

## A case study of urban commoning in housing [or: urban agriculture, energy, peer production etc.] in [German city XY].

### Background

The studying of commons and of the role of commoning in societal change particularly in urban contexts has only recently matured into an established, interdisciplinary research field (Colding et al. 2013; Radywyl & Biggs 2013; Moss 2014; Stavrides & De Angelis 2016; Shah & Garg 2017; Turner 2017). The development and governance of de-commercialized spaces in diverse fields like housing, gardening, tinkering, or energy generation involves many different processes, and takes very diverse shapes in dependence of the individual motivations of activists and of thousands of contextual factors. The understanding of the dynamics involved and of transformative potential (or otherwise) of such initiatives is still in its infancy. Individual case studies of such processes and assessments of their impact on incumbent ways of providing services in and governing of the city can help with the building up of a better conceptual understanding.

### Possible research questions

- What ambitions drive the establishment of the selected commons? (e.g. a project of Miethäusersyndikat, a housing cooperative, an urban gardening/ agriculture initiative etc.)
- In what sense and by whom is the commons or de-commercialized space recognized as an alternative to the commercial provision of goods or services?
- What difficulties have been faced when establishing the commons, especially with regard to necessary links to commercial activities?
- What links have been established to commons in other fields of activity, and to what extent have mutually supportive relationships been formed?

### Relevant theories/ approaches/ concepts

- Urban commons/ commoning
- Urban political ecology
- Diverse economies

### Relevant methods

- Document analysis
- Semi-structured interviews
- Actor mapping
- Institutional analysis

### Requirements

- For German cases, which I would prefer, proficiency in German is necessary
- The ability to conduct interviews in German would be a strong asset.

### Literature

Colding, J., Barthel, S., Bendt, P., Snep, R., van der Knaap, W. & Ernstson, H. (2013). "Urban green commons: Insights on urban common property systems." *Global Environmental Change* **23** (5): 1039-1051.

Moss, T. (2014). "Spatiality of the Commons." *International Journal of the Commons* **8** (2): 457–471.

Radywyl, N. & Biggs, C. (2013). "Reclaiming the commons for urban transformation." *Journal of Cleaner Production* **50** (0): 159-170.

- Shah, A. & Garg, A. (2017). "Urban commons service generation, delivery, and management: A conceptual framework." *Ecological Economics* **135**: 280-287.
- Stavrides, S. & De Angelis, M. (2016). "Common Space: The City as Commons", Zed Books.
- Turner, M. D. (2017). "Political ecology III: The commons and commoning." *Progress in Human Geography* **41** (6): 795-802.