

Urban Commons: Organizing the City // Workshop Program

Organizers: Martin Kornberger (Department of Organization), Christian Borch and Ester Barinaga (Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy)

Thursday, November the 15th, Location CBS K4.74

12.30 - 13.00 : Welcome, introduction and program

13.00 – 14.00 : Martina Löw, TU Darmstadt, *Modes of urban collectivity*

14.00 – 15.00 : Jonathan Metzger, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, *The city is not a Menschenpark: rethinking the tragedy of the urban commons beyond the human/non-human divide*

15-15.30 : Coffee break

15.30-16.30 : Sophie Watson, Open University, *Urban Public space as a Space of Care: Reflecting on Aristotle's notion that 'that which is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it'*

16.30-17.30 : Per Olof Berg, Stockholm University Business School, *Reclaim the City (Brand): Notes on the immaterial commons of place*

17.30- 18.00 : Reflections & comments

Friday November the 16th, Location CBS K4.74

08.00 – 09.00 : Fabrizio Panozzo, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, *Planning, making, selling and consuming creative atmospheres in urban China*

09.00 – 10.00 : Ben Anderson, Durham University, *Atmospheres of Emergency and Urban Life in Common*

10.00 – 10.30 : Coffee break

10.30 – 11.30 : Orvar Löfgren, Lund University, *Sharing an atmosphere: an ethnography of railway stations*

11.30 – 12.30 : Leif Jerram, The University of Manchester, *Urban Space, Community Resources and the Pessimism of History: Cruel Lessons from the Twentieth Century, Cruel Conclusions for the Twenty-First*

12.30 – 13.00: Reflections, comments & conclusion of the event

Rationale for the event

We have entered the urban age, an era where the majority of the world population lives and works in cities. Against this backdrop, we are interested in discussing how contemporary cities give rise to new modes of urban collectivity and hence inspire new forms of politics and organization. We suggest that Elinor Ostrom's notion of the commons (developed for entirely different purposes) might serve as a starting point for such a discussion.

Based on an assumption of the collectivity is incapable to manage common resources, conventional solutions to the tragedy of the commons (Hardin) have focused on either centralized government regulation or privatization of common pool resources. Challenging established economic theory, Ostrom, however, showed how collectivities (from locals in Africa to Western Nepal) have developed institutional arrangements for effective management of common resources.

Extrapolating (and going somewhat beyond) Ostrom's analysis to the level of cities, it seems evident that the notion of the commons is likely to generate interesting perspectives: How are the boundaries of the commons in an urban context defined? What processes regulate the use of the urban commons? What exclusionary processes are involved in such definitional and regulatory processes, and what organizational and political implications follow in the wake of such endeavours? What are the cognitive, symbolic, technological and material infrastructures that render the commons and citizens visible and hence constitute them as objects for governance, not just individually but also collectively? What conceptions of value(s) constitute the urban commons, and how do managerial technologies (such as branding) organize them?

By letting the discussion of cities revolve around the notion of the commons, we hope to inspire a series of reflections on urban life which addresses issues of political and organizational importance by casting new light on how urban collectivity is composed, transformed and governed.

Acknowledgment

The workshop has been funded by the Private Public Partnership initiative, one of the two Business-in-Society platforms at CBS.