

*Community Gardens as a spatial expression of organizational structures.
Investigations taking Vienna as an example*

Andreas Exner, Isabelle Schützenberger

This paper investigates community gardens in Vienna under the perspective of a fundamental transformation of the contemporary spatial matrix of urban space towards a differential space (Lefebvre). To this aim, eight case studies as examples for projects with a varying degree of state influence are compared.

Gardens shaped by the local state embody state requirements for legibility of socio-spatial relations. These requirements are part of the matrix of abstract, bureaucratically managed space. Gardens which are not directly shaped by the state on the other hand show a lower degree of legibility and may stand in a more or less obvious contrast with surrounding spatial structures. Gardens shaped by the state are characterized by a greater internal homogeneity and are more homogeneous when compared among each other than gardens without or with a lesser degree of state influence. It is argued that a mere aestheticization of space by marking differences does not suffice to transcend abstract space.