

## Building Production and its Discontents in Socialist East Germany

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Since the late 1950s, industrialised construction methods played a significant role in East German architecture. Yet, rather than being a rapid and largely unproblematic shift from architecture to building production, different sources suggest that a number of theorists and practitioners remained ambivalent towards industrialised construction. Arguing from distinct positions their shared concern was that productivist thinking and a narrow focus on the logic and demands of the production process might have negative effects. This paper will introduce a number of their critiques. Moreover, drawing on the example of the Berlin-Marzahn housing district (1973-1988), two strategies will be discussed that aimed at ameliorating such negative effects: collaboration between architects, artists, and designers as well as the involvement of residents in shaping their environment. The paper asks to what extent those strategies challenged basic tenets and structural features of building production in state-socialism.

### Biography:

Torsten is an assistant at the Institute gta at ETH Zurich. He recently completed his PhD dissertation "*Komplexe Umweltgestaltung: architectural theory and the production of the built environment in the GDR, 1960—1990*". He studied architecture at the Bauhaus University Weimar and earned a Master's in Architectural History from the Bartlett/UCL.