

## Metropolitan Temporalities

**Veranstalter:** DFG International Graduate Research Program „Die Welt in der Stadt: Metropolitanität und Globalisierung vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart“, Center for Metropolitan Studies, Technische Universität Berlin

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The third annual conference of the DFG International Graduate Research Program Berlin–New York–Toronto „The World in the City“ focused on questions of urban temporalities. The three-day conference brought together an international and interdisciplinary group of scholars to discuss the role time plays in the construction and experience of metropolitan life on local and global scales.

In the opening lecture, MUSTAFA DIKEÇ (Paris) scrutinized the material economy of time production and pointed to its entanglement with technical and capitalist developments. Analyzing the challenges associated with the synchronization of street clocks in the late 19th century Paris, he demonstrated how private capital participated in producing modern time regimes.

The panel „Questioning the Temporalities of Metropolitan Memory“ analyzed how strategies of memorial politics create representations of „pastness,“ which can be (ab)used as political and cultural tactics for naturalizing domination. Taking as example the anniversary of the Alevi massacre in Siva, ERAY CAYLI (London) described the Turkish state’s strategies to construct a non-antagonistic memory based on linear ideas of time in order to exclude alternative interpretations. DAVID HUGILL (Toronto) showed how the Native-American origin of Minneapolis has been suppressed through relegating it to a mythical past that obscures the perpetuation of colonial structures of power. PASCALINE THIOLLIÈRE (Grenoble) discussed the conflict between the rules set by official authorities upon funeral practices and the „occasional,“ time of grief in contempo-

rary France. In her commentary KAREN TILL (Maynooth) highlighted how the urban setting constitutes the ground on which different politics of memory interact. The conflicting of these conceptions destabilizes the inevitability of the present and makes its historical production visible.

The discussion of the panel „Reconciling Temporalities of Transformation“ revolved around conflicting temporalities of the planned and the „lived“ city. THOMAS BEARDSLEE (Columbus) showed how the spatial redesign of Marrakech’s Junaa-el-Fnaa Square and the caused ruptures in the temporal realities and needs of different involved actors affected local everyday life structures. MARC PRADEL (Barcelona) argued that top-down planning procedures in Barcelona’s 22nd District have failed because they did not consider the temporal realities and existing social practices of the neighborhood. In her study of the newly built Chinese city of New Ordos, MEISEN WONG (Berlin) showed how residents have to cope with the temporal contradictions between state-directed dreams of a global future and everyday life in an underpopulated „ghost city.“ JENNIFER JENKINS (Toronto) argued in her commentary that the commonality of the three geographically distant case studies was the way in which the abstract time of planners and the „temporality of globalness“ encounter with local temporalities and everyday time experiences.

Discussions in the third panel „Everyday Life, Informality, and the Experience of Permanent Temporariness“ revolved around strategies that urban actors use to arrange within informal and temporary urban settings. LUCAS ELSNER (Berlin) showed how Bogotá’s informal Bicitaxis provide public transport options by acting within the gray spaces of „negotiated im/permanence,“ in which Bicitaxi associations find temporary and informal arrangements with state authorities. MARA FERRERI (London), ALEX VASUDEVAN (Nottingham) and GLORIA DAWSON (Leeds) questioned for the case of London whether property guardianship, which developed into a form of dwelling for young urbanites, is a way of exploiting the precariousness of a „creative underclass“ or rather an outcome of the highly mobile

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„new bohemian“ lifestyle. MELANIE LOMBARD (Manchester) demonstrated how individual experiences of temporal informality in two neighborhoods in Xalapa, Mexico produced among its newcomer residents „senses of time,“ which became central for the construction of the city’s collective identity as „work in progress.“ In her commentary, TALJA BLOKLAND (Berlin) highlighted the different meanings that „precarity“ can have across South/North divides and pled for a cautious application of the concept of „temporality.“

The panel „Cultural Representations of Urban Rhythm“ discussed rhythmic dimensions of the modern urban experience represented by means of music and cinema. JOHANNA ROHLF (Berlin) reconstructed how mechanical urban sounds, which have been a source of inspiration for jazz musicians, were between the reasons for jazz’ success in expressing the enhanced pace of industrial cities and helping nervous urban dwellers to cope with it. MATTHIAS GROTKOPP (Berlin) described the heist film as a way of making accessible the image of ordinary work based on a thorough urban cartography of the time-space relations. DANIEL MORAT (Berlin) in his comments focused on the city as the main setting that aroused the historical question about rhythm. In cities, he argued, rhythm has been mainly thought as synonym of pace even though rhythm also implies the contrast between regularity and irregularity.

The panel „Histories of Future Metropolis“ discussed how visions and plans of urban futures have been deeply engrained in the planners’ present. ROSEMARY WAKEMAN (New York) showed how in the French colonial plan for Aleppo, the entitlement to a modern city was a prerogative of the colonial elite, while the Syrian neighborhoods were relegated to the „past“ under the politics of historical preservation. FLORIAN HUTTERER and ANGELA MILLION (Berlin) argued how the openness and flexibility between representations of past, present and future in the highly controversial 19th century Hobrecht-Plan for Berlin made it a successful basis for contemporary urbanism. OWEN GUTFREUND (New York) comparing three utopian futuristic urban plans (New York

1930s, Toronto 1959 and Shanghai 2010), argued that the North-American cases shared an, even if controversial, utopian vision of the future; while in Shanghai, the future is oriented towards a reproduction of Western urbanism. DOROTHEE BRANTZ (Berlin) in her commentaries argued that the analyzed plans share the feature of being different examples of ways in which the future, by the cutting out of the „lived“ city, has been produced as a predictable entity.

The panel „Political Time in Urban Settings“ asked what influence political temporal orders have on urban social movements and municipal governments. ROGER KEIL (Toronto) demonstrated how urban spatio-temporal patterns are closely bound to electoral outcomes: since the 1990s Toronto has seen a growing polarization in electoral preferences between the progressive inner city and the conservative suburbs. Only in 2014 Mayor John Tory cut across this spatial-electoral divide and changed electoral patterns in the city. HENRIK LEBUHN (Berlin) showed how the fall of the Wall placed Berlin in the context of global cities. The former GDR’s public wealth was privatized in a primitive accumulation process and enabled the municipal government of the 1990s to pursue „global city dreams.“ JOHN MOLLENKOPF (New York) analyzed the crucial role that timing played in the election of Mayor Edward Koch in New York between 1977 and 1985. The fiscal crisis and the tensions generated by rapid social transformations enabled Koch, even if he represented the interests of a shrinking white middle-class minority, to win the support of the Black and Latino middle-classes. In his commentary, KANISHKA GOONEWARDENA (Toronto) questioned whether time and temporality can at all be seen as homogeneous categories in the study of the three cities and how far political time is always already an „ideological time.“

The mid-conference plenary debate aimed to offer broad theoretical reflections and inspire new impulses to test and challenge the diverse empirical material presented at the conference. Referring to Henri Lefebvre’s „Rhythmanalysis,“ DOROTHEE BRANTZ (Berlin) argued that the study of

urban temporalities and everyday practices must integrate both perspectives of rational social time and natural rhythms (day/night, seasons). Elaborating on the development of modern „urban time“ as „mechanistic time“ in opposition to cyclical „natural time,“ she argued that the impossibility to reduce the natural times to the mechanistic time is one of the sources of conflict over urban temporal regimes. MUSTAFA DIKEÇ (Paris) argued that the perception of time and space are based on power relations that are naturalized and rendered invisible, allowing the use of time as an economic resource that is produced and consumed like any other commodity and embedded in both material infrastructure and social space. DIETRICH HENCKEL (Berlin) proposed viewing time as a hegemonic object that can be colonized like space. Like the pioneers that once conquered the uninhabited Plains of the American West, today’s temporal colonizers conquer the formerly „uninhabited times.“ For example nights are integrated into economic time cycles of production and distribution. KAREN TILL (Maynooth) elaborated on the difference between „time“ and „temporality.“ Other than the term „time,“ which implies the modern idea of standardization, the term „temporalities“ emphasizes the plurality of „rhythms.“ In urban studies, however, space tends to be privileged over time. Urban scholars should bring space and time in conversation and pay more attention to the experiences of artists, activists, and residents in order to understand urban realities.

The panel „Colonizing Time? The Impact of Globalization on Urban Rhythms“ asked how global transformations have impacted everyday life rhythms and the built form of cities. MARTIN DANYLUK (Toronto) argued that the global connections of the world economy after the „logistics revolution“ have brought port cities into proximity with increasingly global hinterlands. The on-demand production and consumption patterns based on global urban lifestyles have influenced the basis for urban rhythms profoundly. HANS-LIUDGER DIENEL (Berlin) asked how the new social figure of „multi-locals,“ people living in more than one city at once, differs from older types of „migrants.“ CAROLA HEIN (Delft/Philadelphia) showed how new

speed regimes re-shaped the nature of port cities: if the older ports marked the center of the city, contemporary ports move outside the center to serve global supply-chain time schedules of multinational corporations. DIETRICH HENCKEL (Berlin), with regard to his own research on the colonization of the night, asked how infrastructures, rules and regulations, economic rhythms of supply and demand, and the use of space by various groups influence the use and construction of the night.

The panel „Time, Land and Rent“ conjugated the discussion over temporalities along the axis of the relation between time and the regimes of capital accumulation. In the three presentations, the financialized production of space appeared as one of the main stages where capital accumulation interacts with different dimensions of temporality. PHILIP ASHTON (Chicago) argued that the US mortgage crisis of the last years induced new experimentations in legal temporalities in order to transfer risks of real estate investment from creditors to borrowers. BENJAMIN TERESA (New Brunswick) showed, in the case of the regulated-rent housing market of New York, how the opening of rent gaps is connected to the intervention of capital, which is able to speed-up the timing of decay and gentrification. In his contribution, THORBEN WIEDITZ (Toronto) argued that the creation of the suburban green belt in Toronto represents a strong factor in the change of temporal investment patterns, making of the green belt land the privileged space for long-term investments. KATHE NEWMAN (New Brunswick) commented that according to the three papers place making has an important temporal dimension, which has to be analyzed along the conflicting interests of the different actors.

Participants in the panel „Everyday Temporalities and Contemporaneity in Urban Streets“ investigated the ways in which time, speed, and temporality led to changes in the design and use of urban streets. BRAIN LADD (Albany) illustrated how 19th century streets in European cities became spaces of contestation for different speed regimes, which necessitated public debates on developing new street manners and norms.

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ANNIKA LEVELS (Berlin) compared the (re)designing of streets to accommodate new sustainable transportation patterns in Berlin and New York, arguing that New York's public sector reacted faster and more decisive to these challenges than Berlin's city administration. BEATE LÖFFLER (Duisburg) argued that Tokyo's suburban or „back street“ neighborhoods show that, despite the city's modern core, the lifestyles common in villages are represented in these „backstreets.“ DIRK HEINRICHS (Berlin) argued that time has a strategic aspect in the use of space and is crucial for understanding the control of public spaces. He asked what role acceleration plays in the development of streets both in the past and in the future.

The last panel „Urban mobility, social acceleration and time regimes“ highlighted how class, gender, and race structure the plurality of urban temporalities. SEBASTIAN DORSCH (Erfurt) showed in the case of São Paulo (1870–1930) how the discourse of „acceleration“ was bound to the colonial ideology of making of São Paulo a modern „white“ city. SIMON GUNN (Leicester) demonstrated that social position, gender, and ethnicity were decisive in defining which kind of work and time regime was accessible for workers in Bradford between ca.1950–1970. Similarly, MAREN BOERSMA (Utrecht/Hong Kong) argued that work plays a crucial role in Hong Kong's „fast life“: even if domestic workers share the household with their employers, these two groups don't share the same structure of temporality. CHRISTOPH BERNHARDT (Berlin) in his commentaries asked if time is completely social determined or if it can also be conceived as an entity with autonomous features. While stressing how different geographical, social and epochal contexts influenced temporal perception, he pointed out that the creation of a modern time regime of leisure was at odds with the logic of acceleration.

„Metropolitan Temporalities,“ as the third annual conference of the DFG International Graduate Program „The World in the City,“ responded to the growing need for a deeper confrontation with „temporalities“ in the urban studies and served as ground to stimulate a global interdisciplinary debate on the

topic. The conference has opened a fruitful academic discussion and therefore laid inspiring foundations for the further development of the DFG Graduate Program in the coming years.

#### **Conference Overview:**

*Welcome*

Dorothee Brantz (Berlin)

*Keynote*

Mustafa Dikeç (Paris), Temporal Infrastructures: Modernity, Time and the City

#### *1) Questioning the Temporalities of Metropolitan Memory*

Eray Cayli (London), Negotiating Temporality through Architectural Memorialization in Turkey and Beyond

David Hugill (Toronto), The Urban Politics of 'Colonial Time' in Contemporary Minneapolis

Pascaline Thiollie (Grenoble), Urban Memorials: Settings for Gestures Embodying the Relationship between the Living and the Dead

Discussant: Karen Till (Maynooth)

Moderator: Samuel Merrill (Berlin)

#### *2) Reconciling Temporalities of Transformation*

Thomas Beardslee (Independent Researcher), Tourism and urban re-design at the Jemaa el Fnaa Square Marrakech: effects on pace, daily routine and performers' lives.

Marc Pradel (Barcelona), Strategic Planning Tempos and the Unexpected: the Case of Barcelona

Meisen Wong (Berlin), The Haunting of a Global Future: Temporal Contradictions in New Ordos, China

Discussant: Jennifer Jenkins (Toronto)

Moderator: Afia Afenah (Berlin)

#### *3) Everyday Life, Informality and the Experience of Permanent Temporariness*

Lucas Elsner/Dirk Heinrichs/Mirko Goletz (Berlin), Providing Public Transportation Services under Conditions of 'Permanent Temporariness': Strategies within Bogotá's Informal

Bicitaxi Sector to Deal with Uncertainty

Mara Ferreri (London)/Alex Vasudevan (Nottingham)/Gloria Dawson (Leeds), *Flexible, Adventurous, Precarious: Everyday Experiences of Temporary Property Guardians*

Melanie Lombard (Manchester), *Struggling, Suffering, Hoping, Waiting: Perceptions of Temporality in Two Informal Neighbourhoods in Xalapa, Mexico*

Discussant: Talja Blokland (Berlin)

Moderator: Christian Haid (Berlin)

4) *Cultural Representations of Urban Rhythm*  
Matthias Grotkopp (Berlin), 'Doing a Job': Crime, Urbanity and the Art of Work

Johanna Rohlf (Berlin), *As Time Goes by. Jazz and Urban Rhythm in the 1920s*

Discussant: Daniel Morat (Berlin)

Moderator: Berit Hummel (Berlin)

5) *Histories of the Future Metropolis*

Owen Gutfreund (New York), *Planning the Utopian Metropolis of the Future - NY in 1939, Toronto in 1959, and Shanghai in 2010*

Florian Hutterer/Angela Million (Uttke) (Berlin), *150 Years of James Hobrecht Plan for Berlin. Reception, Rejection and Acceptance of a Master Plan*

Rosemary Wakeman (New York), *Colonial Cities as Future Metropolis: L'Urbanisme aux Colonies et dans les Pays Tropicaux*

Discussant: Dorothee Brantz (Berlin)

Moderator: Stefan Höhne (Berlin)

6) *Political Time in Urban Settings*

Roger Keil (Toronto), *Stuck in the Middle: Rolling with Neoliberalism in the Toronto Urban Region*

Henrik Lebuhn (Berlin), *Shifting Politics in Post-Wall Berlin: From Global City Dreams to Neoliberalism Light*

John Mollenkopf (New York), *The Fall of the Koch Coalition in New York and the Challenges of a Left-oriented Governing Majority, 1977-2013*

Discussant: Kanishka Goonewardena (Toronto)

Moderator: Lisa Vollmer (Berlin)

*Mid-Conference Plenary Debate*

Dorothee Brantz (Berlin)/Mustafa Dikeç (Paris)/Dietrich Henckel (Berlin)/Karen Till (Maynooth)

Moderator: Rosemary Wakeman (New York)

7) *Colonizing Time? The Impact of Globalization on Urban Rhythms*

Martin Danyluk (Toronto), *Supply-Chain Urbanism: Coordinating Flows in Planetary Space-Time*

Hans-Liudger Dienel (Berlin), *Multilocals as Time-Pioneers of New Urban Rhythms*

Carola Hein (Delft), *On-time Urbanity and Spatiotemporal Boundaries in Global Port Cities*

Discussant: Dietrich Henckel (Berlin)

Moderator: Jeanne Haffner (Cambridge, USA)

8) *Time, Land and Rent*

Philip Ashton (Chicago), *Reconceiving Law's Temporality: Rent, Mortgage Contracts and the Adjudication of the US Mortgage Crisis*

Benjamin Teresa (New Brunswick), *Timing Rent Gaps: Speculation in Rent-Regulated Housing in New York City*

Thorben Wieditz (Toronto), *Relationship Between Industrial Lands in the City of Toronto and Urban Containment Policies*

Discussant: Kathe Newman (New Brunswick)

Moderator: Ute Lehrer (Toronto)

9) *Everyday Temporalities and Contemporaneity in Urban Streets*

Brian Ladd (Albany), *Speed and Conflict in Pre-Automotive Streets in London, Paris, and Berlin*

Annika Levels (Berlin), *Urban Streets in Transition - Sustainability, Time, and Space in Contemporary Berlin and New York*

Beate Löffler (Duisburg), *Hamlet or Metropo-*

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lis? Dimensions of Time and Space in Tokyo's  
Backstreets

Discussant: Dirk Heinrichs (Berlin)

Moderator: Anna Steigemann (Berlin)

*10) Urban Mobility, Social Acceleration and  
Time Regimes*

Maren Boersma (Utrecht/Hong Kong), Fast  
Life, Low Incomes? Time in Everyday Lives  
of Low Income Service Sector Workers

Sebastian Dorsch (Erfurt), São Paulo,  
1870 [U+2010] 1930. Mobility, Urban Time  
Regimes, and Spatial Arrangements in the  
'Yankee City of Brazil'

Simon Gunn (Leicester), Lived Time and the  
Industrial City: England, c.1950-1970

Discussant: Christoph Bernhardt (Berlin)

Moderator: Alexander Nützenadel (Berlin)

Tagungsbericht *Metropolitan Temporalities*.  
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