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Input

Workshop I
City and the Past: Cultural and Citizenship Education at the interface of remembrance policy

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History Lessons in Urban Space

"Build bridges and live reconciliation": not only was this motto used in the first sermon given by the bishop at the inauguration of the Frauenkirche (the Church of Our Lady) in Dresden, but "bridge" and "reconciliation" are two themes that, in June 2004, also provided the rhetoric for the inauguration of the Stari Most in Mostar, Bosnia Herzegovina. The bridge, which dates from the Ottoman period, was destroyed during the war in former Yugoslavia in the 90s as one of the last bastions of a shared history in a divided city. Two examples that symbolize destruction and transformation, and that have a special place in the memories of the local people. They are landmarks and symbols whose comeback is popularly associated with the reclamation of the identities of the cities. In fact, however, the reconstruction of these monuments fits within the range of current urban development and revitalization strategies. As a result of the political and economic upheavals after 1990, many towns, cities, and regions in central and Eastern Europe tried hard to work with the spolia of their histories. The uncertainties and lack of orientation following the break-up of the social structure led to the use of these historic fragments as docking stations. The rediscovery of local and regional references works to safeguard a new sense of community. The French historian Pierre Nora has already pointed out that the collective memory is always activated when a break with the past occurs, for history is then taken up to establish a new present and in this way maintain social continuity. Following Nora´s ideas of the *Lieux de memoire*, monument sites portray the enduring focal points of collective memory and identity to each generation.(1) These points alter in line with the changes in the way they are perceived, appropriated, used and passed on.(2)

How can such a selective formation of tradition contribute to the restoration of a lost community, to a new self-image in the communities of Dresden, Sibiu or Mostar that have been marked by disruption and transformation? Is this strategy of history culture via reconstruction of monuments simply following the logic of urban identity policy or could the collective memory, incorporated in the built environment stimulate a broader way of negotiating history's meaning and significance for the cities in everyday life?

These questions are situated within a complex context, three aspects of which will be discussed. Firstly: historic-political strategies, as observed in many cities in contemporary Europe, indicate a change in the treatment of history in late modern societies. The strategy of taking recourse to set pieces of urban history in terms of updating them for urban redevelopment, is related to a generally changed treatment of history. Second: the specific feature of the situation in terms of the politics of remembrance is that the people suffered a rupture in their patterns of value and interpretation over the course of the break-up of the social structure after 1990. What role do local traditions and history play in this? And Thirdly: local history, historic material, and monuments shift their meaning in the context of local, regional, national, and international policy and the international public. Their inclusion as World Heritage or national heritage sites is accompanied by a new level of meaning: the repositioning in the trans-national memory space of humanity. What happens with local memory cultures if for example the old bridge of Mostar were suddenly placed alongside the Egyptian pyramids or the Great Wall of China? These places constitute symbolic capital on a local, national, and international level. It is a matter of dislocation from the local culture of remembrance and its cosmopolitan replacement as a World Heritage Site.
What effect does this shift in meaning have on the memory culture in the respective towns?

Let me start with the first aspect:
Recently the new Exhibition in Munich has addressed the phenomenon of reconstruction and reframed it in a broader historical and societal context: Aleida Assman pointed out in her contribution to the catalogue that the new interest in reconstruction has to be reflected in the context of the Modernization process of the 20th century and its particular approach towards tradition and history. Whereas the modern legacy was determined by what the historian Reinhard Koselleck has called "creative destruction", which was based on a radical rupture between the past and the future. Today we witness a shift from that paradigm, a change in mentalities towards a new interest into historical sustainability to overcome the traumatic lost of history. The "creative destruction" had its heydays in the post-war period: the idea of salvation/release from the past shaped the mental consciousness of that time period. In addition within the radical planning approaches of the post-war period - the "aufgelockerte durchgrünte Stadt" - within the perspective of utopia and revolution ruins and remaining old buildings where conceived as traumatic. Historians stated that, with the collapse of the iron curtain and the decline of the utopian projects in the west and east, a new perspective on the past was possible: Future expectations and planning optimism, both essential for the modern paradigm, lost their validity and allowed an shift in the perspective of the past- as trauma and potential resource. The more we became aware of the fact that future lost its importance as a projections screen for constant renewal and change, the past seems to offer new opportunities. Assmann maintains that the past has taken over a quality as resource for transformation that usually has been associated with the future. Within that change in consciousness history is no longer perceived in a linear perspective, which has already taken place: instead the new and the old find new arrangements.(3) What is most visible in the practice of reconstruction, but also in new forms of dealing with history in media, where new formats like history documentaries emerge, but also various popular culture formats: history-like performances in reenactments, celebrations, fests.

So scholars like Rosemarie Bayer claiming a "history culture of the second modernity", which is defined by the insight, that history is today characterized by subjective and socially-dependent interpretations, against (which) historical science as a unified discipline can no longer come up. History is becoming an open source, its meaning is constantly negotiated in a pluralistic field of diverse ways of viewing and interpreting history, thus enabling ever new interpretations. (4) Furthermore new actors are participating in the process of interpretation and communication of the past. Many reconstruction projects in Germany has been initiated and strongly supported by different agents and associations and form the civil society - a "multivocality" in the process of interpretation of the past is observed. Meaning, less and less state supported institutions maintaining the domain of maintenance of heritage.

In particular, cities are the places where the past is incorporated in the three-dimensional build environment - this spatialized? history has led to conceive the city as palimpsest where layers and layers of past times are superimposed. In a concentrated space history is layered as a result of constant transformation, re- and devaluation. Even though these layers are simultaneous presented, they are not conceived as such.

The constructive character of the new history culture- and the phenomenon of reconstruction is part of it- is openness to always new interpretation and meanings, which have to be discussed also in the frame of the information age as well as the global consumer culture. For example media and tourism are crucial driving forces, in which the past appeared in a variety of formats and activities: For example in city tourism history is one of the distinctive narratives. With the term heritage industry a whole complex of living history museums, heritage trails, theme parks, historical fests and celebration is named. What they share, history, is here commercialized and presented as an idyllic and conflict less past, which is easily consumable. At the same time, tourism, media and consumer culture have also transformed rather traditional formats of the presentation of history: like for example museums or archives.

Let me move on to the second aspect of the history lessons in urban space: the conflicting politics of remembrance and its impact on urban culture – especially under the conditions of new Europe. The German Historian Karl Schlögel has announced in the middle of 90th a return of the cities in central Europe. He celebrated the renovation activities in Tallinn, Riga or Sibiu as an expression of the comeback of the one of the remarkable features of Europe - its urban historical culture. Marketsquares, boulevards, monuments and castles appear in new lights. And within Europaen cultural capital programmes especially in cities of the former eastern block - reconstruction of historical buildings plays an important role to underline and emphasise the "Europeaness" of the city/country. European cities seem, in a special way, the ideal projector screen for the European idea. They embody specific cultural value complexes which are today associated with Europe. This is embedded in a broader context of European cultural politics. I just want to mention here briefly: The initiative of the Cultural Capital was initially motivated by political attempts to construct a common European identity by cultural means. Chris Shore proposes that the politicisation of culture in the EU represents the attempt of the political elite to compensate for EU`s chronic a lack of legitimacy. "The problem is, according to EU commission, that Europeans are not sufficiently aware of their common cultural values and shared European heritage". Identity formation and culture building therefore become central in the campaigns to promote the "European idea".(5) Capital of Culture programmes are essential part of this process which is frequently described as "Europeanisation". The discourse here confirms an assumption, which Wolfgang Kaschuba has already pointed out: "the catchword of identity is becoming the guiding concept of social discourse and culture its significant content."(6) Critiques have already reflected the rather homogeneous understanding of culture, which is applied here. Such process harbour ideas of cultural homogeneity of identities, which in many respect correspond to the classical paradigm within the nation state of the construction of imagined communities. Moreover in order to prove the commonality of European Culture, the development of contrasting images of oneself and the other is essential.

Let me briefly introduce here the Sibiu case: The region was at its prime during the Habsburg Empire of the 18th and 19th century. Many preserved historical buildings dating from the epochs of European architecture and not least the presence of a German-speaking minority are testament to the influence to this historic period. To highlight this age for its European character and as a symbolic capital of the capital of culture and in doing so, obscure the many varied conflicts in the region and in Romania during WW II and the socialist dictatorship, seems to serve the interest of the urban elite. One has the impression that Sibiu offers itself to the new larger Europe as a time capsule of a kind- as an urban terrain where tourists are invited to travel trough time, back to the imaginary European origins.

As if repeating a mantra, the press spokesman of the city explains the symbolic significance of the restoration of the ensemble of the three squares in the old town. The city presents its layout shaped by Piata Huet, the square devoted to religious affairs, Piata Mica, the marketplace visited weekly by local traders, and Piata Mare the place of public representation and political life - the city`s agora - as a model of European urban culture. With the restauration of the old town the public face of the city has begun to change. The weight of the historical city centre, which, next to the socialist city of Sibiu, led a rather shadowy existence until 1989 has again swung into favour for the old town. Moreover the old division between upper and lower city, which in the past assured a spatial and social divide between blue and white collar workers tradesperson, craftsmen and public official, is returning. Above the ailing lower city where shoemakers and carpenters pursue theirs crafts in basements kiosk traders deal with everyday demands and workers end their shifts in bars filled with smoke, the highly polished upper city rises up for tourists. Moreover although the buildings here are not really generous spatially a tourist guide assures us, that real estate prizes have increased beyond the reach of the local population. Those who can afford the houses are especially interested in the Saxonian feeling – a symbolic capital, which enriches the lifestyle concept of the new upper class.

The reconstruction of an imaginary homogenous history - as a European - which leaves its mark on the urban landscape by means of a selective practice of reconstruction, has an deep impact on the local cultures of remembrance and causes conflicts between the different modes of interpretation and valuation of the past. It undermines the possibilities to consider remembrance culture under the circumstances of a post-socialist society and with a conflicting multiethnic past, as a heterogeneous space in which various interpretation and experiences about the past can be shared. Furthermore within this rather static and homogeneous understanding of what supposed to be "Europeaness" in Sibiu it obscures the other ubiquitous ways of being European. Labor migration to Italy, Spain and Portugal is part of the everyday life in Sibiu. So the travel agencies in the backyard of the fancy Balcescu Boulevard in Sibiu tell the stories about the routes of the Euroliners, which Romanians use to travel across Europe in order to supplement their family meager income. However the pictures and images with which Sibiu promotes itself as a European Capital of Culture appears not to accommodate this daily practice of the production of a new Europe as a mobile and dynamic space. While the logo of the festival "City of culture-city of cultures" aimed to revive the multicultural European city, based on the ideal of the old eastern European multiethnic city, it did not reflect the experiences made by the new Europeans in the cheap guesthouses and lodgings, construction sites and farms of Southern and Western Europe.

Third: the transformation of the meaning of monuments after 1990 and their re-embedding in new context of commemoration. Let me her briefly reflect the example of the Mostar Bridge and its conflicting culture of memory. Sites of memory, monumental sites play a significant role in way how a society can remember. Pierre Nora has invented the term "lieux de memoire"; or referring to Walter Benjamin that strange interplay between time and space, which makes monument sites so crucial for a society. Memorials portray the enduring focal points of collective memory and identity to each generation. But these points change in line with the changes in the way they are perceived, appropriated used and passed on. So new meaning was attached to the

Mostar bridge in the process of its destruction during the war and its reconstruction in the post-conflict period. The international activities in Mostar has centred from the beginning around the reconstruction of the old town and the bridge. If one walks over the bridge and through the alleyways running along the Neretva, which have likewise been rebuilt with the original materials, one cannot fail to notice the ruins still standing on both sides of the bridge. Moreover, the perfect reconstruction of the local bars, restaurants and souvenir shops stands in stark contrast with the reality of a post-war city in Bosnia Herzegovina – a federation that originated from the Daytona Agreement almost 10 years ago and which, in the light of the region's economic plight, can still hardly function without international aid.

How does the reconstruction of that monument affect the city's self-perception?
One has firstly to acknowledge that the focus of the reconstruction of the old town was very much framed by particular role monuments like the old bridge or the library of Sarajevo has played in the Balkan war. These buildings, which have been demolished, were part of the common cultural heritage of this former multiethnic society. Following Martin Coward: the aim was to obliterate those places that served as a reminder of a multiethnic past. The term "urbicide" – derived from the word genocide – should allude to the conscious annihilation of urbanism – in this case of places that represent heterogeneity and cultural diversity. "The widespread destruction of urban fabric is the destruction of a common shared space. Insofar as the dynamic of ethnic cleansing is that of carving out of separate ethnically homogeneous and self determining territorial entities, it comprises a denial of common space through a destruction of that, which attests to a record of sharing spaces – the heterogeneity of cultural heritage and the intermingling of civilian bodies". (7) According to Coward, given this background, the crucial issue for Bosnia today is one of shared space, belonging equally to all communities – a concept that has provided the key for coexistence in Bosnia for hundreds of years. Isn't it therefore obvious and inevitable, from the international parties' point of view, to rebuild the bridge and the nearby streets? But how is the reconstruction of the bridge seen by the still-divided society within the city? Or is the bridge and its surroundings just a construct of the international community, which still has a strong presence in the city 10 years after Dayton? And an artificial tourist island as well? In one of the guest books in the exhibition areas next to the Bridge one can read the statement "Long life the new old bridge but it will not bring back the old Mostar." Is the Old Town simply for „the mercy of the tourists" re-erected, as many locals tried to assure us? While a battle commenced in the still or once more ethnically separated districts about the symbolic meaning of parts of the city, i.e., in the form of churches with particularly high towers or Mosques with a prepossessing presence, the international administrators tried to press ahead with the reconstruction of the historic city centre. The AgaKahn Foundation was one of the main sponsors of the reconstruction. The bridge is meanwhile found all over the city on posters, house walls and project placards, and is the logo of the city administration that was unified or brought together this year. Everywhere the bridge stands for the growing together of a divided city. But in reality the bridge belongs to the Bosnian part of the Mostar: the division line was the boulevard, the fire line, still on both sides surrounded by ruins.

Whereas the bridge in the realm of politics is considered as a medium for multiethnic identity formation and reconciliation, the everyday live shows a different and less ideological picture. The world heritage status is conceived as a unique opportunity to stimulate tourism. Before the war, Mostar was a city that lived mainly from tourism. Every holiday on the Adriatic coast was accompanied by a visit not only to Dubrovnik, but also to Mostar to admire the historic centre and bridge. In this context, the strategy of the only recently elected mayor of the whole city, a Croat, is to use the bridge to attract tourism. By supporting tourism, he aims to improve the economy – destabilised by the war – of the region: the unemployment rate is estimated at 40%. For him, the return of tourism means a return to pre-war normality. Inclusion on the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites also provides a connection to the rest of the world. But the nomination causes even more problems: The world heritage list represents a different order. Monuments are removed from their local context and take on a new significance in the heritage of the human kind. The integration in the World heritage list is accompanied by new regulations and standards, which have a deep

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impact on the site itself. Jan Turtinen consider it as a phenomenon „that is constructed in a transnational field of various interests, perspectives and locales".(8) In order to respect and to maintain the status the city has therefore set up its own agency to monitor the range of tourist attractions on offer and to link these to the local economies and sites of cultural production. At the same time the bridge and the tourism offers for the new inhabitants, coming mostly from the rural regions, an opportunity for making their own living. Miniature versions of the bridge are also sold in the tourist quarter. Souvenir shops stand side by side and sell oriental metalwork alongside UN helmets and bulletproof vests. Some of the metal items are even made from fragments of grenade. Smart new restaurants, bars and lounges sit alongside rustic taverns. Bars are full on summer evenings. But it are not only tourists that spend the day in Mostar – Mostar's youth also loves to party any day of the week, mostly spending money earned by their relatives in Western Europe. The more stylish venues are running by people who spent the 90s in Munich or Stockholm, for example. The bridge offers them a new opportunity to do business in the city, and they can draw upon networks that flourished diasporas in the wartime. Also for the divers of Mostar the bridge is a source for income: They prefer to conceive themselves as heroes of the bridge: Following their stories, before the bridge has collapsed, they were the ones that saved it with tires. Not without a sense of humour they claim also an UNESCO title. During the summer months it is always a spectacle when they jump from the bridge into the deep Neretva. On the occasion the public inauguration of the bridge in 2004 they were invited to participate in the show. Although local elite conceives them as an offence, they claim to belong to the bridge and the river: „The divers and the bridge are the same story like the Gondolieres in Venice". (9)

The example shows that the change of the meaning of monumental sites causes new conflicts and contestations within the urban culture of the city. Besides the particularities of the post war condition- the lesson shows that the communication and participation of monumental sites has equal importance as the reconstruction of the build monument itself.

To sum it up:
Cities are prominent places were history is presented in a concentrated manner: in the built environment various layers of the past exist in juxtaposition. The city is a palimpsest, even it is not always perceived as such by its inhabitants. Different political systems and inscriptions shaped the perception of the city in a specific way. Cities are unique places to reflect the past, but learning to remember requires a critical and open democratic approach, in which various actors and institutions can participate, and in which history is not functionalized within politics of identity. In this respect, how the various historical layers the city offers could be stimulated? And how can the city dweller conceive himself as part of that generation chain, in which the city is told seems crucial questions of education. This counts even more, taking the global context of identity politics into account, in which cities are striving to mobilize their past as a resource in a global process of identity formation. The more history goes beyond its academic domain and is becoming a raw material for global popular culture, and gets consumed and appropriated by immense numbers of people, the more the question of new formats of communicating history in a reflexive and critical way seems necessary. Cities as living and lived environments offer thereby unique opportunities to facilitate a public in which various narratives and conflicting positions of the history - in plural as histories can be told.

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