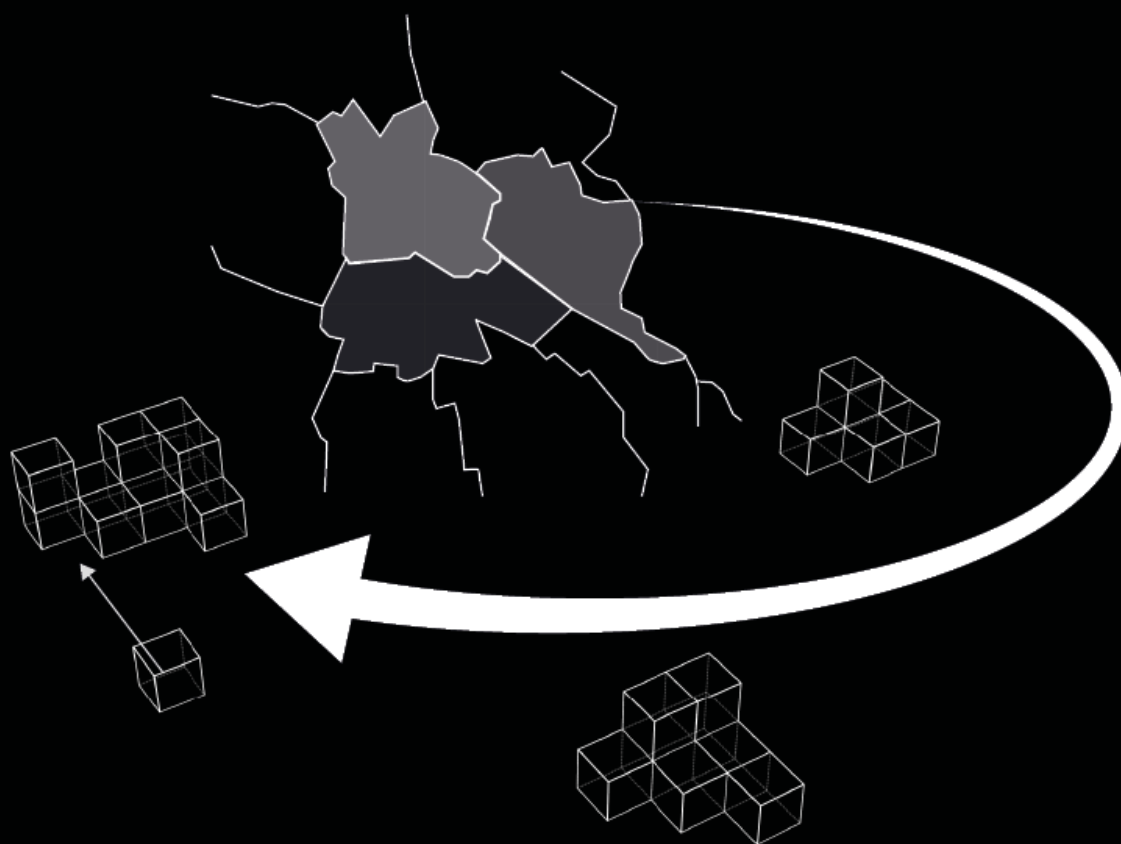# THE PUBLIC CONDENSER OF THE 21st CENTURY

AART OXENAAR

MAX MEERE

4587006

ABSTRACT

In this paper the effect of the building typology 'public condenser' on gentrifying neighbourhoods in Berlin is being investigated. In general gentrification can cause formal and informal forms of displacement. Also it can change social and environmental conditions of a district with a decrease in sense of belonging and decrements in health as consequence (Smith, 2020). Agnotti statese that gentrification happens when: neighborhoods change in such a way that longtime residents and businesses move out because of the strongly increasing land prices. Where communities had to fight hard to make improvements, it now happens easily because the new group of inhabitants are more powerful and have more money (Angotti, 2012). Overall many original residents, including the most disadvantaged, are able to remain in their gentrifying neighbourhoods and share in improvements (Brummet, 2019).

The role as an architect, to design and manipulate
space (Waldrep, 2014), is in great contrast to conserving an existing environment. As a future architect, I consider myself responsible for satisfying not only the gentrifiers and their individual needs, but also satisfying the needs of the original inhabitants.

Gentrification in the inner city neighbourhoods of Berlin can be divided in four stages according to Holm, urban sociologist at the Humboldt-University (Holm, 2009). The four stages are early Pioneer gentrification, late Pioneer gentrification, Modernisation and Displacement and Super Gentrification. Holm also states that gentrification has become a trend for the development of most inner city neighbourhoods of Berlin. Here the neighbourhoods influence each other which makes that the gentrification process cannot be meaningfully described on neighbourhood scale. Observing the inner city of berlin, it can be concluded that various forms of gentrification are happening in the city at different times and in different places (Holm,2013). A clockwise circulation of epicentres of gentrification through the inner city neighbourhoods of berlin becomes visible. New building projects in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg already indicate an intensified phase of gentrification, Friedrichshain is still in a phase of housing renovations and Kreuzberg and northern Neukölln experience a pioneer phase in which an in-migration of creatives and rising rent prices occur (Holm, 2013).

Figure 1: Spatial Differentiation of Gentrification in Inner City Neighborhoods in Berlin (2009)
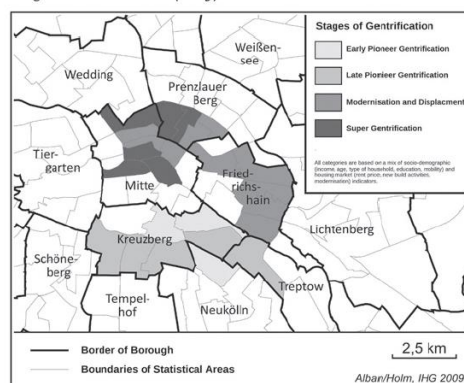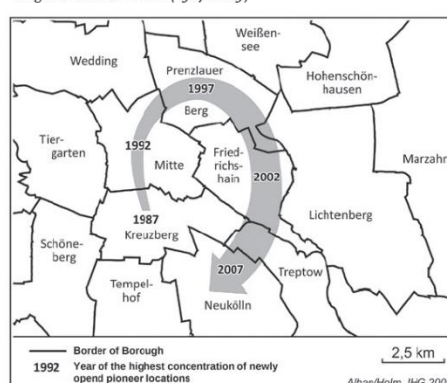
Figure 2: Spatial Dynamic of Pioneer Locations in Inner City Neighborhoods in Berlin (1987-2009)

Research suggests that multiple urban forms can be seen as sustainable (Williams et al., 2000). However much of the debate about the sustainability of cities and urban forms has focused on

increasing the density of development, ensuring a mix of uses, containing urban sprawl and achieving social and economic diversity and vitality. This is often characterised as the concept of a ' compact city' (Jenks et al., 2009)

The main question of this research is: How can the popping up of a public condenser in early stage gentrifying neighbourhoods contribute to a sustainable city?

How can the public condenser as a multi-phase system respond to changing urban trends like temporality, gentrification and societal needs.

To answer this question a variety of sub questions will be addressed. The design of the public condenser is central to this.
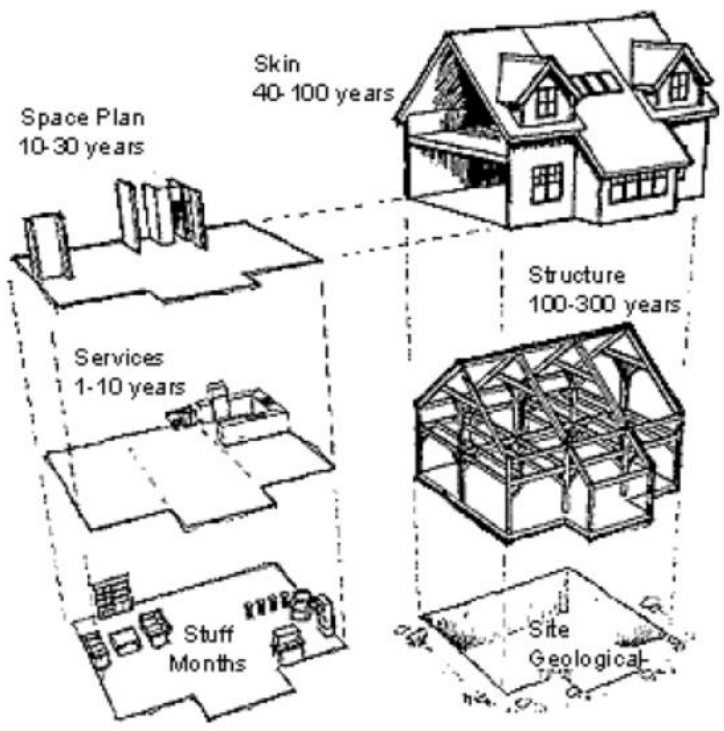
Public condenser:

- How is it situated?
- How can it be a prototypical project?
- How demountable is it?
- How sustainable is it?
- How mobile is it?
- How many functions does it have?
  Etc.

To answer this question a research by design strategy will be applied. The questions that arise during the process will be addressed by the research techniques: observation, interviews, surveys, experiments and secondary data analysis.

The 21st century public condenser
The 21st century public condenser comes and goes. It grows and shrinks with the needs of the neighbourhood, focussing on creating activity and encounter between different demographic groups. It condenses the quick uprising urban changes into a stable situation with a sense of belonging. Landing on its location it contains program rich in commons, over time the more stable functions are left behind, with space to develop. The public condenser of the 21st century has a demountable structure. It is never built from scratch and always uses existing resources. As quick as it pops-up it disappears.

Space Plan
10-30 years

Skin
40-100 years

Services
1-10 years

Structure
100-300 years

Stuff
Months

Site
Geological

SOURCES

Brummet, Q., & Reed, D. (2019). The effects of gentrification on the well-being and opportunity of original resident adults and children.

Holm, A. (2013). Berlin's gentrification mainstream. *The Berlin reader. A compendium of urban change and activism*, 171-188.

Jenks, M., & Jones, C. (Eds.). (2009). Dimensions of the sustainable city.

Pallasmaa, J. (2012). *The eyes of the skin: Architecture and the senses*. John Wiley & Sons.

Smith, G. S., & Thorpe, R. J. (2020). Gentrification: A Priority for Environmental Justice and Health Equity Research. *Ethnicity & Disease,* 30(3), 509–512. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48668064

Spence, C. (2020). Senses of place: architectural design for the multisensory mind. *Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications*, *5*(1), 1-26.

Wong, L. (2016). Adaptive Reuse. In *Adaptive Reuse*. Birkhäuser.

Question formulation:

(1)Will the popping-up of a public condenser in an early stage of gentrification contribute to a gradual city development so that original and new inhabitants can both share in neighbourhoods their improvements.

Closed question
(2)Will the popping-up of a public condenser in an early stage of a gentrifying neighbourhood contribute to a balanced share in improvements for both original and new inhabitants so a natural and sustainable city development can be secured?

Open question
(3)How can the popping-up of a public condenser in an early stage of a gentrifying neighbourhood contribute to a balanced share in improvements for both, original and new inhabitants, so a natural and sustainable city development can be secured?

SITE: WRIEZENER KARREE

The location is situated close to the intersection of three so called 'kiezen'. Andreasviertel, Weberwiese and Wriezener bahnhof. The area of Wriezener Bahnhof nowadays consists of **industrial, utility, commercial and some residentia**l buildings. The urban fabric is highly influenced by the former train station: Old Ostbahnhof (1867). A remnant is the former cogeneration plant behind the building, built in 1953/54, which is today's Berghain. On the location of the present paper factory used to be housing blocks. While the old Ostbahnhof didn't survive the Russian artillery, the residences did as can be seen on an aerial picture from the early 1960's.

GoogleEarthPro - Luftbild 1953

The area WB is most of all three kiezen, in a gentrifying process. striking data are the low average age, large population growth and high migration background. The challenges and opportunities lie, because of this, in the differences in age, culture and education level. The goal of the project is to create activity and encounter for all groups of people. By the design of so called **Pop-up** architecture and program, a large variety of groups will make use of this project. Ever changing structures will never bore.

For pop-up architecture one should think of changing and moving structures, experiences and program. Responsive and data driven design will help creating appropriate adaptations.

NOTES AND THOUGHTS – MAX

Accommodating rising demand for central urban neighborhoods, such as through building more housing, could maximize the integrative benefits we find, minimize the out-migration effects we find, minimize gentrification pressures in nearby neighborhoods, and minimize aggregate rent increases that dampen future in-migration (Brummet, 2019)

An important consequence of gentrification is the decrease of sense of belonging by the current inhabitants. The urban condenser of the 21st century aims to create activity, encounter and understanding for all inhabitants, original and new. The 21st public condenser is a

- Participate
- Belonging

definition:

Gentrification is a general term for ***the arrival of wealthier people in an existing urban district, a related increase in rents and property values, and changes in the district's character and culture***

Question forming:

(2) Is the architectural typology of a public condenser in the form of pop-up architecture capable of creating a more gradual development of a district to prevent the negative aspects of gentrification? In which phase of gentrification should it be built?

With this background, Berlin's inner city restructuring is shaped by a spatial expansion of gentrification, but also by a side presence of different phases of gentrification and by a circulation of the current epicenters of gentrification. For example, the concentration of pioneer locations (such as clubs, galleries, subcultural bookstores) has shifted from Mitte to Prenzlauer Berg to Friedrichshain in a clockwise movement through the city, reaching Kreuzberg and even parts of Neukölln within the last few years (see Holm 2011).

Thus, while new building projects in the already upgraded neighborhoods in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg indicate an intensified phase of gentrification, gentrification in Friedrichshain is still a matter of housing renovations. At the same time, Kreuzberg and northern Neukölln exhibit classical forms of symbolic gentrification and are currently experiencing a "pioneer phase" in which an in-migration of "creatives" and rising rent prices can be studied.

Add:

Friedrichshain , history a bit, is one of the most gentrifying places…

Project is to design a public condenser in one of the 3 kiezen in friedrichshain.

How can the public condenser of the 21st century activate gentrifying places by the use of the temporary design method: Pop-up Architecture.

- POP-UP architecture focusses on design for **all senses. multisensorial design**
- Crossmodal correspondences, where the one sense influences the other
- Comes and goes, grows or shrinks with its community.

- Flexible for social changes
- Invites and intrigues

In this sense the public condenser can be (partially?) become a prototype

In line with the public condenser concept research I came up with the following program:

Program: art, culture, education, sport, urban living room.

After further to the site and surroundings the following program had been added.

Program: food, housing, library

1   WHAT IS GENTRIFICATION?

General

- where and why?
- who involved?
- political policies
- financial story
- my position as architect

In general gentrification can cause formal and informal forms of displacement. International studies repeatedly show that the displacement of low-income households in areas that are gentrifying significant is (Atkinson, 2002). However Brummet, Senior Research Methodologist at the University of Chicago , states that overall many original residents, including the most disadvantaged, are able to remain in their gentrifying neighbourhoods and share in improvements (Brummet, 2019). The contrasting opinions are the result of the lack of documentation of the difficult to obtain number of displacement (Slater 2006). Next to displacement, change in social and environmental conditions of a district cause a decrease in sense of belonging and decrements health (Smith, 2020). Agnotti statese that gentrification happens when: neighborhoods change in such a way that longtime residents and businesses move out because of the strongly increasing land prices. Where communities had to fight hard to make improvements, it now happens easily because the new group of inhabitants are more powerful and have more money (Angotti, 2012).

The role of an architect is to design and manipulate space (Waldrep, 2014). This is in contrast to conserving an existing environment. As architect I want to design for the gentrifiers but also for the original inhabitants, by satisfying both their needs.

berlin

- where and what is the trend?
- History
- What happens per phase of gentrification?

Gentrification in the inner city neighbourhoods of Berlin can be divided in four stages according to Holm, urban sociologist at the Humboldt-University (Holm, 2009). The four stages are early Pioneer gentrification, late Pioneer gentrification, Modernisation and Displacement and Super Gentrification. Holm also states that gentrification has become a trend for the development of most inner city neighbourhoods of Berlin. Here the neighbourhoods influence each other which makes that the gentrification process cannot be meaningfully described on neighbourhood scale. Observing the inner city of berlin, it can be concluded that various forms of gentrification are happening in the city at different times and in different places (Holm,2013). A clockwise circulation of epicentres of gentrification through the inner city neighbourhoods of berlin becomes visible. New building projects in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg already indicate an intensified phase of gentrification, Friedrichshain is still in a phase of housing renovations and Kreuzberg and northern Neukölln experience a pioneer phase in which an in-migration of creatives and rising rent prices occur (Holm, 2013).

friedrichshain

- in which phase
- who live here
- what can we learn from other neighborhoods
- demographics

2   WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES AND SOLUTIONS?

reference projects

conclusion

3   HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS INTO THE PROJECT

SOURCES

Brummet, Q., & Reed, D. (2019). The effects of gentrification on the well-being and opportunity of original resident adults and children.

Holm, A. (2013). Berlin's gentrification mainstream. *The Berlin reader. A compendium of urban change and activism*, 171-188.

Jenks, M., & Jones, C. (Eds.). (2009). Dimensions of the sustainable city.

Pallasmaa, J. (2012). *The eyes of the skin: Architecture and the senses*. John Wiley & Sons.

Smith, G. S., & Thorpe, R. J. (2020). Gentrification: A Priority for Environmental Justice and Health Equity Research. *Ethnicity & Disease,* 30(3), 509–512. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48668064

Spence, C. (2020). Senses of place: architectural design for the multisensory mind. *Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications*, *5*(1), 1-26.

Wong, L. (2016). Adaptive Reuse. In *Adaptive Reuse*. Birkhäuser.

Slater, T. (2006). The eviction of critical perspectives from gentrification research. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 30* (4), pp. 737–57.

Prepare a "draft" version (about 300 words) of your project abstract. This draft should indicate at least;

(1) what your chosen problem/task/ambition is and

(2) why you think it is important/meaningful in the context of the site and the city.

Additionally, you may indicate how you plan to go about your project, the methodology.

This draft should be the point of the discussion w/ Dr. Aart Oxenaar on 3 Nov.

We suggest that you upload your draft as soon as you can, certainly before Thu. 3 Nov.

1. Why to build for The Commons?
2. How do you connect The Commons to this brief?
3. Which core elements define your Public Condenser as a hybrid?
4. What is the role of this public building in today's society?
5. What is your exact site within the given site area and why have you chosen this particular site?
6. How does the site research inform your Public Condenser brief?

7. What kind of sustainability is needed?