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CONFLICT, CONSENT, COOPERATION: COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN GERMANY BEYOND MARKET AND STATE

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During the last decades public-private partnership have become a popular concept for local development policy. In Great Britain and the United States the preconditions of a civil society enabled the emergence of the entrepreneurial city. But public-private partnerships for public gain are to a great extent incompatible with the German state-society. For that reason local planners and politicians were urged to search for a national specific political response on restructuring beside the Anglo-American solutions. "City marketing" is a new welfare state-oriented negotiation policy that occurred in Germany at the end of the 1980s. It contains a strategy for comprehensive planning beyond market and state. The aims are a joint consent process on the objectives and steps for a balanced local development.

1 Introduction

In the 1980s a new keyword for local policy made its triumphal march through the German local states: city marketing. City marketing as a new approach to local policy beyond market and state. But what is city marketing? Can you treat the city like a product, like soap, cars or washing powder and commercialise it? Or is the city not the product but the enterprise itself? (KELLER 1990, p. 70). I would like to argue that city marketing in Germany is far away from being just an adoption of private marketing strategies. City marketing is not related to marketing theory. It does not evolve the packaging or selling of the city. It is the wrong term for the right thing (see BORCHERT 1994 in this volume). City marketing is a new strategy for comprehensive planning that transforms the traditional German fordist state. To state the reasons for this thesis, a brief consideration of different planning stages in Germany is necessary.

2 Stages of planning in Germany after 1945

If we look at the planning history in Germany after World War II we can distinguish three different types of local planning strategies. During the 1960s and early 1970s the traditional model of comprehensive planning gained prevalence. According to the fordist welfare state, justice and rationality were to be realized through long term planning and land use zoning etc. Scientists prepared models for future development, planners acted as typical experts.

During the 1970s this planning model fall into a deep crisis. Planners had carried their heavy demands too far. Comprehensive planning failed because of the untenability of three hidden assumptions. a) Planners tried to draw objective

decisions on behalf of general welfare, which tended to be subjective and fallible. They promoted their own interest in the name of the public (ADORNO 1967, p. 125). It was a kind of God the Father-model of comprehensive planning where the planners pretended to possess the key to public welfare. b) According to this first assumption planners used scientific methods to predict and control future developments. But this claim failed too due to the disenchantment of science and deconstruction of the modernist understanding of rationality. c) And last but not least was comprehensive planning doomed to failure because of the complexity of local development issues (BOEHME 1989, p. 160). No matter how comprehensive the master plans were supposed to be, the reality of the city was even more complex. This triple failure of comprehensive planning entailed an orderly retreat in the following years. During the 1980s physical planning only played a minor role in Germany. The emergence of postmodern architecture and the aestheticisation of the postmodern city overlaid the traditional ambitious goals of comprehensive planning. Within these years of muddling through the entire city was withdrawn from the political agenda. As substitutes traffic abatement, the colour of facades and park areas emerged as important topics for the collage city.

The postmodern aesthetic and eclectic strategies worked for several years. But at the end of the 1980s a new need for strategic management emerged. The European unification process, the German reunification, and the growing competition between cities and regions on the international scale made inventions in local policy urgently necessary. A third stage of planning was inaugurated. Similar hunts for new local development policies started in other western countries during the 1970s and 1980s. City marketing is part of the new hunt for a flexible local development policy in Germany.

3 Why did public-private partnership fail in Germany? Anglo-American and German preconditions for political incentives

In the Anglo-American world public-private partnership promised to be the right solution for local development policy beyond urban renewal and comprehensive planning. It seemed to be the proper flexible response on the challenges in the restructuring of the urban system, the economic markets and social and political order under the conditions of postfordism. Many German planners and politicians looked with envy across the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean. Due to the peculiar conditions of the German welfare state a direct transfer of public-private partnerships seemed impossible. In Great Britain and North America the state is a synonym for nation or territorial borders. The state as such does not exist (WINDHOFF-HÉRETIER 1993, p. 104). Different groups within the society live social life on their. Private initiatives are the main actors and the market guides their actions. The state just provides a framework for this kind of social self-management. Public and private spheres are not strictly separated. They are networking on the basis of

informal relations. Problems get solved in several procedures and commissions. Political objectives and individual cases are discussed with the persons concerned (MUENCH 1991, p. 168 f.). This system of checks and balances implicates a modest universalism.

In relative conformity with these kinds of public self-image and state responsibilities public-private partnership for public gain could develop very well. The emergence of closer working relationships among private organizations and the established agencies and local government principal organizations continued in a certain way the Anglo-American understanding of public intervention. The transition from planning to real estate management during the 1970s in the United States and the following decade in Great Britain was criticized from planning theory. "Development through public-private negotiation was a sharp break not only with urban renewal procedures but with long-established traditions of public administration" (FRIEDEN 1990, p. 425). The explicit shift from traditional planning activities to direct subsidies for promoting urban economic development induced a shrinkage in the social activities of the local welfare state (LEITNER 1987, p. 126). A strategy for local development and long-term planning were intensively missed (ALBRICHTS 1991, p. 131). For all that criticism out of traditional planning theory the emergence of public-private partnership for public gain was in harmony with the traditional understanding of state responsibilities in North America. The joint development enabled urban renewal, redevelopment and the rebuilding of waterfront areas under the conditions of federal cutbacks. Most locations and characters of the projects yielded moreover large profits (FRIEDEN 1990, p. 426). Although the privatization of government functions was criticized and charged with a loss of democracy, public-private partnership for a certain time has been a functioning model for local development policy under the conditions of restructuring (SCOTT 1992, p. 26).

But this shown path of local development policy was impassable for German local politicians. The Germans usually look at the state as their father (FUERST 1992, p. 5). In the tradition of Georg W.F. HEGEL and other German philosophers the state is a unitary, homogeneous institution that represents all social groups. The German welfare state should be able to decide upon every question in public interest and to define public welfare anytime at any place. He represents the common volition of the German nation (WINDHOFF-HÉRETIER 1993, p. 104). Public decisions derive from universal law. The law is the interpreter of politics. Private interests are strongly separated. Within these patriarchal, authoritarian structures it is nearly inconceivable that public and private actors draw decisions in a common process of negotiation and dealing. Any form of multiple-advocacy is suspicious. So the Anglo-American model of public-private partnership could be no example for the German local government. The preconditions of a non-state or civil society on the Anglo-American side are incompatible with the German state society on the other side. This is why German local planners and politicians (also in Scandinavia, France, the Netherlands) had to search for their own political response on restructuring.

4 City marketing in Germany

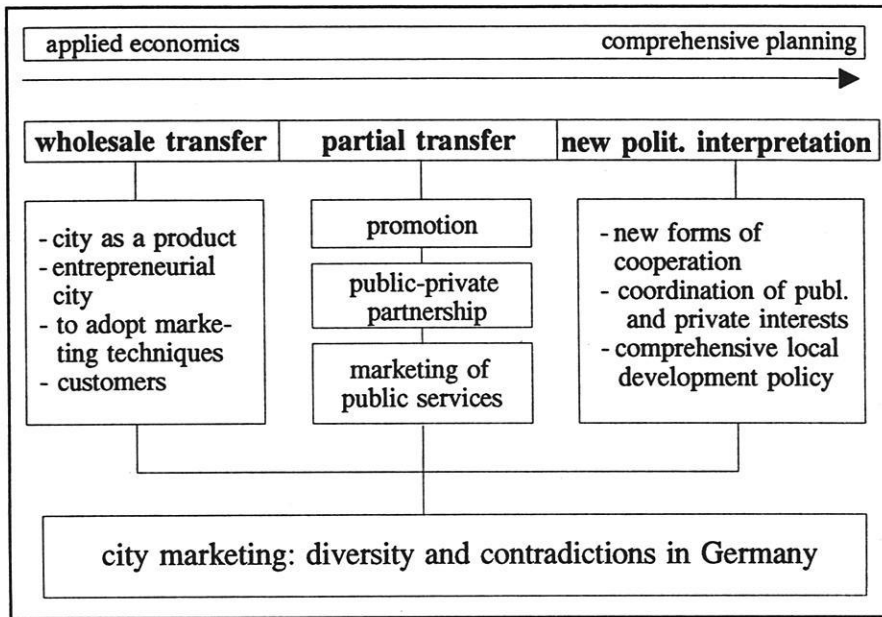
4.1 Strategic approach and intentions

At the end of the 1980s the beginning of the German debate on city marketing leaned strictly upon the idea of the entrepreneurial city imported from the United States and Great Britain. The privatization of public services and the transfer of management strategies stood in the center (KOESTER/ SCHMIDT 1992, p. 141). Through marketing methods mayors should metamorphose into managers, the city inhabitants should be regarded as clients, and the public administration had to change into a general merchandise store that serves the pattern of demand (MEFFERT 1989). But this kind of **"wholesale transfer"** of marketing methods was unable to suit the needs of local policy. The innovation was rhetorical rather than substantial. A whole range of serious problems occurred during the application of marketing methods (LALLI/ KARTE 1992). Not a single town in Germany dared to implement a wholesale transfer of private marketing methods.

Due to this failure of a wholesale transfer many urban planners pushed the idea of a **"partial transfer"** of marketing methods into the public sector (see Figure 1). Only specific issues of local development policy should be treated with marketing techniques. Advertising and promotion, public-private partnerships in real estate development and the marketing of singular public services (libraries, hospitals etc.) were identified as marketable issues. These kinds of promotion, partnerships, and privatization suited the local budget but they did not produce a local development strategy. They were unable to present a holistic political response on the challenges of restructuring (LALLI/ PLOEGER 1990, p. 42). The entrepreneurial city was simply an one-dimensional particular financial answer to the wholesale changes in society. Therefore a third approach of city marketing occurred, that tried to create a **"new political interpretation"** of marketing methods for the public sector. A more sophisticated kind of comprehensive planning was aspired with loose connections to marketing theory. Within this approach the term city marketing might even be replaced by other words like "cooperative local development policy", "discursive planning" etc.

To achieve this difficult goal in 1989 the state government of Bavaria, in the south of Germany, and the federal government founded five model projects in different towns. With public financial support a comprehensive policy in public-private partnership under public leadership should be explored. Through venture capital from the government some local governments preserved the chance to develop city marketing in an experimental and creative way under the conditions of the German welfare state. The model they invented received the following structure (HELBRECHT 1994).

Figure 1 City marketing in Germany



Source: HELBRECHT 1994, p. 88.

City marketing in Germany is a new form of local development policy. It pursues the old ambitious goals of comprehensive planning with new instruments, organizations and methods. The overriding goals are to improve the quality of life and create competitive advantages. The difference to zoning and land use planning consists in a joint consent process on the objectives and steps for a balanced local development. City marketing is more a communicative policy than just physical planning in the traditional sense. The participants in the debate about the future of the city are public and private actors like politicians, planners, retailers, inhabitants, social groups, sports clubs, charitable societies. In opposite to Anglo-American public-private partnerships city marketing is not limited to negotiations about special projects. The aim of negotiation is a comprehensive program of measures (MUELLER 1992, p. 2 ff.). These measures can belong to any political issue like housing policy, traffic policy, promotion or public administration. The local participants make their individual choice, they decide about the contents. To achieve this noble and lofty goal a neutral mediator from an external consultant office, called city manager, is charged to organize and neutralize the fragile communication process. During the last years the five public financed examples have found several adherents. Three main reasons have caused the spread out of city marketing and describe the strategical approach (HELBRECHT 1994, p. 189 f.):

- The failure and orderly retreat of comprehensive planning left a vacuum of strategic thinking in the public sector. Through city marketing the entire city has come back on the agenda of local policy.
- Peculiarity should be according to the determinants of time-space compression an essential part of local policy today (HARVEY 1989). Since city marketing integrates many actors in the formulation of political goals, local knowledge and regional innovation potentials are systematically included.
- Comprehensive planning plots plans, but from planning to realization often a long time went by. City marketing is an political alternative that achieves concrete results.

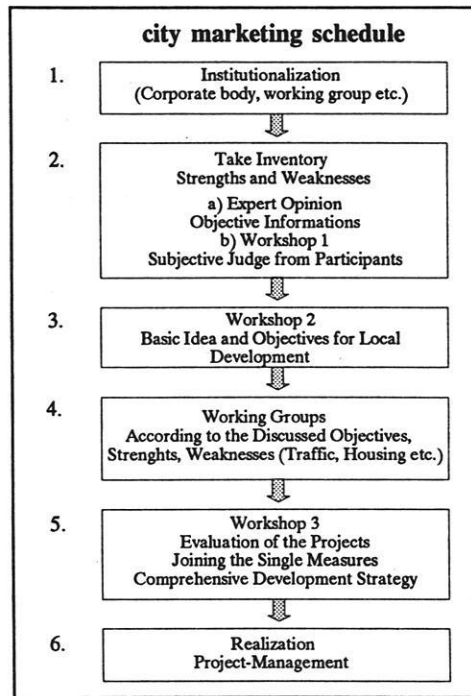
4.2 How to carry out city marketing

The definite form of city marketing differs from one project to another. The pluralistic shape is essential to suit the individual situation in different local states. Thereby city marketing enables a local policy that contains local choice. Although different types of institutional settings, organization forms and methods exist, city marketing can be roughly summarized in six chronological steps (HELBRECHT 1994, p. 192 ff.).

City marketing starts with an institutionalization in form of a registered association, an informal working group, a corporate body or any organizational form that enables public and private actors to work together (see Figure 2). By the agreement on the institutional setting the local actors draw an implicit decision on the structure of participation. The institutionalized working group members occupy strategic positions and influence the whole negotiation process. In general communities of economic interest, planners, and politicians build an informal association and finance the joint project. So the distribution of power between the different participants is unequal from the beginning. To what extent cultural or social pressure groups get their proposals accepted depends on the local power structure, political culture and the groups ability to plead their cause (KEMMING 1991, p. 11).

The second step contains an inventory of the cities strengths and weaknesses. Preparing an inventory is quite usual for comprehensive planning too. But city marketing is not only interested in the objective facts in form of data, expert opinions and consultants. In form of specially moderated workshops different local actors from enterprises, local authorities, households, political, cultural and social organizations are inquired. Together they produce a common opinion about the local strengths and weaknesses. Through special means of communication the debate is considerable stripped of emotional elements.

Figure 2 How to carry out city marketing



Source: HELBRECHT 1994, p. 152.

Thirdly after the inventory the local participants try to develop a model for the local development process. Again the local actors meet in a workshop and produce by the help of communicative methods a normative guiding line for the future development of the city (KLEBERT/ SCHRADER/ STRAUB 1987). At this stage the different actors have to show mutual understanding for separate interests. Everyone has to explain his or her standpoint and appreciate other points of view. The search for a local consent on the general welfare is the bold experiment for a new understanding of the German welfare state beyond fordism. The local politicians have given up their decision-making power without delivering on public-private partnership just for public gain or abandon public good. One can imagine that this risky negotiation process does not work anytime at any place. The local regulatory culture and tolerance are strong criteria of success for city marketing.

In the next chronological step city marketing builds different working groups according to the strengths, weaknesses and normative guidelines that have been developed. Every team tries to produce concrete actions in different political realms (traffic, inner city development, housing etc.). The city manager guides the process and supervises the working groups. The teamwork on special subjects is the core of

city marketing. Negotiation gets concrete and ends up in projects (EBUS/ MUELLER 1992, p. 10 ff.). The participants propose their knowledge, creativity and material resources to find the best project for the desired aim.

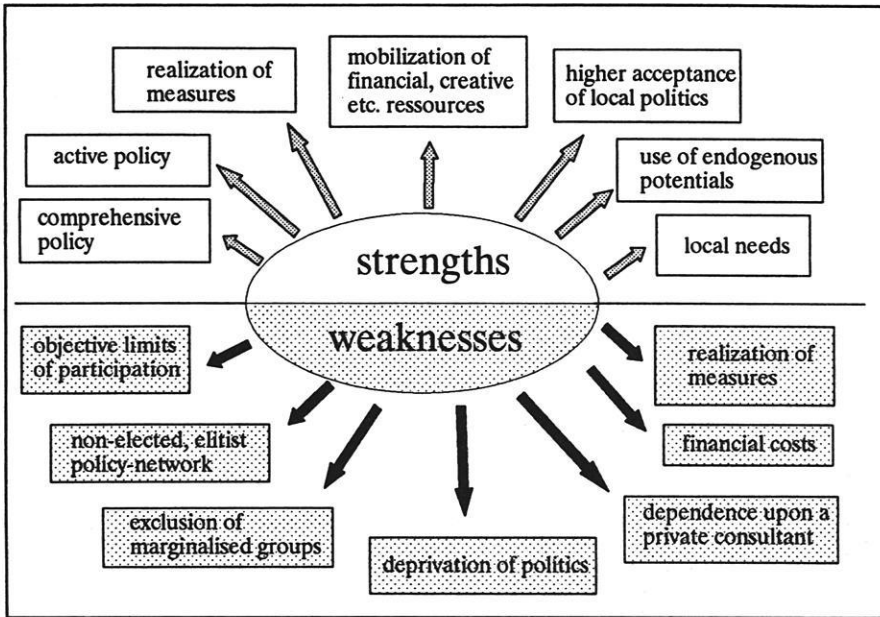
When every working group has carried out its order the plural projects get evaluated and considered carefully one against the other. Antagonisms, conflicts and friction must be eliminated. A comprehensive program of projects is aimed. During this fifth step the city manager convenes the working group participants in another workshop. Together they evaluate the projects and develop a comprehensive action strategy. After finishing this last step in the negotiation process city marketing enters the final and decisive stage: the realization of measures can begin. By that time the responsibility for city marketing shifts from the public-private negotiation structure towards the local government. Whether the measures get realized depends on the politicians goodwill. Finally city marketing comes back to where it belongs: the responsibility for a comprehensive local policy rests on the local government.

4.3 Strengths and weaknesses of city marketing

City marketing is a soft strategic instrument, that is based on soft foundations like cooperative culture, trust, and tolerance of the concerned persons. The success of city marketing is strongly dependent on the regulatory culture of the local state. It contains a jeopardy for public and private actors likewise. The planners and politicians have to risk a negotiation process where the private actors may gain prevalence. The private actors get involved into public policy and questions of general welfare. They have to qualify their actions and points of view. But if the fragile consent process succeeds, the advantages for the local state are many (see Figure 3). City marketing enables a new level of quality within the local development policy in terms of comprehensiveness, creativity and flexibility. New resources in form of ideas, capital, and local knowledge are mobilized for local policy. In this way city marketing enables a strategic approach to public planning in collaboration with the private sector. It raises the acceptance of political decisions.

But contrary to the diverse strengths city marketing provokes several problems (see Figure 3). Due to the discursive approach the opportunities for participation are strictly limited. Only up to 100 persons can participate in a workshop, more than 20 people would break up a working group. City marketing ends up in a non-elected policy network, where elitist pressure groups (Chamber of Commerce etc.) may gain prevalence. So the decision-making process becomes the key problem of this new comprehensive policy. City marketing only represents interests of those groups, who are able to plead their cause. The traditional local authorities can scarcely prevent the democratic deficit. The local government itself is a victim of city marketing and has to cope with a loss of power due to public-private negotiations.

Figure 3 Strengths and weaknesses of city marketing



Source: Own design.

5 Conclusion

City marketing is the wrong term for the right strategic approach in local development policy. It tries to overcome the narrow project-oriented public-private partnerships and enables a new approach to strategic planning in the public sector. Despite its diverse strengths city marketing is far away from being a common planning strategy in Germany. Only few German local municipalities venture on this fragile negotiation process. Although city marketing is based on German political qualities it goes beyond the traditional understanding of the welfare state. The role of the local politicians is dramatically reduced during the negotiation process. In consequence many city marketing projects suffer from the obstruction of the local government when proposed measures are to be realised.

Apart from this concrete problems city marketing is part of a general debate on state intervention, democracy, and the role of public and private actors in the German welfare state. In fordist times corporatism was restricted to negotiations between employers' associations, trade unions and the state. Nowadays new informal networks between different social actors spread out and claim to make public policy in neocorporatist shape to a growing extent. The American multiple

advocacy approach gains more and more power (BAUER 1991, p.217). Consequently the German state has recently become an important object of struggle within social restructuring. Neither the traditional German state society nor the Anglo-American model of a civil society are suitable. The emergence of city marketing seems to be a paradigmatic example for the German difficulties to find the appropriate political response between a state society and a civil society towards a new postfordist political order.

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