takes a political economy approach to critically assess the sustainable culture within the context of the neoliberal city. My first hypothesis is that there is an observable shift from politicized urban movements towards localist initiatives. What they all still nourish is the notion of social justice, as an ethical concept, which is also a core concept of sustainable development. As forms of hyperlocalization (Hess, 2010), and instances of sustainable socio-economic enterprises, it is worth to focus on the analysis of the grassroots sustainability culture projects as cultural practices which in the end "enrich an experiential understanding of social justice." (Zukin, 1991).

My second hypothesis is that the diversified grassroots sustainability shares a conceptual overlap with the new urban politics in the context of the 'actually existing neoliberalism' by advancing the discourse on community, self-reliance and creativity. The culture of sustainability and its performance through grassroots initiatives and neighborhood-oriented projects serves as a means for social mobilization in the case of contestation and anti-systematic practices, and a means for derailing the welfare functions in the case of the neoliberal strategies of governing.

Further, the self-reliance is taken as a pillar of social sustainability in relation to the local context. The concept of self-reliance, self-help and self-organization started to be referred to in the 1980s, with regard to the state crisis and diminishing function of a welfare state. Self-help

actions are discussed as a "political legitimation for a neo-corporativist restructuring of the relationship between state and society" (Egan et al, 1981, p. 6); a reflection on the postmodernism-postcapitalism connection, especially with regard to the new social movements; in regard to its embeddedness within the restructured capitalist state (Mayer &Katz, 1981); a form of the normative orientation for the citizenry (Harms, 1982).

Creativity (Landry, 2000) is seen through the hybridization of public spaces (comprising both the personal and the public, the leisure and the work) and reuse of deserted buildings, as well as a reevaluation of urban disinvested spaces. It has been promoted   and encouraged as a means for urban re-imagination, and for advancement of the specific local context, bringing up conditions for more sustainable urban experience. This is the point where two city representations coexist: creative and sustainable city, both flashing out the neoliberal city.

In terms of urban representation, I explore how the grassroots sustainability projects are incorporated in the sustainable city discourse. Sustainable city is seen as a discursive practice of "enviromentalization of the urban experience." (Rossi & Vanolo, p. 46). Here is argued that sustainability is a normative discourse which can be applied for the entrepreneurial purposes, building an attractive city brand.

1.3. Methodology

This paper builds on field research conducted in Berlin between February and March 2012. The sampling procedure was based on a specific criterion, as I intended to identify those projects which bring together different agents and variety of institutional and organizational arrangements and concepts of community, self-reliance and creativity. The main method I employed was semi-structured interview. In addition to this, I also gathered and analyzed data

from all kinds of internal and promotional material and publications, as well as from web sites and blogs.

The selection of interviewees who were not directly engaged in the grassroots projects, but served more as a support network, also sought to reflect the diversity of agents in urban sustainability: the public and private-public sector (German Council for Sustainable Development, Stiftung Zukunft); areas of interventions (architecture, society, culture, economy, urban development); the private sector (Ticket B). Others were interviewed in regard to their practice as agents of grassroots sustainability: representatives of 'communal projects' (UfaFabrik, Institute for Creative Sustainability ID22) and individual projects ('Sustainable Couch Network', and 'Sustainable Alternatives Blog'). The interviews were recorded, and lasted between 35 min and 1 hour, with the average length of 45 minutes. There were eight interviews in total. One interview was conducted as a focus-group (interview 3), and one was combined 'walk and talk' techniques—a city walk with locals where various community-led projects were shown to me. This 'walk and talk tour' entered this study as a unique method for data collection, as it was the only effective way of exploring the projects. This tour was an instance of a spatial practice, and it was illustrated in further text by photographs taken by me. On the other hand, it was used by Verena Molitar for her own project on Sustainable Couch, as a self-guide device, for the people who visit Berlin and want to get familiar with the social projects in this city. The interviews were conducted in English and were transcribed entirely.

The reason for choosing these particular informants coming from different organizational and contextual settings was partly induced with my attempt not to limit the research by following one approach exclusively (grassroots projects analyzed from the "niche approach" or from the "actor-network" approach). Having informants from so-called support network for the

sustainability culture accounts for the actor-network stance, where the projects are analyzed in relation to the wider institutional and political frame. This illustrates the social embeddedness of the sustainability culture, which is the goal of this thesis. In addition to this, I chose people who were direct participants or "practitioners" of the sustainability culture. This selection is informed by the "niche-approach" which takes the grassroots projects as sources for social innovation and "alternative paths of development" (Hess, 2010). Also, this approach could help in illustrating the responding reaction—how does sustainability culture, once embedded, influence, alter or articulate the embedding frame.

Opting for the interview as a technique for collecting data stemmed from a need to capture the dynamics of the relationships, and different levels of narratives concerning the values and aims of culture of sustainability. It helped me to grasp the common representation and understanding of sustainability and the 'translation' of the lived practice into categories that stakeholders use to legitimate their acts and to promote their ideas. Quantitative approach would not be apt in this case, as it would not be able to issue the nuance of the topic. Also, in searching for this type of qualitative data, the question of representation became easier to handle, as I concentrated on a limited number of players, trying to discover what makes *their* point of view on sustainability, and how is their practice incorporated in a wider context.

II CONTEXTUALIZING SUSTAINABILITY: FROM URBAN FRONTIERS TO URBAN PIONEERS

In this chapter I briefly present the contextual framework for the sustainability culture projects analyzed in the next chapter, in order to situate them in a wider context of urban development and political economy of the city of Berlin. I firstly give an overview of the 'spatial situation' in the city, which appeared as a consequence of the physical and political division of the city since 1961 and which served as a material basis for the social situation after the Wall came down in 1989. I specially concentrate on the residual spaces as an outcome of strategic disinvestment of both political regimes—DDR and GDR. I argue that the abundance of a free space was conducive to the emergence and development of the communal structures and cooperative arrangements.

Elucidating on the squatter movement, I then show its connectedness with the environmental movements emerging and coevolving at the same time, i.e. in the 1970s and 1980s. I relate this connectivity to the radical ecology current in the arts and the urban culture discourse, initiated and represented by the influential work of Joseph Beuys, and in doing so, I trace back the idea of self-realization and creativity in relation to the social and natural environment, which will later be one of the main lines in the culture of sustainability. Then I follow the stream where the transformation from radical movements to co-opted localist movements happened, identifying the emergence of social entrepreneurism discourse and the proliferation of the politics of localism as a crucial point for this shift.

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2.1. Social and Spatial Context: Urban Interventions and Urban Voids

Due to its peculiar history, post-wall Berlin missed a rigid regulation when it comes to urban planning, which enabled free experimenting within the urban space, leading squatters and other flamboyant "the right to city" seekers to cross a fuzzy borderline between 'actual' (tactical) and 'planned'(strategic) development. This specific historic context was primarily shaped by the presence of the wall, both symbolic and material, and city's division from 1961 until 1989. Firstly, both half-cities served as show cases for two different ideologies. West Berlin had to be propagated as the "outpost of capitalism" and the eastern cityhalf stood out as a capital of East Germany.

This spatial informality and abundance of urban voids (Borret, 1999) emerged due to strategic disinvestment in some areas of both half cities for ideological reasons, resulting in proliferation of residual places and in a sprawl of the sites of alternative urban interventions-- artistic squats, urban gardens and farms, trailer camps, flee markets, and makeshift beaches. After the reunion, these sites coevolved from informal, hidden and marginalized into more regulated parts of urban texture, with the prospect of being fully incorporated into a suitable representational discourse on the city, as urban elites tried to reposition the city in a global network of urban nodes. One of the means for such a re-imagining development was the "marketing oriented and staging urbanism" (Colomb, 2011; Till 2011), which presented the redevelopment and efforts to reposition the city as an event per se. Staging urbanism especially drew upon aerial look at the construction sites, provided by real stages, from where curious citizens along with journalist could observe the work and the transformation of brownfields into the legitimate urban space. (Colomb, 2011) There was a parallel between advertizing and promoting the existing state of the city and keeping its prospect of development in a right

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direction, by connecting the past and the future via a desirable city-image and via a spectacularization of the redevelopment.

The availability of free space was just one side of the story. With this spatial situation civic activism and contesting tactics went hand in hand. Berlin's exceptional geopolitical position during the Cold War period proliferated imageries dubbed by Belinda Davis (2008) as a double utopia. She argues that Berlin has been fostering many various images for the outsiders, among them one of the most persistent was the image of a divided city. Davis points out that West Berlin was seen as emanating with energy, "especial mutability", and such imaginary was possible by "imposition of fantasy" (Davis, 2008, p. 247). Political activism during the 1960s and 1970s created the space of West Berlin, so that politics in fact made its existence alive, where West Berlin became "a site particularly accommodating of activists' fantasies." (Davis, 2008, p. 247)

This trend continued after unification; the reunification entailed a vast 'political power vacuum' opening the space for 'anarchistic, libertarian experiment against everything that was petit bourgeois'(Holm & Kuhn, 2010, pp 6-7). Occupying urban voids, which were unused, empty places all over the city--warehouses, department stores, and dilapidated factories, especially the locations along the line of the former wall were abandoned—new modes of communal expression inscribed themselves into the urban fabric. The concept of reuse and the concept of temporary usage of space as a strategy for revitalizing those disinvested areas emerged. This opened the space for innovative ways of grassroots engagement in urban development.

Many established loci labeled today as agents of the grassroots sustainability culture started as a form of reuse and a form of alternative urban life (in this thesis particularly described

as an instance is a squat community Ufafabrik). The tradition of grassroots projects can be traced back to urban movements from the seventies. The emulsion of environmentalism and rights to the city, as well as the notion of social justice served as a ground for their further incorporated development.

One of the influential actors in the German public discourse who brought up the idea of environmentalism together with social activism was Joseph Beuys, a radical ecologist, and artist working and acting in the 1970s and 1980s. The radical approach to ecological system is one in which concerns go beyond the natural world, and connect with the larger patterns of human life: economy, politics, and society. Joseph Beuys introduced the idea of the role of art in firming the radical ecological paradigm. In the sense of political activism, Beuys was a cofounder and a candidate of the German Green Party. In the 1970s he led several public demonstrations for ecological causes. In his artistic endeavors he challenged the idea of how western civilization is circumscribed, and how "an expended conception of art can tackle even the social, economic and political reorganization of western society" (Adams, 1992 p. 28).

He called for the replacement of the ecology-destroying tendencies, by abolishing consumerism, patriarchy, statism and capitalism. By doing so, he was the first to introduce the ideas of sustainability culture. He even today remains one of "the most radical artists concerned with new ecological paradigms" (Ibid, p. 26). The unity of activism, ecology, creativity and responsibility was given in his concept of 'social sculpture'. Social sculpture, as an art which requires socially engaged audience, is what lies at the basis of the new social movements contesting the system and offering a power for social transformation.

2.2. "Berlin is poor, but sexy"[3]: The City and Its Representations

I argue that what enabled the cooptation of once grassroots contestations was the discourse on social entrepreneurism, elements of which were embedded in different representations on the neoliberal city. Decay in social welfare functions of the government and the deregulation of markets had its negative consequences. As an answer to these crises, during the 1990s a new compromise emerged, known as "the third way" (Giddens, 1998). The third way reestablished government responsibility for social services, such as health and education, but still supported the idea of the free market, and competiveness on the global scene. The general idea behind the third way is to build up a strong civil society, using community development principles (ibid). This establishes the institutional framework for social entrepreneurship and also indicates a turn to the social city discourse.

Social entrepreneurship has been seen often times as coevolving with the non-profit sector. Barbara Wallace (1999) looks upon non-profit social entrepreneurships in urban communities, which can range from those providing educational, health and cultural resources, to the small business niches. What she identifies in her study is that they all share same features: making small scale economic activity more visible and sustainable, advancement of common goods and public spirit rather than private interests, and participatory democratic practices.

The idea of social entrepreneurialism is widely accepted in contemporary Berlin. This city is perceived as a focal point for young creative people with its 'buzzing lifestyle and modern zeitgeist' (Miles, 2002). The grassroots sustainability projects have a long tradition, because of their benefits for the local community. Using empty spaces for various creative activities

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[3] The author of this catchphrase and affective advertisement line is Karl Wowereit, member of the SPD (Social Democratic Party), and the Mayor of Berlin since 2001.

represents a developing social economy, which is as such regularly funded by the European Union and Berlin's 'Stadtwicklung Senat' (Senate Department for Urban Development). The institutional framework for this kind of engagement is provided by Zwischennutzung (Temporal use, in regard to available space); it is 'not a law or planning guidance, [but] merely a tool or an approach to development that is widely recognized and promoted to encourage participation and discussion in urban development; test uses that are rooted in real needs; create self-employed jobs; eliminate vacant space and prevent damage." (Miles, 2002) This program became known under the name 'Urban Pioneers'. It is regarded as a tool for spatial revival, social economy and civic participation. It stems from material condition of the city—voids—and from the welfaire-provision oriented policy, developed in cooperation with the private sector (Urban Pioneers, 2007). The Senate leaves the initiatives to be conducted at the bottom level, rather than imposing the top-down approach, calling for the practice of self-initiatives and self-sufficiency, as well as for nourishing the entrepreneurial spirit.

On the global level, urban competivity--as a principle of the neoliberal urban politics--enabled the discourse on creative city in order to attract investments and the creative class (Florida, 2005). A need for repositioning the city in the global urban network forced the political elites to come up with "discursive practices" of remaking the city. In the case of Berlin, by using what was already there, that is the strong inclination towards experimenting and artistic expression, the Creative City discourse was launched as a suitable framework for advertisement and city branding, and for the discursive inclusion of informal practices into the official city image.

Creativity has been discussed as a tool for urban development in a new socio-cultural context, and as a "structural foundation" for urban development (Costa et al, 2008). There have

been two streams of analyzing the creativity in urban context (Landry, Costa, Howkins, Florida—policy oriented and pragmatic analysis; Ann Marcuse, Peter Hall, Allan Scott—more academically based research). Creative City discourse departs from a more traditional approach to the culture and the city (ibid, p. 3), it maintains the possibility of "designing and implementing more transversal interventions that overcome the old dichotomies and conflicts in domains and forms of actions (e.g. economy versus culture, public versus private, ephemeral versus permanent, local versus global)" (ibid, p. 3-4). Creativity is here understood in a double-folded way: as a result of a collective action and projects, and as an intrinsic quality of human action which enables public participation (ibid, p.13).

Richard Florida (2005) has been the most influential with his thesis on creative class and creative city. He proposes to increase the quality of urban life in the sense that tolerance and amiability of the environment stands high. Florida argues to unleash this dormant human potential certain environmental conditions must be met. One of them, if not the crucial one, is "an open culture- one that does not discriminate, does not force people into boxes, allows us to be ourselves, and validates various forms of family and of human identity." (Florida, 2005: p. 5) These conditions bring to the fore 'creative capital', which Florida differentiates from 'human capital' by being more precise in defining what kind of capital, and by underlying in itself what factors of a place contribute to this capital.

This brings about strategic partnerships with private stakeholders in order to set in motion the Creative City discourse. In the case of Berlin, this function fulfills "Berlin's Partner":

> We encourage investors to choose Berlin as the best place to start a business and support business retention, once they're here. We give advice on foreign trade and how local businesses can access new markets abroad. Plus, we coordinate city marketing and make our city a strong brand. (http//www.berlinpartner.de).

"Berlin Partner" develops campaigns which create Berlin's image as "an attractive location for business and science, a creative capital city, a metropolis for culture and sports, and a great place to live." (ibid) As an official marketing agency of the city, Berlin Partner currently conducts the project "Be Berlin", which intends to show the versatile nature of the city, by 'letting' the Berliners to present the city in their way. This 'human story' approach in marketing aims at easier identification and connection with the idea of an attractive city. It is also indicative of the bottom up strategies of city branding, and incorporation of the local sentiments for the city.

2.3. Cooptation: The Local Agenda 21

Berlin was the first city in Germany to introduce the Local Agenda 21 (Kern et al, 2007). Between 1994 and 1998, the Local Agenda 21 resolutions were implemented in all of Berlin's boroughs. The implementation of the Local Agenda 21 was alleviated by the rich citizens' initiatives, and was primarily a bottom up process (ibid). The process of implementation of the Local Agenda 21 resolution was developed in two phases. The first one was characterized as entirely bottom up, and the next one starting from 1999, was taken over from the Senat and passed through the professional bodies and agents. In this manner the Institute for Future Studies and Technological Evaluation founded the "Project Agency for Sustainable Berlin" in 1999 to introduce and advertize the sustainable development in Berlin. Projects, model enterprises and campaigns were financed by the Berlin Lotto-Trust (ibid).

Between 1999 and 2007 almost 100 projects were coordinated and financed, and almost all projects mentioned in the Agenda-Resolution (the ones needed for the implementation on the sustainable development on the local level) were supported by the special 'project agencies' (Ibid). The second phase was marked as a top-down approach. Even though the financial

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situation was the worst, compared to other Landers, the easy implementation of the Local Agenda 21 in Berlin was facilitated by, among other factors, a rich localism. (ibid)

One can identify at least two streams which shaped the emergence of the culture of sustainability. There is a material one-- the physical reality, and an immaterial one-- the social reality. Politics of scale was also in the play, as it accounted for the local specific response to the global influences. The politics of scale and the need to reposition the city has brought up new politics of representation of the city as a product of its discursive production. This discursive production could not erase the palimpsests of earlier phases of the city making, therefore it had to reinvent them and reincorporate them in a new light. Sustainability as a framework together with the Local Agenda 21 activation plan, which gathers different stakeholders, had that legitimate power to redefine social arrangements, and so to co-opt them into the institutional and legal system.

III SUSTAINABILITY FROM ABOVE: COMMUNITY, SELF-RELIANCE, CREATIVITY

In this chapter I present a double-folded analysis on the empirical data from the field site. I firstly analyze them by looking at how are the concepts of community, creativity and self-reliance deployed within the projects on sustainability culture. I argue that those three concepts make a common ground between neoliberal strategies of urban governance and grassroots activism, and I intend to show how their deployment illustrates this overlap between neo-liberalism in the city and its contestation from below. After presenting the analysis on these three concepts, I shift attention to the notion of representation of the sustainable city, and I explore what elements of grassroots activities enter the realm of sustainability culture. For this purpose, I look into the data collected during the 'Sustainability Tour' where I was in capacity of a participating observer in order to understand the way 'sustainability' was presented to visitors and tourists coming to Berlin and to determine the criteria based on which various grassroots initiatives were selected for the tour.

All the projects reviewed in this chapter had the same goal in common, namely, to provide sustainability as a set of ethical principles and a practical guide about how life in urban setting should be led; in practice, sustainability is understood as a complex, but compact sum of social, economic, environmental and cultural conditions necessary for a striving community and content individuals. These projects are different in organizational sense, as some of them emerged as spontaneously created instances of communal life; others are organized and function as private enterprises[4]; and some of them are private-public foundations. On the other hand, there

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[4] Some private enterprises enlist elements of sustainability culture in their business offer in order to attract customers. 'Ticket B Office', which operates as an architectural office specializing in giving city-tours has offered "Sustainable Development Tour", in which they show examples of sustainable buildings, or so-called green architecture. When asked why they have chosen to offer this kind of tours, one of the founders answered: "I am not sure whether we offered the tour or clients came and demanded one. We as architects, as guiding architects, we always try to show the newest buildings, and the special aspects of respective buildings; everybody is

are specialized public regulating bodies, working in a tight connection with the government on the implementation of the Local Agenda 21, and providing the context of the Sustainable City. This arrangement is not specific of Berlin and Germany, but represents a type of advisory body (National Councils for Sustainable Development) implemented within the governmental framework on sustainable development in many countries of European Union[5].

3.1 Community

Among the projects/initiatives which are framed within the sustainability culture, two are of interest to see how the idea of sustainability and sense of community are connected, and what it renders as an outcome. The discourse on community provides a stage for exercising urban citizenship, by ensuring ongoing democratic participation. On the other hand, in order to provide inclusion for members, sense of community depends on exclusion, resulting in that someone is always left out and excluded from it, as it needs a clear bordering to define itself and so to persist (Staeheli, 2008). In these instances one can see how the notion of a sustainable community resonates with the neoliberal understanding of community as both exclusive and inclusive term, as "constituted by contradictions that operate together" (Staeheli, 2008, p. 5). One instance

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interested in innovation, after all."They just exemplify with their experience how sustainability culture emerges as a brand mark for business and service oriented sector. It is also noteworthy to see how people understand "sustainability" in the case of architecture: "For us –guiding tours on sustainability is an ambiguous project, because a good architecture, good buildings are sustainable by definition. It's not a tangible thing, something which is easily seen. It's hidden in the walls, so there is nothing to look at. But people they want to see, for instance, sustainable housing project, and then we often discuss what to show them after all." (T.K, Interview 3, March 4, 2012)

[5] "National council for sustainable development" or NCSD is a generic term for multi-stakeholder mechanisms which bring together representatives of civil society, private sector and governments to provide participation in , planning and policymaking, and in integrating the social, cultural, economic, environmental dimensions of sustainable development into national action plans. "We are established by the government, and we have fifteen members in the council, which are given the mandate from the government for the period of three years. I am working at the office which supports the council members to do their work. Council members have council meetings several times a year, and we basically the meetings, and the recommendations that council members give to the government in terms of resource efficiency, energy, questions of cultural dimensions of sustainability." (J. W, Interview 4, March 4, 2012)

where this community discourse is clearly used is the Ufafabric which started as a squat and eventually became labeled as an agent of grassroots sustainability; the other example is community rhetoric in a project implemented by "Stiftung Zukunft" foundation which works on the sustainable development of the city from below. The sense of community is intertwined here with the idea of civic participation and self-reliance activities. These activities and agendas also construe community as a space for exercising civic virtues and as a bounded security zone for individuals.

According to the narratives of my informants, there are four primary understandings of community in the culture of sustainability: community understood as a subculture, offering an alternative way of life; community as a way of civic participation, understood mainly through its relation to self-help programs; community as a basis for integration, and as provision of security.

3.1.1. From a Subculture to an Agent of Sustainable Development

The UfaFabrik is located in the Berlin district of Tempelhof-Schöneberg. It is a mixed-use urban village consisting of several buildings, connected by narrow pedestrian paths and a couple of larger open green spaces. The UfaFabrik premises were formerly occupied by "Ufa" film company studios[6], built in 1917. In 1965 the Ufa film company abandoned this location. For some time this space was left unused. In June 1979 about a hundred people moved on the Ufa grounds - an action the squatters termed a "peaceful activation." This action was largely organized by a group that began to live and work together in 1972 in the alternative Kruezberg

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[6] UFA, (Universum Film-Aktien Gesellschaft) was German film production company that was the most famous during the silent era. Before the World War 2 "its studios were the best equipped and most modern in the world. It encouraged experimentation and imaginative camera work and employed such directors as Ernst Lubitsch, famous for directing sophisticated comedies, and G.W. Pabst, a pioneer in the expressive use of camera position and editing techniques." (http://www.britanica.com)
It was established with a purpose to promote German culture. After the World War I, it developed distribution deals with the American studios Paramount and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and got world fame by producing such classics as F.W. Murnau's Der letzte Mann (1924; The Last Laugh), Edwald André Dupont's Variété (1925; Variety), and Fritz Lang's Metropolis (1927). (http://www.filmreference.com)

neighborhood of West Berlin. During the mid-1970s this group expanded and formed a "people's center" or what they also called a "self-organized and independent communications center" (http://www.ufafabrik.de).

Today, the UfaFabrik village is a home to about thirty people who range in age from five to sixty five. On the other hand, UfaFabrik's various non-profit and for-profit organizations employ more than two hundred people. It is a place where one comes to eat, read newspapers, inform on new eco-friendly projects, get enrolled in one of the many workshops and courses. The UfaFabrik includes a café; a community center with its own set of social and cultural programs; a guest house; an International Cultural Center which operates with a circus, theater, dance, cabaret, a samba band and other performing arts. What was once established as an alternative social unit today is a sustainable living project, comprising social, cultural and environmental activities.

From the very beginning, they incorporated the idea of sustainability in their everyday practice:

> Back in the beginning we had no word for this sustainability, but the day-to-day life was living sustainability: we did the culture, the economy, the ecology… every part was created by the life itself (W.W, Interview 1, February 22, 2012)

The idea of a sustainable life stemmed from a holistic understanding of the everyday life, with its multitude of activities. Their first activities connected to the "peaceful activation" and squatting through which a communal life appeared can be considered to be part of a subculture (Gelner, 1997) succumbed to the phenomenon of a postwar society, which reevaluates and re-questions old social patterns, and responds to the capitalistic growing consumerism by pursuing alternative paths. This was exemplified by environmental-friendly experiments conducted by the UfaFabrik's activists in the 1970s. The experiments were complemented by demonstrations

organized against nuclear power plants and the formation of one of Berlin's first food cooperatives. In 1979 UfaFabrik members opened the natural food store and created one of Berlin's first organic bakery. Their story is tightly connected with the first environmental festival which took place in 1979, and was called "Umdenken- Umschwanken."

> The festival lasted 6 weeks. After six weeks we had to leave. We were very sad, they had to go, so we were thinking what to do next. So someone proposed 'let's live it, let's do it'! Then we started to look for places were we could move in and which were big enough to accommodate all those people. (ibid)

After merging with a squat community from Kreuzberg, the motley crew occupied the building of the former film studio and turned it into a small urban village. During the 1980s the community started to be partly financed by the Berlin's Senat, primarily because of their innovative solutions to ecological problems:

> Back then we built cogeneration systems, solar management, rainwater using systems, greenroofs, and in the beginning it was small scale, but in the late nineties we widen the activities to social activities. (ibid)

Expansion of their activities during the nineties and reaching to the social sphere was coincided with the outsourcing of the state's welfare functions to the private bodies and private-public partnerships. The other condition for this was that their initial activities became institutionally, politically and culturally defined and recognized by the application of the principles of sustainable development and Local Agenda 21. Rising interest in Local Agenda 21 initiatives over recent years in Berlin has meant a growing interest in the UfaFabrik as an example of implemented Agenda 21 principles. Cooperative efforts have been increasing

between the UfaFabrik and the Local Agenda 21 actors, leading for example to one of the current major efforts of the UfaFabrik, the sustainable redevelopment of the nearby Hafen Tempelhof[7].

This and other Ufafabrik's recent roles in urban development might be understood as a 'professionalization' of once informally squatted places, with inevitable departmentalization and delegation of different jobs to different sectors (in their activities, today is a clear division between the economy, ecology, culture and social matters). It is what Pruijt (2003) calls cooptation of urban movements in a way that they still continue with their activities but in a manner that is utilized within the general institutional framework. From an alternative and experimental setting it became a unique public-private partner in urban development, with a strong accent on providing social support, and self-help programs.

3.1.2 Community as a Space for Integration

The central role of Ufafabrik is to provide opportunities for "personal development and coordinating social work" (http://www.ufafabrik.de). There are various social courses and monthly conducted seminars including everything from "African drumming to karate and salsa dance". Educational programs are offered for pregnant women and for parents with toddlers, as well as "integration classes" through which immigrants can share experiences and learn German language (ibid). They also provide home-care services for the sick, disabled or in some way unable to take care of themselves and their families. Here one can see a strong emphasis on the notion of integration in case of immigrants, and also a strong accent on the self-help, were people can learn how to become better in the domain of parenthood and other private spheres. This is

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[7] Hafen Tempelhof is a small river port on the Teltow Canal, situated near the premises of the UfaFabrik. It encompasses a large warehouse which redevelopment called for the proposals on a variety of new cultural and business uses. In 2002, the site was promoted through 'Harbor Festival', in order "to draw attention, build partnerships and accelerate the implementation process". (http://www.ufafabrik.com)

coordinated through Neighborhood Management units[8], (NM) which are established in every district of Berlin. Ufafabrik is the "headquarter" of NM for the district of Tempelhof.

Also coordinated by Neighborhood Initiative within the premises of the Ufafabrik there is the Children's Farm, which aims to bring the countryside and the farm animals to city children and so provide an innovative and environment-oriented mode of education and feeling of compassion. As with UfaFabrik projects in general, "many volunteers are integrated and help manage NM activities" (ibid). The discourse on community is here provided by the general framework of Social Inclusive City which is incorporated via activities of Neighborhood management. The Neighborhood and Self-Help projects are coordinated with the District and City Government, to provide families as well as children, youth and seniors education resources, social programs of self-development and community-building activities.

From the initial understanding of community as a subculture providing an alternative urban life, now there is a notion of community which has to be incorporated and taken care of through different programs of its improvement. The Ufafabrik represents a space where family as an organic unit of society is maintained and provided by all kinds of self-help and educational resources. Starting from the counseling and pregnancy-maintenance programs, orientation and counseling for young parents, through children educational activities and German classes for foreigners, there is a lot of emphasizes on the community building through versatile projects of improving the social capital of the district.

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[8] In 1999, the government of Berlin, in a close co-operation with the districts, defined areas with 'special development needs': "In order to achieve a lasting improvement of the situation in those areas and to contribute to their stabilization, it was decided to implement a 'Neighborhood Management' (NM) in each area. This was done within the framework of the program 'Districts with Special Development Needs - The Socially Integrative City' initiated by the national government and the governments of the federal states of Germany in 1999." (htpp://www.stadtenwicklung.berlin.de) This is a typical strategy of zoning, used in neoliberal urban development, were the "special needs" parts of the city demand attention and a reason for the 'disciplining', by imposing a discourse of "badlands" as a device for the intervention from above (see Dikeç, 2007). In the next subchapter we can see that the same strategy of zoning is sometimes employed from below as a means to secure community, and make it sustainable.

On this example one can see how one alternative lifestyle got 'translated' into the actors of sustainability by applying the general framework of the Local Agenda 21. The other explanation is that the Ufafabrik started to be considered as an important partner to the sustainability development platform because of its fitness for absorbing the welfare services. There is an overlap between the self-reliance understood as a dimension of sustainability and self-reliance as part of a normative discourse in the late capitalism. By advancing discourses of community, as well as introducing creative approach and innovative solutions such as ecological consciousness and alternative forms of education, they actually started to be seen as a partner in the Social Inclusive City, the framework which encourages social entrepreneurship, embodying the so-called Third Way with the idea of a strong civil society, built through using community development principles.

3.2. Community as Self-Reliance

The Stiftung Zukunft is a private foundation which deals with the "sustainable future of Berlin" by intending to shape and influence important decisions brought on the city level. In doing so, they employ the notion of "the qualified citizens" who participate in the development of their city, because "they care" (A. S, Interview 5, March 9, 2012) for the future of their own community. The fruitful and proliferating Berlin's tradition of self-organization are so incorporated into a notion of culture of sustainability:

> The idea in a radical sense of anarchy is that people should take more responsibility for themselves, they should also have more responsibilities, but also more rights, when they believe that what they do is right. (A. S, Interview 5, March 9, 2012)

When asked what is the main activity of their foundation, my informant answered that is "taking care of the community's needs, and making sure that problems are solved and properly

addressed" (Ibid). What they do is actually making the problems more visible to the larger public, and shading light on "burning issues in the society". (ibid)

Their major success outlined by my informant was a successful completion of the project "Intercultural Moderation as a Strategy of Intervention" concerning the school campus Rütli in Tempelhof. Since May 2007 they have developed "the concept of the Campus Rütli as a pilot project to be organized within the community and communicated to the public, consciously and decisively." (http//www.campusrütli.de). This campus in Neukölln was described as having a bad reputation, always coping with overwhelming problems, such indifferent and under-motivated pupils and external drug dealers. The language both used in interview and in the brochure explaining the project, describe the district as "troubled", "disadvantaged" and "dangerous". Thus the project "sought primarily to put in place a new and sustainable educational concept which would include the creation of a collective social space and could serve as a model". (Ibid) There is again a notion of the hybrid space[9] as a spatial solution to the social problems, the one already found in the case of sustainable life style maintained in the UfaFabrik.

The next step in the execution of this project was to secure the campus zone by cutting it off from the neighboring environment. Security of the campus was achieved through a privatization of the public space:

> There were also some administrative measures—the small street crossing this area was declared
> for the school ground, so it was a public street, and then the authorities decided to make it non-
> public. So now it belongs to the campus. So they could seclude the whole area—there is no street
> in the middle, no danger from the outside, and there is no public space—it's private, it belongs to

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[9] Hybrid space as a postmodern concept of a living space. I resort to it as I find it interesting in how many different contexts and with how many different consequences appears through this review of the sustainability culture projects. It is used for organizing the alternative cohousing projects like artistic squats comprising the everyday life through housing solution, and as a space for art. It is, as we see here, used for the policy-conducive interventions in managing the "troubled" communities. On a more abstract level, it is diametrically opposite to the concept of a no-place, as voided of social meaning and identity (see Augé, 1995)

the school, everybody can use it but, in case there is a trouble in the small street the school has the authority to tell people to go away. (A.S, Interview 5, March 9, 2012)

Six months after introducing the integration strategy through parental programs and foreign languages for immigrants, and the secularization through the privatization of public space, a change became visible:

The Senat, the teachers, the social workers, and the pupils really came into the new mood, in a very short time. Many things changed. What we wanted to create is a campus, a school area, and a space where they [pupils] want to be once they finish the school in the afternoon. And it should also be an area for cultural activities, open to the families open to the mothers, to the fathers" (Ibid)

On this example one can make an easy connection to the concept of gated communities (Smith, 1996), as a type of spatilized difference. What is evident is that the this initiatives exist either as a self-organized way to make urban life more sustainable, and more rewarding, or to make a community more integrated. When the latter, the tactics and strategies to achieve this sustainability are complimentary with the neo-liberalizing strategies of governance. It contains zoning, the privatization of a public space and the idea of cultural incorporation of the others.

The idea of civic virtue and taking responsibility for own community strongly resonates with the idea of neoliberal subjectivity, and taking care for oneself, excluding the others from the realm of an imagined secured zone. Self-help, as initially an element of contesting urban culture, resembles some parts of specific neoliberal culture, like growth-oriented development, and productivity-inducing measures, as there is a normative framework the concepts operates in, a standard to be achieved, an effort to 'create' good neighbors, informed parents, motivated pupils. It seems that sustainability assumes discipline and correction, in order to attain civic virtue for the sake of a striving and prosperous community.

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3.3. Creativity

Creativity is within culture of sustainability understood as a form of local authenticity, the way how people relate to their own city and their society. It is also a solution to urban problems, with a strong anti-globalizing and anti-corporate sense, by looking in the hidden and simple ways of unconventional tactics. Creativity is often seen as a resource for action towards a social change, in this meaning it can be equated with hyperlocalism, as a specific form of utilization of the local knowledge (Hess, 2010).

Emphasizing the connection between the culture of local structures and its sustained existence, the Institute for Creative Sustainability (Id22) started to operate back in 2002, as a "non-profit, civil society-based organization supporting cultures of sustainable urban development and innovativehousing"(http://www.id22.com). Id22 supports and makes visible "self-organized housing projects, organizes networking events, produces publications, operates internet portals and works with media partners to improve urban living." (ibid) Institute for creative sustainability was founded at the Ufafabrik premises in the late 1990s. This institute works "both practically and theoretically with sustainable development, and manages the European Creative Sustainability Network as well as communications initiatives such as the European WEEK of Sustainability" (ibid). Among their numerous projects is Experiment City Berlin which began in 2002, in order "to identify, network and publicize creative and sustainable solutions to urban brownfields and abandoned buildings". My informant on behalf of the Institute as its founder emphasized the influence that the UfaFabrik had on the ID22 development:

> It's fair to say that the organization is in many ways influenced by the ufaFabrik, for example what they had have that idea from the 1970s that working integrates culture and ecology, we used the words creativity and sustainability. But it's more or less the same thing. If you say culture and

ecology, you can also say creativity and sustainability, but creativity and sustainability are more current terms. (M.L, interview 2, March 27, 2012)

What is of importance here is the concept of creativity, which is employed with a level of eclecticism, referring to the genuineness of local groups in their way of organizing urban life: the way they engage with the social environment and with the urban environment, the way they solve urban problems, coming up with the housing solutions and the same is what it stands as the creative:

> So, using the similar philosophy, culture as a base for integrated work, also by using this Berlin specificity, or maybe Germen's in general—there is certainly a lot of anarchy, self-organization, do it by yourself,… The idea in a radical sense of anarchy is that people should take more responsibility for themselves, they should also have more responsibilities, but also more rights, when they believe that what they do it's right. (ibid)

This Institute also organizes guided tours to show the creative solutions in Berlin. In this way they, I argue, contribute to the discourse on the city as a show-case, adding up to the representation of the city. Creativity is here understood as something which can be observed, marked, branded and transferred from a place to a place. In this way one can see how small local initiative gets incorporated in a bigger neoliberal picture on the city.

> We say: all people… all humans are born creative, and all people have an interest and have a right to express themselves. That's the beginning of the city and beginning of the sustainable development. It's not so much about the technical issue, it's about people having the opportunity to express themselves, and also to participate in development, in design. (ibid)

My informant wanted to delineate from a growth-oriented understanding of creativity by distancing themselves from creative economy, where "the focus is really on the larger companies and business, the ones who have a hundred and more employees: fashion, film, music…the ones

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which are more global players". He elaborates on this difference, by going a step further in reflecting on urban development:

> The idea of creativity is distorted. We see it in fact as a most recent transformation of the capitalist approach to the urban development, which is oriented towards growth. The new thing is that the marketing of the city, the image of the city is presented as a nicer face, but it's about jobs and growth. Our point is – that is not necessarily sustainability. We are saying that sustainability sometimes has to do with jobs and growths, but most important thing is qualitative developments. (ibid)

The creativity understood in this context of social sustainability is different from the 'creative economy' discourse. In my informant's opinion, Florida (2005) came up with the concept of creativity which many other governments also incorporated in the urban development agendas as a device for urban growth. On the other hand, creativity understood in the context of a local sustainable development is something which people bring about in relation to their city. This understanding of creativity reaches back to the traditional modes of socialization, and local specificity.

3.3.1. Creative Resources as Hyperlocalism

Another form of hyperlocalism which can be discerned from individual acts and practices I have had opportunity to meet while in Berlin is connected with the idea of what my informant Verena Deventer named "social traveling". Enabled by new forms of communication, and proliferation of cyber-public spaces, social traveling concept assumes the use of the local-based knowledge and dissemination of the information via online communication, in order to make traveling more genuine, and enriching. It contests the idea of a commercialized and consumerism-oriented tourism which exploits the local structures. One of the social networks which advanced the notion of social traveling is couchsurfing.com. According to my informant,

the concept of such tourism is to "give back something to the community". By taking an active interest in local context and local community, visitors advance local communities' sustained existence and their self-led development.

> The whole thing is about informing about sustainable hosting—when you are couchsurfing and when you are hosting someone, you get informed and advised to buy at local food market, instead of going to McDonalds; to turn off the lights when you go out, and all the other dimension of sustainability. (V.D, Interview 7, March 20, 2012)

According to people who host and travel via sustainable couch, leisure is considered to be a specific learning process, an active practice of applying a set of principles in relation to the local context:

> So if you decide to go to a city for the very first time, you go to the website, and read the recommendations from the local people—where to go, what to see, what to eat, and gaining the genuine experience of being in that city, and so avoiding the traps of commercial tourism. (Ibid)

Here we see that achieving sustainability of a society also presupposes a specific conduct, awareness and responsibility. It demands making political statements and recognizing the wider set of conditions, identifying global versus local politics of scale, profit and non-profit oriented activities. Having a sustainable lifestyle assumes having information, and that is why it is the sustainable couch, and couchsurfing is a mode of hyperlocalism created and advanced in primarily in the cyber space. This cyber-feature renders sustainability culture as a set of images, signifiers and representations, as a construct communicated online.

3.4. Walk the Talk: Sustainability Tour

The following section gives a review of the grassroots projects which were shown to me in the Sustainability Tour, where I took part as an observing participator. These projects are not the only of this kind in Berlin; they are included in this thesis because they had been chosen to be

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attended and to be discussed by the creator and founder of the Sustainability Couch[10]. It was interesting for me to see which projects entered the realm of the sustainable culture and what was selected to be representative of the sustainable city. The line of the projects' review follows the line of our walk in the district of Neukölln. This tour included two hours of walking with occasional breaks in front of the places. Since it was Sunday, most of them were closed, so we got only the exterior overlook on them and the information from Verena.

Eco non-profit store 'Biosphäre'(*Figure 1*). This establishment is an eco-store and so-called 'community social project'. All the profit from sale are reinvested in the shop or given to employees. This kind of establishments are labeled in Germany as „Übungsfirma" (meaning a place where people who are unemployed for a long time have the chance to get back into a kind of working routine). It servers as a mediating institution which takes care of the social welfare by conducting commercial activities.

In this shop one can find two different prices on each product: one is for the workless, the ones who live on welfare or those who can prove that they earn less than eight hundred fifty monthly euros after tax reduction; the other price is the regular one, for the employed. This case illustrates how is the idea of social welfare is associated with the idea of ecology. It is also an instance of the eco-branding which is applied in order to make the project more visible.

Community hostel "Huttenpalast". (Figure 2). Founders of this community hostel we visited in our tour said they wanted to create an open space where people from all over the world

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[10] Verena Deventer is an initiator and 'director' of the Sustainability Couch in Berlin. Having a background in the Media and Tourism studies, and an experience of working in the commercial tourism field, she has decided to explore, promote and live social traveling. As a reason for this she named her dissatisfaction with the commodification of culture for the purpose of profit-oriented tourism: "Mostly what tourism became is filling hotel beds. I have always felt that I would love to work more within what is traveling really about for me. So I was just happy when some years ago I discovered couchsurfing, which was probably one of the first network that grew so significantly, and that popularized social traveling." (V.D, Interview 7, March 22, 2012)

can meet (Ibid) This hostel explicitly makes an appeal to the notion of community, advertising itself as an open space for anyone wanting to get to know the local community . The hipness of the community-oriented activities contributed to the "creative" low-impact gentrification: this hostel contains trailers, huts, tents - there's a cafe built from thrown away material like old bathing tubs, cable rollers and used furniture. What they do is promoting and providing space for the local artists, and those who come from abroad but who lack funding for the personal start-up. In this way they get an opportunity promoted within the "cosmopolitan community of hip nomads" (Ibid).

Co-working space "Wostel"(Figure 3). Co-working spaces are independent working environments with and an open access to office equipment and possibility to socialize within own business community. For this particular place, it has been said that the users come mostly from creative industry (Sustainability Tour, March 11, 2012). These "offices", provide an interaction between individuals which tends to be "meaningful, and more social" (ibid). They advertize it with a slogan: „Where coffee shop meets cubicle!" Co-working unites attract those individuals who work independently but share the same values and they were founded "to escape isolation at home or the chatter of the café" (Ibid). It was also said that "working here you join a cooperative community which is shaping the future of work". (Ibid) A strong accent is placed on the networking as a new way of maintaining business relations. In the basis of such a way of organizing a business place is the idea of free lancing, inevitably coupled with the reality of contemporary cosmopolitanism, and rootlessness of new business communities.

Sustainable squat: Wagenburg Lohmühle. (Figure 4, 4b) "Wagenburgen" are common in Berlin as an expression and representation of alternative and anti-capitalist lifestyle. A lot of them were set up in the time after the wall came down because of the free unused space, due to

the wall strip, which circumscribed the no-man land. Wagenburg Lohmühle was constructed during 1991 and 1992, transforming this former „strip of death" to a colorful garden, planting flowers and seeding grass and just making this a "lovely place to live, sustainable ecologically, economically and socially". (Ibid) The Wagenburg is open for different kinds of social events and parties. There is a special "community place" comprised from a stage and a table with events calendar.

The alternative urban cultures are here intertwined with the idea of ecology and opposition to the prevailing capitalist values. Opting for the "sustainable ways of living" is also a political practice, as another dimension of sustainable culture. It is ultimately a political act—an act, as it contests, and political as it is concerned with the issues of power and social marginalization. Leftist ideology and sustainable living are also connected through the idea of the common goods, and using the resources which are available. As one of my informant said to me, it is an alternative and a utopian and a deep longing for more organic connection with the nature:

> Squatting for me is like an expression of social stability—to use all the resources that are there, and to make the best possible use of them. Live together in big houses in big groups, basically not leave abuilding empty, because some company is making profit out of it. It's like the other part of a bigger picture, because you can tell; about sustainable alternatives to everyone, and people would say oh great, I want to have a pony, I want to grow my potatoes, but actually, we are all living in Berlin. (A. S, Interview 8, March 22, 2012)

Give Boxes "Umsonstläden." (Figure 5, 5b). Give boxes are based on the assumption "that there are way too many things already produced on the planet and so we can decide to swap and exchange them than throwing them away" (ibid). In exchange one can take something away from the box, and this free this exchange is possible because the box is open. This concept assumes the idea of equity, and it is different from charity shops which implicitly embodies the power

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relations, as it is one-direction process—those who have give to those who do not have. In the case of an open give box the process is two directional, and it represents the idea of a cycle, reuse, and regeneration.

What does make the sustainability culture? What do people perceive as sustainable dimension of an urban life? How much is this different from the official, advertized picture of the Sustainable City? What I can discern from the Sustainability tour is that certain moments are established as commonly accepted dimensions of a sustainable culture: eco labeled, anti-capitalistic orientation, sense of community, anti-consumerism, and localism. Sustainability is understood as a responsible attitude about the environment-- as eco-consciousness, and as a more anti-systematic orientation when it comes to the social sphere. Sustainability culture relies on contestation as a political practice and strategies of empowerment of those who are offering alternative views and paths of development. The way how sustainability culture is presented and disseminated presupposes discursive practices of branding and advertisement and a connection to the popular images (eco-hipness, "give something back to the community", local artists, cosmopolitan business community).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

When I started the research on sustainability culture I was overwhelmed with the amount of its possible meanings. During the research I noticed that precisely because of this plethora of meanings, it serves everyone by intersecting different contexts, and revealing a very complex and significant network of relations between various stakeholders and scales. On a more abstract level, my research also suggested that culture of sustainability is a diversified practice and proliferation of images that flesh out the neo-liberal urban governance, mediating between the political and the social.

I was intrigued by how something which started as a contesting culture, rooted in the urban social movements became one of domineering discourses on the neoliberal city. In resolving this puzzle, my intention was not to boldly claim that Berlin is a pure embodiment of neo-liberalism. I intended to explore dimensions of urban governance and its interaction with the civil society which amounts to the strategies of neo-liberalism. That is why I resorted to the concept of "actually existing neo-liberalism", which explains urban neo-liberalism as a context-dependent, dynamic, forming and dissolving discourse, as a never firmly entrenched set of practices, put in a straightforward motion from above, but always contested and challenged from below. The dialectics between its entrenchment and its contestation, as well as the interplay between the global and the local as a context, is what brings about grand strategies and petite tactics, embodied not only in policies and interventions, but also in subcultures and hyperlocalism.

The cooptation of urban movements so that their activities are utilized within the general institutional framework is accomplished by including them in the discourse of the sustainable urban development, by their 'professionalization' and departmentalization into the special units

which refer to the special dimension of sustainability. From an alternative and experimental urban culture grassroots become a partner in a private-public arrangement on which is placed a strong accent on providing social support, ecological innovation and cultural integration. What once emerged as an alternative lifestyle became 'translated' into a dimension of sustainability culture, by application of the Local Agenda 21. This 'translation' and cooptation was also alleviated by the possibility of the neighborhood projects to exhibit social welfare functions on the micro level, by providing social inclusion programs, educational resources and cultural activities.

By advancing discourses of community, and self-reliance, as well as introducing creative approach and innovative solutions coupled with ecological consciousness and alternative forms of lifestyle, the sustainability culture actually sustains the notion of the neoliberal subjectivity, by relating to the notion of civic virtue and to responsibility for own community, excluding others from the realm of an imagined secured zone. Civic virtue as necessitated for the community build-up imposes a normative framework, in effort to 'create' good neighbors, informed parents, and motivated pupils.

The sustainability culture functions in a realm of images and representations, which add to its utopist elements. This utopian feature accounts for the constant proliferation of imageries. Due to the abundance of its versatile signifiers, sustainability culture becomes easily spread and communicated, which in the end renders it commercialized and deployed in various profit-driven activities. This explains the intertwinedness of several city representations where the elements of sustainability culture are incorporated: a sustainable city is also creative, and socially inclusive. It is vibrant and radiating, and above all, entrepreneurial.

Instead of a definite conclusion it might be useful to reflect on a possible set of questions that this study rather opens than answers due to the limited space and time. One of the future research projects might answer what exact city branding strategies are employed to incorporate grassroots sustainability culture in the dominant city representation. Another important question still waiting answer is the problem of scale. Particularly, there is an interest to see the dynamics between different-leveled granting agencies, be that on the level of the European Union, national or on the city level. Who is funding what kind of projects, and what are the problems targeted and attempted to be addressed within different granting schemes certainly reflects on implications of the politics of scale. Finally, there is also an interest in exploring the connection between the corporate responsibility and grassroots projects, namely, is there any connection, what is the nature of that connection and what are the mediating bodies alleviating the relationship between them. This question would address the different ethical levels of social entrepreneurship in relation to the mainstream business, and the way these levels are negotiated and structured.

One research is never finite. Rather than concluding, and giving an exhaustive explanation, it opens new debates and questions. Having this in mind, I set off for the new exploration of the sustainability culture, in Berlin, and elsewhere.

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Figure 1 Bioshäre, Weserstrasse 212

Figure 2 Hüttenpalast, Hobrechtstrasse 65/ 66
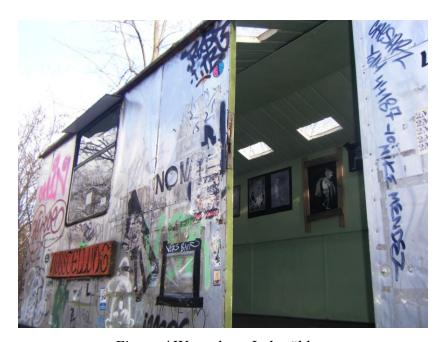
Figure 3 Wostel, Hobrechtstrasse 66

Figure 4 Wagenburg Lohmühle.

Figure 4b Wagenburg Lohmühle

Figure 5 "Umsonstläden" Jessnerstrasse 42

Figure 5b "Umsonstläden" Jessnerstrasse 42

#	Name	Affiliation	Date
1	Werner Wiartala	UfaFabrik	February 22, 2012
2	Michael LaFond	Institute for Creative Sustainability	February 27, 2012
3	Heiko Weissbach Thomas Krüger	Ticket B	March 4, 2012
4	Julia Werner	German Council for Sustainable Development	March 7, 2012
5	Annett Szabo	Schtiftung Zukunft	March 9, 2012
6	The Sustainability Tour	Sustainable Couch	March 11, 2012
7	Verena Deventer	Sustainable Couch	March 20, 2012
8	Alisa Starodub	Sustainable Alternatives	March 22, 2012