

2016-2019

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Transnational Production Spaces

A multi-local study on the impacts of the global clothing industry on urban spaces and urban planning.

The worldwide production of goods is increasingly organized within transnational production networks. Regions with very different conditions and resources are connected through complex and highly dynamic production processes based on an international division of labour. The resulting integration in global production systems not only affects local economies, but also the built environment and urban development of the respective places of production.

This research project explores the spatial effects of industrial production and the role of urban planning at different locations of a transnational production network of the clothing industry. It traces the interplay of local and transnational forces in the spatial and physical development of these production locations. Harnessing the research approaches of Global Commodity Chains and Global Production Networks for a multi-local and multi-scalar analysis of urban spaces, it is our aim to investigate the translocal character of urban production places and thus to contribute to the emerging research field of transnational urbanity.



In the medium term, research at Habitat Unit will explore a range of

case studies from various industrial sectors and production regions – following the industrial goods in their transnational production and distribution processes in order to investigate diverse production networks and their interplay with spatial structures and urban development.

Case Study

Our case study focuses on selected industrial locations in Turkey, Bulgaria and Ethiopia which are connected by a production network of the clothing industry supplying Western European fashion companies and markets. The study locations subsequently became target destinations for the relocation of specific production stages or entire segments of production. The core study focuses on clothing production for the European market in the Istanbul metropolitan region. Here, a gradual de-centralization of production from inner-city areas has taken place, including the relocation of large scale industrial operations to the western neighbouring province of Tekirdağ. In the last two decades, producers from Turkey have also partially transferred production to an expanding range of international offshoring destinations in Eastern Europe, the MENA region, Central Asia and most recently, East Africa. Our study investigates such industrial locations and their specific contexts in Bulgaria (Kardzhali) and Ethiopia (Addis Ababa). Within the context of transnational economic dynamics, our research traces how industrial production shapes the physical urban space and drives urban development in these locations, thereby also exploring its interplay with urban and regional planning governance.

The project addresses the principal question how urban spaces of industrial production are constituted at different stations of a transnational production network and what kind of forces are taking effect on them – from local to global ranges of influence. Our research takes materialities as its point of departure – highly mobile commodities and their production on the one hand and the built structures of urban space on the other hand. By combining an analysis of the built environment and qualitative analysis of planning governance, the research project aims to build an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of spatial negotiations and the role, scope and leverage of the different actors involved – from the local to the global scale, between bottom-up and top-down drivers of urban development, and at the intersections between formal and informal economic and building practices.

Project presentation in the concluding Symposium „Mapping the Global Factory. Architectures of Commodity Chains“

The project is funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) under grant agreement No MI 1893/2-1.

Academic Partners

The project Transnational Production Spaces is part of the DFG scientific network ['The Spaces of Global Production: The Territorial Dimensions of Global Production Networks and World City Networks'](#) (2018-2021).

Advisory Board:

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Publications

The special issue "Commodity Flows and Urban Spaces" will be published in early 2020 in [Articulo. Journal of Urban Research](#) (guest editors: Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann, Philipp Misselwitz).

Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann (forthcoming 2020) Transnational Urban Spaces: Production locations of the global clothing industry in Ethiopia, in: L. Moretto, A. Fisher and G. Faldi (eds.), *African cities through local eyes*, Springer

Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer (2019) *The Collapse of the Rana Plaza in Bangladesh: Specific Inequality and Universal Responsibility*, *ARCH+ Can Design Change Society?*, Birkhäuser, p. 130-135

Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann (2018). "Getting It Right from the Start"? Building Spaces of Transnational Clothing Production in Ethiopia, *Dialog* (130–131), 63–71.

Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer (2017) [Der Einsturz des Rana Plaza in Bangladesch. Spezifische Ungleichheit und universale Verantwortung](#), *ARCH+* (230), p. 190-195.

Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer (2016) Patchwork Urbanism – Transnationale Räume der Bekleidungsproduktion in der Region Istanbul, *dérive* (63).

Anke Hagemann (2015) From Flagship Store to Factory: Tracing the Spaces of Transnational Clothing Production in Istanbul, [Articulo - Journal of Urban Research](#) (12).

Anke Hagemann (2015) Räumliche Arbeitsteilung. Städtische Raumproduktion in der Bekleidungsindustrie am Beispiel Istanbul / Spatial division of labour. The production of urban space in Istanbul's clothing industry, In: Banz, C. and Schulze, S., *Fast Fashion. Die Schattenseite der Mode* (exhibition catalogue), Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg.

Events and conference papers

2019

Anke Hagemann: Building the global factory – architectures of transnational clothing production, Symposium [Factory World: Architecture and Industrialization over Time and Space](#), Architecture Space and Society Centre, Birkbeck/University of London, October 30-31, 2019

Symposium [Mapping the Global Factory. Architectures of Commodity Chains \(> online video documentation\)](#), concluding event of the Project Transnational Production Spaces, Berlin, September 29, 2019

Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer: [Mapping the Architectures of Global Production](#), *RGS-IBG Annual International Conference*, London, August 30, 2019.

Elke Beyer, Lucas Elsner: [Textile Enclaves and Soybean Trains. Providing infrastructures for global production in Ethiopia and Argentina](#), *RGS-IBG Annual International Conference*, London, August 29, 2019; *Deutscher Kongress für Geographie*, Kiel, September 27,

2019.

Elke Beyer, Lucas Elsner: [Architectures of Circulation](#): Urban Infrastructures of Global Commodity Production, Research Seminar SoSe 2019

Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer: Architectures and Hinterlands of Planetary Clothing Production, [Workshop Planetary Urbanization and Architectural Research](#), University of Manchester, March 4, 2019.

Elke Beyer: [Building the global factory. Mundane Architectures of Globalization](#), Lecture, *Architectural History and Theory Seminar Series*, February 12, Edinburgh School of Architecture

Elke Beyer, Lucas Elsner, Anke Hagemann, Philipp Misselwitz: Infrastructures for Global Production in Ethiopia and Argentina, Conference [Colonial and Postcolonial Landscapes: Architectures, Cities, Territories](#), Lisbon, January 16-18, 2019.

Infrastructures and the built environment. The physical dimensions of global production networks, 3rd meeting of the [DFG Scientific Network "The Spaces of Global Production"](#) hosted by Transnational Production Spaces / Habitat Unit, Berlin, January 24-25, 2019, Evening lecture Christof Parnreiter

2018

Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer: Mundane Architectures of Globalization: Production Spaces of the Transnational Clothing Industry, Conference [From Building to Continent: How Architecture makes Territories](#), Kent School of Architecture, Canterbury (UK), June 28-29, 2018.

Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann: Placing the global clothing industry in Ethiopia: Production locations and their urban impact in the periphery of Addis Ababa, [Conference Through Local Eyes](#), Addis Ababa, October 29-30, 2018.

Paper Session: [Transnational Production Spaces. Integrating Global Production Networks and Urban Research](#), *American Association of Geographers, Annual Meeting*, New Orleans, April 2018.

Anke Hagemann: [Relational geographies of production: Studying urban built environments through transnational commodity chains](#), *American Association of Geographers, Annual Meeting*, New Orleans, April 2018.

Elke Beyer: [Manufacturing Infrastructures: Developing Industry Parks for the global clothing industry in Ethiopia](#), *American Association of Geographers, Annual Meeting*, New Orleans, April 2018.

2017

Elke Beyer: Cuts and Seams: Urban Effects of Transnational Clothing Production in South-East Bulgaria from the 1980s to the present, *The Ins and Outs of Socialism: Visions and Experiences of Urban Change in the Second World*, Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv, August 25-27, 2017.

Anke Hagemann: Spatial re-association: Researching urban built environments along transnational production processes, *American Association of Geographers, Annual Meeting*, Boston, April 2017.

Transnational Production Spaces. Workshop, Habitat Unit, TU Berlin, February 2017.

2016

Anke Hagemann: Where were my clothes made? Tracing the spaces of transnational clothing production in Istanbul, *RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2016*, London, September 2016.

Anke Hagemann: Spatial effects of global production networks: urban upgrading and the relocation of industry in Turkey's globalized clothing production, *Global Production Networks and Social Upgrading: Labour and Beyond*, Brown International Advanced Research Institute (Brown University) & Global Development Institute (University of Manchester), Manchester, May 2016.

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