

International Association of
Educating Cities
Association Internationale des
Villes Éducatrices
Asociación Internacional de
Ciudades Educadoras



Education and Urban Life:

20 Years of Educating Cities

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Published for the 10th Congress of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC)

IAEC Executive Committee:

Adelaide, Barcelona (Presidency and Secretariat), Budapest, Genoa, Lisbon, Lomé, Lyon, Rennes (Treasury), Rosario (Vice-Presidency), São Paulo, Tampere and Turin.

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Acknowledgments: to the members of the Executive Committee; the authors and city mayors who contributed to the book; the Barcelona City Council; UNESCO; UCLG; and the IAEC Secretariat team.

We are grateful to W.W. Norton & Company for authorizing the reproduction of the chapter "Drift" from *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in The New Capitalism* by Richard Sennett.

Printed by: Arts Gràfiques Bobalà, SL

Date: April 2008

ISBN: 978-84-9850-096-7

Copyright Deposit: L-495-2008

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To the Reader

Eulàlia Bosch

Eulàlia Bosch (Barcelona 1949) is a lecturer in Philosophy. One of her main focuses of professional interest has been and continues to be to explore the relationship between the educational institutions and the cultural life of modern cities. From IREF (Research Institute on Philosophy) she fostered the expansion of the program of aesthetic education, through the *Mystery Creatures* (1992) and *The Magic Box* (1993) contemporary art exhibitions. As director of the Educational Department of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona she made further inroads into this field by organizing exhibitions such as *To Remember Is To Make Memory* (1997) and *The City of the Words* (1998).

Currently, as a partner of *Gao, lletres*, she is engaged in organizing and advising exhibitions (*Oteiza*, San Sebastian, 2000), publishing books (*I Send You This Cadmium Red: A Correspondence on Color between John Berger and John Christie*, Actar), the creation of educational programs for Internet (www.lapedreraeducacio.org, 2005) and acting as artistic and educational advisor to museums, schools and social and cultural centers. She has published numerous articles as well as the books *The Pleasure of Beholding* (Actar, Barcelona, 1998) and *Education and Everyday Life* (Browlow Education, Victoria Australia, 2005).

Education and Urban Life: 20 Years of Educating Cities is a publication through which the International Association of Educating Cities is celebrating not only its twenty years of existence, but also the launching of new projects that will help incorporate into its programs the social and political changes that have had such a profound impact at the turn of the century.

The idea behind this anthology is to foster discussion and establish a common reference point for people in positions of responsibility in local governments and in institutions and groups involved in educational tasks, as well as for teachers working at all levels of education. That is to say, the book aims to serve as a meeting point for those responsible for guiding and regulating the life of cities and those involved in education on a day-to-day basis. These are two spheres which, all too frequently, find themselves so estranged that they not only fail to recognize each other as natural allies, but, in their mutual ignorance, leave a vitally important issue unattended, an issue that is the basis of the existence and development of democratic societies: the political education of their citizens.

The book is divided into three major sections:

The first focuses on some of the processes of change that are affecting urban systems today and profoundly alter our social life.

As Professor David Harvey points out in the opening lines of his article, *we cannot separate the kind of city we want from how we want to live our lives and the kind of people we want to become*. This observation, so inti-

mately tied to the concept of education itself, is the leitmotif of the opening section of the book that goes on to address issues such as: contemporary mutations in public space—Zygmunt Bauman; migratory processes and their cultural implications—Blair Ruble; the power of the media—Josep Ramoneda; the unsustainable socioeconomic inequalities on an international scale—Arcadi Oliveres; the search for “authenticity” in the forms of urban development—Sharon Zukin; the inclusion of the gender perspective in building a sense of community—Olivia Guaraldo; cultural responses to an ageing population—Antón Costas; the new social links generated by the Internet—Genís Roca; and the importance of local governments in world governance—Elisabeth Gateau.

The overarching concept for the second section is education, that relationship which exists between knowledge and the ways it is transmitted, between learning processes and personal development, between accumulated knowledge and the uniqueness of each individual...in sum, between the privacy and sociability that citizens necessarily require. Education understood as the ability allowing us to constantly recreate our way of understanding the world and living in it.

In his revision of the classical concept of *character*, Professor Richard Sennett provides context for the contemporary motto “no long term,” that defines a state of mind present today in many people’s everyday lives. This generalized perception of fragility presents an extremely difficult challenge. There are no qualities more distant from the learning processes and consolidation of knowledge than instability, impermanence and immediacy.

In this section, articles cover subjects such as the intercultural debate taking place in cities today—Néstor García Canclini; the contemporary function of libraries, indisputable reserves of knowledge since antiquity—Alberto Manguel; the idea of city as archive—Vyjayanthi Rao; the connection between schooling and education in contemporary cities—Maxine Greene; the concept of the urban medium itself as a basic educative space—Jaqueline Moll; the relationship between education and justice—Juan Carlos Tedesco; the links between education and political life in the cities—Joan Subirats; and the inevitability of the ongoing learning processes—Philippe Meirieu and Joan Manuel del Pozo.

Last, but not least, the third section of the book provides a brief overview of the biennial congresses of the International Association of Educating Cities congresses. The history

of these meetings shows the process of developing an idea that only twenty years ago seemed somewhat impromptu and today is behind multiple programs in close to 400 cities throughout the world.

This section also includes statements by the mayors of some of these cities that have decidedly chosen to make the existing educational component visible as part of their regular political action.

The book concludes with a text by the Director General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, in which he points out that *education and training are the most valuable assets of cities in the context of globalization*. I hope this book will serve to spread this idea and suggest new ways of understanding education that are closely tied to the desire for fulfillment to which all human beings aspire and have a right.

Introduction

The People's City

Pasqual Maragall

Pasqual Maragall i Mira (Barcelona, 1941) holds a Ph.D. in Economic Sciences from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and a Law degree from the Universitat de Barcelona. He was a driving force behind *Convergència Socialista de Catalunya*, one of the founding groups of the Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSC-PSOE).

He served as mayor of Barcelona for 15 years (1982-1997). In 1986, the city was selected to host the 1992 Olympic Games. Organizing that event resulted in a transformation of, and unprecedented notoriety for, the city.

During his tenure from 2003-2006 as President of the *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Catalan government), his administration passed the referendum to reform the Catalan Statute of Autonomy on June 18, 2006.

The People's City

“What is the city but the people?”
William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* (1608),
Act. 3, Scene 1

Twenty-five years ago—the span of a generation—my city, Barcelona, found itself immersed in a process of urban reconstruction. At the time, the city was emerging from a long period marked by the absence of democracy and self-government, by negligent city planning, by a dearth of public and private investments, and by a general lack of ambition and self-esteem. We were coming out from under a dictatorship and everything, or nearly everything, needed to be done. But we were not working in a vacuum, or starting from scratch. We did not have to build a city: we had to rebuild it, remake it. Those were the terms we used at the time, because we knew that the city itself had the elements, the tools and, in effect, the people who would make that renovation possible. We were, at the same time, heirs to the work of Mies van der Rohe (1929 Pavilion), Gaudí, Functionalism and Modern Baroque.

This all began in 1979, with the reinstatement of democracy at a municipal level—the same year that the Catalan Statute of Autonomy was approved under the Spanish Constitution of 1978. At the forefront of this effort was a generation of individuals including Narcís Serra and myself, Xavier Rubert de Ventós, Josep A. García Durán, Josep Maria Vegara and others, born in the immediate post-Spanish Civil War years. We were the children of a generation whose lives had been marked by the Republic and the war. Because of what we had experienced at home, what our parents had experienced, we felt committed to restoring the democratic tradition that Franco's dicta-

torship had so bloodily disrupted and sought to erase. Our parents were of the generation of the thirties, the generation of the Spanish Republic that, throughout years of upheaval and in a splintered country, trusted in the paramount values of education and culture to solve the problems of century-old regression and strained coexistence that burdened Spain in those times. It was the generation of the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (Free Institution of Education), and of the *Institut-Escola* (Institute-School) that—together with individuals such as Marta Mata, Catalan educator and Head of Education for the City of Barcelona (1987-1995)—were, in and of themselves, living declarations of principles.

We had to restore that generation's values and make them the backbone of our efforts. Our mission was to create an educated urban environment, respectful of the past yet eager to propel the city into the future; an environment that would heal the wounds inflicted on the city's urban and social fabric by non-democratic city planning; one that would involve people and make them feel proud, once again, of belonging to the city; one that would create a consensus among the different voices; and one that could use the creative force of the free market for the common good. (At the time, members of Britain's Labour Party said: “We don't worship the market, we use it.”). All of that led to the creation of a *modus operandi*, a model. It was a model that, in a sense, culminated in the hosting of the 1992 Olympic Games and was named just that, the “Barcelona Model.” The model aroused widespread interest. In the years leading up to 1992, we traveled to numerous cities in Europe and in the United States, to explain what we were doing, what our aims were.

I particularly remember one of these experiences. We were in Boston, the most “English” of American cities. I was giving a talk at the Boston Athenaeum and used an expression to sum up our intentions: “The city is its people.” An elderly gentleman in the audience pointed out, “That’s from Shakespeare!” Without even realizing it, I was in fact quoting Shakespeare. *Coriolanus*, to be precise. It is a tragedy based on the world of politics and politicians, a reflection on governing. When the tribunes have Coriolanus arrested, with the support of the plebeians, Sicini states, “What is the city but the people?”

That was our belief. We stood behind the idea of bringing power closer to the people. Later on, the European Union would adopt what is known as “subsidiarity” among its main principles. Drawn from Catholic teachings, it essentially means that whatever the local administration can take care of, a higher administration need not be concerned with. We fought for schools to be under the aegis

of the city government, close to the families and their children’s teachers. But also—and perhaps this was most important—we knew that cities educate. We knew that a city “with manners,” with intelligent architecture and urban planning serving everyone’s needs, with transportation and personal safety issues addressed, with the aim of putting decision-making power in the hands of the people, the neighborhoods and the community groups, would most likely yield a stronger sense of community than many educational programs, however well-intentioned they may be.

The idea that the city can, and must be, both a setting for education as well as an educating agent is the spirit behind “educating cities,” a concept that emerged almost twenty years ago. It is a project addressed to the city and, if I dare say so, the world at large. With the hope that it be well-received, shared, re-defined and reshaped by many other cities and many other people. This book is about the experience.

Educating Cities: A Commitment to the Future

Pilar Figueras Bellot

Pilar Figueras Bellot is a teacher, with degrees in Music and Psychology.

Currently a Professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, where she has also been Department Head, Director of the Escuela de Formación del Profesorado teacher's college, and Vice Dean. She previously served as a schoolteacher for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education, as well as Music Specialist.

While at the Barcelona City Council, she has been Director of Educational Services; Director of the Barcelona Municipal Music Conservatory and Director of Music Education.

She gave impetus to and directed the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities and was Secretary of the "Barcelona, Ciutat Educadora" Interdepartmental Commission.

Since 1994, she has been Secretary General of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC).

She has also authored numerous publications on the subjects of music education and "Educating Cities."

Educating Cities: A Commitment to the Future

The concept of the *educational city* was initially proposed in 1972 by Edgar Faure and others¹ in the collective work “Apprendre à être.”

With this thought-provoking approach as a precursor, the Barcelona City Council coined and adopted the **Educating City**² concept in 1989 and presented it as a proposal that integrated the city’s formal, nonformal and informal education for all of its inhabitants. It also reflected a political, public and active commitment that had a bearing on families, schools, city councils, associations, cultural industries, businesses and other institutions and groups.

After some personal reflection with the benefit of hindsight, I believe that initially focusing the first International Congress of Educating Cities on childhood and youth, and placing a clear emphasis on these age groups when drawing up the Charter,³ greatly limited the awareness of the idea’s scope and possibilities, despite the publication of a book on the subject⁴—which dealt with the concept from a variety of viewpoints—and the content of the presentations given during the Congress itself.

I think that with the passing of time and a great deal of effort, this idea is becoming increasingly present, concrete and developed in accordance with its scope, and that the way it has been carried out in various cities

represents an undeniable source of inspiration and richness.

The decalogue approved by the General Assembly in Jerusalem (1999) on the occasion of the 5th International Congress (www.edcities.org) revealed the need for Educating City proposals to go beyond young children and their first years of schooling to include the entire population and all areas (urban planning and development, culture, social services, the environment, sports, the economy, health, etc.).

The changes taking place in societies and cities prompted us to update the Charter,⁵ taking into account the contents of its last article (“*This Charter, therefore, should be expanded to include aspects that have not been dealt with on this occasion.*”), and incorporate new themes and opportunities, without ignoring the difficulties (lifelong learning, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue, city accessibility for dependent individuals, sustainable development, ICT training, etc.).

In retrospect, we can state that in each and every city, the Charter serves as a tool for building and development, both individually and collectively.

Today, experience enables us to confirm some of the assertions made in 1990 and add some new ones as well.

¹ Edgar Faure et al.: “Apprendre à être.” (Learning to Be) UNESCO, 1972. pg. 239 ff.

² Adopted on the occasion of the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities: Barcelona, 1990.

³ Charter of Educating Cities: drawn up and adopted during the Congress.

⁴ Various authors: “The Educating City.” Barcelona City Council, 1990.

⁵ (www.edcities.org) Genoa, 2004: 8th International Congress of Educating Cities.

Education is a shared task: families and schools, as well as many other still unrecognized agents, form a new scenario, a new educational “system” that is present throughout citizens’ lives and needs to be understood, considered and developed. We do, however, insist that this shared task should in no way ignore the essential role of families and schools, which will undoubtedly have to adjust to the new scenario.

Every day we come across unquestionable proof that urban planning, culture, schools, sports, environmental and health issues, economic and budgetary matters, transport and traffic, safety and services, the media, etc., contain and include different values, knowledge and skills that must be considered key factors in educating citizens.

The educating city is a new paradigm at the core of which are knowledge, awareness and development of the educational factors contained in different policies and actions, in all areas, in addition to the assessment of their impact.

Although the preamble of the Charter of Educating Cities states that the city “*offers countless opportunities for education. However, the city can also be influenced by educating forces used in a negative way...*,” we would like to point out that the city **is educating** when this intention is implicit in the way it is presented to its inhabitants.

We confirm the important role of local governments in building educating cities: citizens’ representatives listen, encourage, suggest, coordinate, propose, lead and execute, as the case may be.

The educating city is a proposal and a commitment that is necessarily shared by local governments and civil society. Clearly, for a city that aims to be educational, education in a broad sense becomes an essential and all-encompassing concern of its political agenda.

The educating city concept is directly related to other concepts such as: equality, inclusive citizenship, cohesion, sustainability and education for peace.

It is important to keep in mind that the concept of the educating city is based on three keystones:

effective communication of the opportunities provided by the city to each and every citizen. For Local Governments it also means explaining the whys and hows of their policies, that is, to make politics educational;

joint participation of citizens: previously defining and agreeing on scope, limits and areas;

assessment of the educational impact of different policies and their level of usefulness and efficiency.

Local governments, the main promoters of adherence to the Charter, need to become involved in the task of creating a political discourse that convinces citizens and municipal representatives of the need for interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration not only between the largest number of individuals and associations in the city, but also among all municipal departments.

Without a doubt, the position of greatest influence on this process, as occurs in all transversal policies, is that held by the mayor, whose conviction determines the attitude of political and technical collaborators, and who should therefore be the nominal and effective leader: first, in standing behind and promoting the idea and then in applying the Charter of Educating Cities.

Local authorities need to find and develop the educational, or civil, aspect present in local policies. (Although not among its formal aims, the democratic city that is fully developed educates.)

This aspect calls for and justifies an interdisciplinary process of cross-sector, analytical, propositional planning that often requires new management models. It is necessary to know how to contextualize and contrast any proposal, whether external or internal, with one's own reality.

For this to be possible, for each city to really create its own educational project, the local structure must take preliminary steps and adopt new forms of internal organization that allow for cross-sector planning and interdisciplinarity. It also calls for new forms of civil society participation, which each city should implement according to its specific makeup and requirements.

As time has passed and we have gained greater knowledge about the many cities we are working with, we have realized that the methods for implementing and developing the educating city concept are as varied as the cities themselves. They have different

rhythms and levels of involvement, which are related to their history, location, specific characteristics and political programs.

The International Association of Educating Cities defends this global conception of education that permeates all aspects of city life and encompasses the entire population. Its purpose is to foster dialogue and the exchange and mutual understanding of the different ways of implementing the Charter of Educating Cities in each of the cities involved.

The vitality of the International Association of Educating Cities and the cities that are joining it every day constitute a driving force towards a common, secure, positive and promising future. We cannot ignore the challenges, adversities and difficulties. Instead, we must have the same courage, conviction and confidence that has been demonstrated by some four hundred cities worldwide. This is the challenge. This is the future.

The Concept of the Educating City Today

Joan Manuel del Pozo

Joan Manuel del Pozo. PhD in Philosophy from the Universitat de Barcelona and currently Professor of Philosophy at the Universitat de Girona. He was Vice-rector for Research and Knowledge Transfer at the Universitat de Girona (2000-2002).

He served as a representative in the Spanish Parliament from 1982-1996.

Beginning in 1995, he was First Deputy Mayor of the City of Girona, and later was Head of Participation, Information and Citizen Relations (1995-1999), Head of Education (1999-2003) and Head of Presidency and Education (2003-2006).

From 2004 through 2005 he was coordinator of the National Education Pact regarding the co-responsibility of city councils in educational matters and was a member of the Catalan Board of Education.

In 2006 he served as Minister of Education and Universities for the *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Catalan government).

From November 2006 to January 2008 he served as a member of the Catalan Parliament.

As of January 2008 he is a member of the Advisory Board for the Catalan Corporation of Audiovisual Media.

The Concept of the Educating City Today

In 1990, from her position in the Barcelona City Council, Marta Mata, the highly regarded Catalan educator who remained active in her field until her death in 2006, put forward a civic and educative ideal that became conceptualized as the “Educating City.” Like all ideas which, far from being Platonically perfect and fixed, are rooted in the complexity and changeability of life today, the concept of the **educating city** changes along with cities and their inhabitants; this change does not imply merely being subjected to all types of growing pressures and difficulties, but rather coordinating with, and adapting to, the new characteristics and needs of cities. The true spirit behind the initial concept of the educating city need not be lost in this process of change, since it innately responds to underlying and unchanging human and social questions. Ongoing change, however, is also a constant in the lives of individuals and in society as a whole, and therefore any project based in reality—including one maintaining a certain ideal—must be able to coordinate with, and take root in, the new profile of cities and the people within them, on both the individual and group levels.

In order to adapt the concept of the Educating City and its proposals to the intense changes our cities are undergoing, the IAEC drew up and approved at its 2004 Congress in Genoa, Italy—fourteen years after the idea was originally conceived—a revised Charter of Educating Cities, which is the focus of this article.

Over and above the important formality of approving and endorsing the twenty Principles

of the Charter, an educating city—both prior to the Charter reform and still today—has always been one that, under the leadership of its democratic representatives, encourages and offers opportunities for education, in the broadest sense of the term, to everyone in a city, individuals and associations alike. One of the main purposes of education is to stimulate maximum growth for both individuals and groups and foster the development of their potential and projects; we must also remember that interaction among people and institutions, associations, companies or any other group is precisely what can serve as the seed for the growth and fullness of all those who share the urban space, meaning that it has *educative* power. One could say that anything done by an individual or group either has educative or “diseducative” value, since no action taken is ever neutral or indifferent in terms of how it affects the development of others. The educating city is aware—and strives to extend that awareness—of the possible mutual benefits resulting from the interaction of people and groups within the city’s public space, and aims to tap all of its positive potential in order to contribute to the personal and social development of its inhabitants.

Changes in the Contemporary City

Today’s city is becoming increasingly complex in nature and while this brings enrichment, it also generates problems.¹ This complexity is not just a result of the number of people constantly moving into one or another of the

¹ Most of this analysis of changes in the contemporary city and the effects of those changes is drawn from the book *Ciudades posibles* by González Quirós, José Luis (editor and introduction) et al., compiled by the Escuela Contemporánea de Humanidades. Madrid: Lengua de Trapo, 2003.

world's cities: every day, an estimated two hundred fifty thousand people worldwide move from rural areas into the cities. That is a significant quantitative change that brings with it—and to a certain extent spurs—qualitative changes in relation to how we lived in, and thought about, our cities up until the last quarter of the 20th century. These qualitative changes are largely due to globalization resulting from the dramatic transformation in all forms of communication, propelled by rapid technological advances.

Some of the main qualitative changes—primarily those generating the greatest sense of unease—which I simply list here without further analysis are: wide-scale digitalization and the progressively expanding virtual world; the intensified use, often even abuse, of urban space for exchanging all types of goods and values; the increased volume and pace of all types of flux and movement related to exchange and commerce; the proliferation of messages and symbols, especially through advertising; the abundance of—and pressure imposed by—publicity turning us into spectators, above all else; the growing tendency, unnecessary yet predictable, to turn life in the city, and everything happening within it, into a grand spectacle²; the transformation of that very spectacle into a consumer product; in the end, the city becoming the stage for an ever-changing public show.

Some of the effects of this—again only mentioned here—include the steady and increasingly accelerated movement of people, vehicles and all types of products and goods, physical or otherwise; the progressive substi-

tution—or at least alteration—of real city life, with images, symbols and showcases depicting and displaying that life; the manipulation of individuals for commercial and consumer purposes; the steady loss of historical memory, replaced by the intensive bombardment of news and messages of every sort encouraging people to live in a media-focused present, fed by constant mindless movement and the drive to consume encouraged by advertising; distant and virtual personal contacts displacing closer, physical contacts; the sort of individualism that views urban life as a risk, where the opportunity factor appears to outweigh the risk factor and where emphasis is placed on competition as a means of achieving dominant positions in the constant exchange encouraged by the city; an individualism that also requires increased—and often disproportionate—protection against the dangers that the risk—initially considered opportunity—carries with it.

Other similar analyses³ stress that the effects of these accelerated changes provide the ideal setting for a “culture of immediacy,” with time being neither circular nor linear, but rather strictly “pointillist,” creating in our cities’ inhabitants a “presentist” concept of the culture, characterized by the precariousness of individual identities and the ties among them, to the point where that seems to represent the substance of individual freedom in our culture. This culture, now clearly *liquid*—lacking secure or *solid* points of reference—does not encourage a desire to learn and amass, but rather seems to be one of distancing, disconnection and oblivion. In this situation—where definition and commit-

² An example of wide-scale provocation that we have seen repeatedly are Oliviero Toscani’s photographs used in advertisements for international clothing companies. Photos and advertising campaigns of that nature are an example of how real human and social problems, such as immigration, HIV and anorexia, are marketed by being turned into spectacles. It is interesting to consider what might be the predominant element in play here: is it the “art” of the photograph, is it the “human subject” or is it ultimately just pure, unadulterated business? In any case, cities become the stage for, and its people, the spectators of, shameless exhibitionism. Perhaps that is a useful way of collectively raising people’s consciousness; or a damaging “endorsement” of abnormal conditions such as anorexia; or simply brazenly immoral in its self-interested exploitation of human pain.

³ Thoughts drawn from Zygmunt Bauman’s piece *Els Reptes de l’educació en la modernitat líquida* (Educational Challenges of the Liquid-Modern Era). Barcelona: Arcadia, 2007.

ment are virtually null—the city’s democratic public space and social and territorial cohesion are seriously threatened.⁴

With regard to the rich concept of public space, Jordi Borja⁵ points out the relationship between its physical configuration and how it is used by people, understood as the statute allowing for certain civic, political and social rights and responsibilities to be exercised; in his words, “The quality of a public space can be assessed above all by the intensity and quality of the social relationships which it facilitates, by the degree to which groups and behaviors mix within it and by its capacity to stimulate the symbolic identification, expression and integration of cultures.” Bauman recently emphasized once again the importance of the “mixing” capacity of the city’s physical space, criticizing urban policy of “homogenizing the neighborhoods and then reducing all commerce and communication among them to the inevitable minimum (...), a foolproof way to stimulate and intensify the desire to exclude and segregate. (...) The fusion which mutual understanding requires can only come from shared experience; and sharing experience is inconceivable if space has not first been shared.”⁶

Numerous citizen movements, in conjunction with their local democratic governments, have made advances to improve the quality of public spaces. These include: recognition of the importance of the urban environment, quality of life in the neighborhoods, and the creation and balance of new urban cores; also, improvements in city democracy, citizens’ consensus and participation in plans and projects, and, consequently, the strength-

ening of local governments in urban policy; and finally, the revamped concept of citizens as the subjects of an urban policy in constant reform as a result of their participation in the process.

Bauman, in concluding his analysis⁷ of the educative challenges in the liquid-modern era, indicates some paths forward that, as we will see, coincide at many points, both in terms of what we have said regarding the idea of democratic public space and with the proposed new Charter of Educating Cities. Among other things, he points out the need for: building and rebuilding ties among people; encouraging people to live hospitably side by side; promoting mutually enriching cooperation in order to raise individual and collective self-esteem; developing hidden potential in individuals and making the best use of each person’s abilities. All of this is summarized in the idea—literally expressed in the sense of “rebuilding public space”—of constant dialogue between the individual and the community and the rights and responsibilities of all citizens; and in the concept of a life-long process of education that not only keeps people abreast of changes in work and technology but, above all, revives the spirit of citizenship.

The educating city, faced with the complex, ever-changing yet stimulating situation at hand, with all the associated challenges, cannot presume to single-handedly respond to all of those difficulties and challenges. It can, however, as we shall see, aspire to generating a quality urban climate of coexistence, providing awareness of the changes taking place, and ways of managing its com-

⁴ In 1998, Jordi Borja’s article “Ciudadanía y espacio público” referred to the “fear of public space.” “It is neither a protective nor protected space. In some cases it has not been planned with security in mind but rather considering traffic flow or parking needs, or is simply a residual space between buildings and roads. In other cases it has been occupied by society’s *dangerous classes*: immigrants, the poor and the marginalized.” Article published within the AAVV series, *Ciutat real, ciutat ideal. Significat i funció a l’espai urbà modern*. Urbanitats, no. 7. Barcelona: Centro de Cultura Contemporànea, 1998.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bauman, Z., *Confianza y temor en la ciudad* (Trust and Fear in the City). Barcelona: Arcadia, 2006, p. 38.

⁷ Bauman, Z., *op.cit.* p. 38 ff.

plexity, of reducing and overcoming some of the negative aspects and fostering the opportunities and positive elements arising from the change. We believe that one of the best ways to view the Charter is as a program that truly attends to and promotes quality democratic public space, with education as one of its main—but by no means exclusive or exclusionist—focuses.

The city today continues to be—as much as or more than before—a space of freedom and communication; and although communication is colored by commercial interests and often targeted to consumerism, the intrinsic mix of the people who live there, in intelligent combination with the new communications capabilities and technology, provides the opportunity to create and deliver messages that are neither commercial nor consumer-oriented. A city aspiring to be an educating city must adapt itself to the demands of the new globalized and digital world in order to more efficiently protect the democratic public space, applying the same communication techniques and styles that are effectively used to other ends. Without a doubt, the city, working together with both formal and non-formal educators, will need to guide its inhabitants—especially, though not exclusively, younger people—in the direction of gaining a conceptual command and ethical understanding of the “new alphabets,” the tools and the infinite possibilities of communication and information exchange in the 21st century. This is surely the central point from which—with great effort and modest forecasts of success—we can make a qualitative change in our cities. At the same time, it must be made clear that the “conceptual and ethical” training obviously means more than mere technical ability or command of the wide range of instruments: it means, above all, full consciousness of the aims, the values and the human and social undercurrent that are in play every day in the immense communications galaxy that the world has become; entire communications

systems with their stars, planets, satellites and asteroids of every sort spinning wildly around stunned individuals who, paradoxically and naïvely, think that they control the world with their remote control.

Aside from this training, now considered rather basic, the educating city must concentrate its efforts on sustaining and reinforcing the community ties that still remain in many cities and stimulate them in places where they have weakened or are at risk of disappearing. The community aspect of a city is essential from an educating perspective: in order to understand one another, citizens need to be actively cooperating and living together, not seeing themselves as separate individuals in cold juxtaposition to each other. Mere juxtaposition doesn't create a city; it simply creates a depository of individuals. Only participatory and interactive coexistence can create civic space and give substance to political projects in the best sense of that term: we must remember that to the Greek founders of the concept of city (*polis*), the verb *politeuesthai* did not mean “doing politics”—a poor literal translation—as in its current professional sense, but rather “engaging as a citizen,” “actively participating in and exercising civic rights.” In other words, being a citizen was intrinsically and closely tied to the community's public activity. In addition, this way of life was closely related, as Jaeger demonstrated, to the “education for” or “culture of”—the two main senses of the concept of *paideia*—civic action or participation (“politics,” in its etymological sense): “Education is not individual property, but rather belongs, by its very nature, to the community. The character of the community is imprinted on its individual members and, in the case of humans and to a much greater degree than in animals, is the *zoon politikon*, the source of all action and all behavior.”⁸ Against the backdrop of this Greek cultural-political model, one could say that at present “creating an educating city” must involve, simply and essentially, “fully creating a city.”

⁸ Jaeger, Werner, *Paideia: los ideales de la cultura griega*. Mexico: F.C.E., 2nd ed., 2nd printing, 1971, p. 3.

Fully creating cities, with the participation of their inhabitants, provides the best possible education—including formal education—and the cities fully become educators; at the same time, educating citizens—formally and otherwise—to fully exercise their citizenship is the seed of the best city imaginable and possible.

The 2004 Genoa Charter Reform

In the IAEC's efforts to adapt the first Charter of Educating Cities to the changes taking place in cities, certain ideas were developed that added breadth and depth to the overall concept.

A new element introduced in the update of the 1990 Charter was the more explicit statement of the general guidelines for the Educating City which, though perhaps implicit in the first version, warranted more attention in order to stress points that redefine and consolidate the document. This was accomplished by regrouping the twenty principles, or articles, of the Charter under three new subheadings; for the sake of consistency, the number of articles remains the same, although the content and order have undergone significant changes.

These guidelines connect the texts as follows: first, "the right to an educating city," encompassing six articles; then, "the city's commitment," covering another six; and finally, "fully serving its inhabitants," comprising the remaining eight articles. The idea behind this is not necessarily to group the articles by subject matter, but rather to convey the general spirit of the Charter—in each section and especially in the interrelationship among the sections—and clarify its goals.

Let us take a closer look: the concept of "the right to an educating city" is designed to be a step towards providing the inhabitants of all cities with the legitimate aspiration to redefine their city as an educating city, meaning one that offers quality of life in both personal

and democratic contexts, along with an improved public space where people can fully participate as citizens; in this regard, the ideal of an educating city is no longer just a wishful and, without question, well-intentioned idea but becomes something that can be claimed as a right by every individual in their respective cities. Needless to say, how effectively this right is carried out depends on other authorities outside the framework of the Charter, but it can serve as a positive impetus. Thus, the first article refers to the right to an educating city as an "extension" of the basic right—a Human Right, one granted under democratic constitutions—of all individuals to an education. In essence it states that only in the context of an educating city can the fundamental right of every individual to a formal school education be totally fulfilled. In other words, the formal schooling of individuals is essential and necessary, yet not enough: there is added value in an educating city, to which its citizens also have a right.

The second and third sections together are a direct response to the first: with the basic right to education recognized, there must be a "commitment on the part of the city" (section two) to "serve its inhabitants" (section three). First, it is important to look closely at the idea of commitment, the ethical/political connotation of which surpasses a city's mere obligation to efficiently and honestly manage day-to-day affairs; making a commitment requires proactively recognizing the right of individuals to what we are calling the "added value" above and beyond the right to formal schooling, and putting that into effect. All in all, it would be simplistic, and not in keeping with the spirit of the Charter, to place sole responsibility for this commitment on the shoulders of city administrators; in fact, the Charter refers to the city's commitment, not the "city council's" commitment, and thus the duty of carrying it out is understood to fall to the city as a whole, though naturally under the leadership of its democratic representatives. In that way, the right to an educating city becomes, in the best sense, a true right/duty for everyone: for the city's representa-

tives, certainly, but also for its people. The city's commitment is very much one of "serving its inhabitants" as stated in the heading of part three, which is a natural sequel to the previous section. Indeed, the idea is that everyone living in the city truly feels attended to—by the city as a whole and especially by its democratic representatives—as a citizen with rights and, very importantly, as an individual with a real possibility of fully developing his/her potential, regardless of age or life circumstance (a classic and fundamental goal of education), and achieving the highest quality of life (a basic goal of democratic governance, and the only one possible in an educating city).

Without going into a detailed description of each of the twenty articles, it may be worthwhile briefly noting, so as to further clarify the concept of the "educating city," the new elements incorporated into the 2004 Charter and the adjustments made to the original document for the purpose of adapting it to the characteristics and demands of cities at the start of the 21st century. The main changes introduced in the charter reform begin with placing emphasis on the need and the right of all individuals to ongoing educational opportunities throughout their lives,⁹ a principle embraced by a broad range of international forums as an essential requirement in a fast-changing world, with an eye not only to a steady improvement in work-related skills, but also to family, civic, communications and social capabilities. A second important new criterion was the wide-scale improvement of facilities allowing everyone—particularly individuals with disabilities, physical or otherwise—access to all of the city's services, buildings and public spaces,¹⁰ a priority in terms of quality of urban life. Another important point, both in its own right and with regard to how populations evolve, was that

of fostering intergenerational dialogue and cooperation¹¹ in order to encourage, to the highest degree possible, social integration of people of all ages and the resulting mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and experiences. Closely related to the above criteria—concerned with ageing and accessibility issues—and in connection with the new globalized knowledge society, the revised Charter focuses on the need for educating cities to guarantee to all—and particularly to those segments of the population which, due to age or other factors, find themselves outside of the learning circles—access to training in information and communication technologies.¹² The goal here is not only the ability to use computers and related tools, but more importantly to know how to select from, understand and handle the flood of available information, thereby evading one of the new causes of social exclusion—something unimaginable in years past. On another level, the Charter reform also addresses the new and increasingly necessary concept of "sustainable development" with express mention of the balance between the city and nature, the right to a healthy environment and overall participation in the good practices of sustainable development.¹³ Another form of sustainability that demands our attention is democratic sustainability, which, as the Charter Preamble states, is lacking sufficient structure with regard to all that is happening within the new global context; thus, several points of the new Charter include stronger and clearer references to promoting the essential values of democracy, freedom, equality, cultural diversity and international solidarity;¹⁴ it especially stresses, in the last article, the importance of what we could call the foundations of democratic culture: educating each and every person with values of respect, tolerance, participation, responsibil-

⁹ Arts. 1 and 19 of the *Charter of Educating Cities*; updated in Genoa in 2004.

¹⁰ Arts. 1, 8 and 10.

¹¹ Art. 3.

¹² Art. 19.

¹³ Art. 11.

¹⁴ Arts. 1 and 2.

ity and interest in public concerns, programs, goods and services.¹⁵

The Charter's Basic Principles

It would not be fair or accurate, however, to focus only on the main points of the Charter reform; as we mentioned at the start, the new Charter maintains the overall spirit of the original document and the newly incorporated elements simply serve to further consolidate it by adapting it to the present circumstances.

Therefore, I would like to conclude this piece on the current concept of the "educating city" by reviewing the basic principles and the enduring—and, thus, also current—values on which it is based; though these may have been reordered and updated, they remain as solid as they were at the outset. The following is not a detailed description, but rather a synthesis of the essential elements of the Charter.

The first is the right to equal opportunities for the education, leisure and personal growth offered by the city as a whole,¹⁶ one of the main pillars of any educating city. Logically, another key feature of the Charter is the specific concern with city policies regarding education, urging that they be carried out within a framework of social justice, democratic community spirit, quality of city life and support for its citizens;¹⁷ and, in a very particular way—given the added value it brings—encouraging the exploration of broad, multidirectional and innovative approaches to both non-formal and informal

education, and of the different possible paths leading to a full understanding of the city,¹⁸ all of which traditionally have remained on the periphery of formal education.

Leading on, then, from this understanding of the city, the Charter places importance on preserving each city's individual identity, in all of its complexity; on maintaining its customs, roots and languages, always with a view to encouraging social integration and unity.¹⁹ In similar terms, it establishes that urban planning must focus on the creation of public space that is accessible, that people can identify with and that draws them together, in order to encourage personal, social, moral and cultural development.²⁰ One element that is key to the spirit of the educating city and particularly apropos to this planning approach, is citizen participation; clichés aside, it is clear that quality of life in a democratic urban environment is directly proportionate to the degree to which citizens participate in the life of their city: therefore, the Charter maintains that the educating city shall encourage critical and responsible citizen involvement, providing the necessary information and civic organizations by which to accomplish that.²¹

Other basic points addressed in the Charter include developing personal initiative and autonomy in children and young people, providing them with cultural and recreational opportunities and information,²² and guiding them towards an education suited to the needs of the labor market.²³ Families and teachers alike will be given the training and incentive needed to help them better educate their children,²⁴ that being a very important influence in one's lifetime education; like-

¹⁵ Art. 20.

¹⁶ Art. 1.

¹⁷ Art. 4.

¹⁸ Art. 5.

¹⁹ Art. 7.

²⁰ Arts. 8 and 10.

²¹ Arts. 9, 12 and 18.

²² Art. 13.

²³ Art. 15.

²⁴ Art. 14.

wise, this will extend to individuals working in the public service sector, including security forces, emphasizing the model of a city open to educating, in the broadest sense of the word, as a coherent, unifying whole. In keeping with this, the Charter addresses the importance of coordination among the city's administrative bodies and with social and civic organizations, particularly those in the service sector.²⁵

A basic principle underlying the Charter as a whole is the concept of social unity. It reappears in different articles, stated in different ways but with a single purpose: working to create a city where each and every person has a place in society;²⁶ where policies are established to assure immigrants and refugees the right to feel that the city belongs to

them as well;²⁷ where only the idea of exclusion—the least educative approach, at either an individual or group level—is excluded.

The final words of the Charter Preamble serve as a particularly fitting closure to this article: “There must be a real fusion—during the stage of formal education and throughout adulthood—of the city's resources and educative potential with the natural development of the educational, labor and social systems. The right to an educating city must include a guarantee of the principles of equality for all, social justice, and territorial balance. This calls on local governments to develop all of the city's educational potential by incorporating the principles of the educating city into its political policy.”

²⁵ Art. 17.

²⁶ Art. 15.

²⁷ Art. 16.

Barcelona: A City Committed to Education

Jordi Hereu

Jordi Hereu (Barcelona, 1965) has been the Socialist Party Mayor of Barcelona since 2006, a post to which he was elected by the citizens of Barcelona in the 2007 municipal elections. He holds a bachelor's degree and an MBA from the prestigious ESADE Business School. Before starting his career in the Barcelona City Council, he worked with a number of companies associated with the port of Barcelona.

After joining the Barcelona City Council in 1997, Jordi Hereu has had ties with the local public sector and over the past 10 years has held various posts in the areas most closely related to citizen affairs. As head of local government in Barcelona, Jordi Hereu has defined the following strategic foundations and political priorities as his political agenda: social cohesion, economic development and international projection; coexistence and security in proximity; sustainability and the fight against climate change, capital status, etc.

Barcelona: A City Committed to Education

I recently took another look at the Charter of Educating Cities adopted at the 1st International Congress held in Barcelona in 1990. The preamble to the Charter (revised in 1994 and 2004) reads as follows: "Today more than ever the city, large or small, offers countless opportunities for education. However, the city can also be influenced by educating forces used in a negative way." It is a good start. Especially if we consider that the last article of the Charter reads: "The educating city must offer all its inhabitants, as a necessary, growing objective for the community, education in the values and practices of a democratic citizenry: respect, tolerance, participation, responsibility and interest in things public, its programmes, heritage and services."

This objective is now shared by hundreds of cities around the world, each with its own specific cultural, social, economic and political conditions. Despite their differences, they are linked by a determination to improve the quality of life for citizens, not only materially (environment and services), but also by helping build civil society. This is an encouraging view of the role of the city because it connects the individual and the collective. The initial impetus behind the program and this underlying idea emerged from Barcelona at a time when the city was caught up in the transformation process that began with the arrival of democracy in Spain. The basic aim was to create a city that was more just, friendlier, fairer and more dignified. In a sense, Barcelona wanted to share this drive and energy with the world, and it pursued this goal in the best possible way, by putting into circulation a generous, elevated notion of what a city can be, one that highlights the role of cities in educating all of their inhabit-

ants, regardless of their age, circumstances or origin. At the same time, the initiative does not undervalue the two most powerful tools for achieving educational goals: the family and the school system.

Education is now being redefined, just at a time when new technologies (which offer vast amounts of unfiltered information) are inundating the mental and physical space of adolescents and young people. Indeed we are redefining our entire society from top to bottom: the way we live, interact, work, form groups, grow rich and become poor. Everything is in flux because globalization has shaken up the old tracts of land we used to inhabit and had so carefully measured out. These changes, however, are for the good: we have opened up to the world, we have the whole world right here in Catalonia, and we have access to a broader array of more effective tools to deal with challenges. That said, it must be recognized that any profound change is bound to be accompanied by a crisis. We must be aware that we are living through a crisis in the educational system, but we must also understand the term "crisis" in a constructive way. We will overcome this crisis precisely because we know what is happening to us.

Barcelona has always been committed to quality public education. For more than a hundred years the Barcelona City Council has acted on this commitment. The city has achieved a great deal in terms of educational renewal, and we have passed many milestones that reflect our determination to move ahead towards an educational model that is fair, democratic, open and civic-oriented. So it is not surprising that 20 years ago Barcelona enthusiastically put forward the "educating

city” project, something I particularly value because I am convinced that cities have a role to play in managing values. I believe cities can and should convey the basic values that enable us to live together in harmony.

In this regard, public authorities have a part to play. It is their role to create the framework for social cohesion within which citizens can live together harmoniously. But the human dimension is much more nuanced. Background, character, environment and implicit education are all important. By *implicit education* I mean what happens outside the formal educational system, the type of learning that goes on every day, often without us noticing. This process plays a fundamental role in educating citizens, particularly new ones, whether newcomers to the city or young people trying out their citizenship for the first time. Neither should we overlook the role of older generations, which serve as an example and provide us with support. The city belongs to all of us and everyone should be involved in learning too. I firmly believe the city exemplifies a specific set of values by virtue of the way it is organized, the priorities set by local government, what it offers its citizens, values that are also expressed in communication and participation campaigns.

The approach a city takes to urban planning is another clear indicator of its values, and I am proud to say that Barcelona’s urban spaces reflect the priority given to public space as a meeting place for citizens. It is important that cities be organized around the space we share, which is the setting for spontaneous interactions between different social groups. For the careful observer, however, the urban space reveals much more about the city. The centrality of public transport, bicycle lanes, and social and cultural facilities all tell us what kind of public values we stand behind. Finally, the services offered by the city, though less visible, are ultimately at the core of the relationship between the local government and citizens, for it is through these services that the City Council ensures equality of opportunity, facilitates personal autonomy,

and provides support for the projects each individual dreams of carrying out. Are these things not values?

It takes training, though, to read the city in terms of values. The task of teaching this skill is shared (or should be) by schools and families. It is the symbiosis between these two irreplaceable systems that produces new citizens who are educated, socially responsible, critical, and active participants in the community. The third factor having an impact on education is the immediate environment—the neighborhood. Public authorities must provide the resources needed to ensure that neighborhoods play a positive role in this educational process. Ideally these three factors should work together and focus on the same objectives. The role of municipal authorities is to make this so.

I would like to highlight a couple of proposals (certainly not all of them) being considered or carried out with the aim of making Barcelona a city that really succeeds in educating its citizens beyond the classroom. One relates to a basic element of our urban legacy: the city’s tangible heritage. This aspect of our heritage is a concrete expression of memory, and cities need tangible reminders of their past, present in their streets, to build their identity, which is also part of the identity of their citizens. Much of the modern memory of Barcelona is industrial, and in historic working-class areas we have factories (now freed up) that are gradually being restored and converted into diverse kinds of facilities, in many cases for cultural use. One current project is to use these buildings as “culture factories,” spaces where young people can create and experiment. We believe that in the 21st century (a century that values creativity and talent), this is the right kind of message to send to new generations.

I would also like to draw attention to the way Barcelona resolves conflicts by negotiating agreements. We believe the processes that lead to these agreements are themselves educational. This approach is not an easy

one. It often involves finding the point of balance between different groups or sectors when all parties involved have some valid arguments. The role of the City Council is to act as an arbitrator, but it must also determine exactly where the “common good” lies beyond individual interests. We have made progress with agreements on mobility, on the conflict between the city’s nightlife and residents’ need to get a good night’s sleep, and even in working with young immigrants from Latin America. We have assisted the latter to avoid the danger of segregation or antisocial behavior by helping them act on their own wish to set up cultural organizations. It is true that progress is slower by this route, but it is an approach that legitimates authority, which also has a place and must be exercised democratically.

A city that turns memory into creation and negotiates agreements to resolve conflicts is an educating city. These are values being put into practice. And these city values, if they are to be strengthened, must be closely allied to the school system and to education at all levels. Quality education is vital to the future competitiveness of our economy and to ensuring social harmony. Right from the first years of life, schools are a tool for integration and for facilitating equality of opportunity. We have succeeded in creating schools that address the needs of all students; now we need to work towards increasing the quality of education, making schools more

modern, and making sure that they are fully integrated in today’s complex society. This is not enough, though: the city as a whole must reflect the values promoted in our schools. It must demand a great deal of itself and of its citizens. This is already happening, but we must pursue this goal with even greater vigor as we seek to achieve both educational and civic excellence.

To finish up, I would like to return once again to our shared history as educating cities. Right from the outset, the Barcelona City Council undertook this commitment with the aim of providing social leadership and using politics as a tool for achieving educational goals. We are convinced that the educational potential of a city is its civic potential and visa versa: the civic quality of the city contributes to educating new citizens (and old ones too). It is therefore our responsibility to go one step further when it comes to democracy, participation, social cohesion and values. These aims are articulated in detail in this movement’s founding charter, which has now made its way around the world with a message of goodwill.

Each day, new municipalities join the educating cities project and take on the commitments it entails. As the president of the International Association of Educating Cities, I feel satisfied with what has been accomplished. We are working toward a better world, and making progress each day.

1

The New Challenges of Urban Life

Dialectical Utopias

David Harvey

David Harvey (Gillingham, Kent, United Kingdom 1935) is currently Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York (CUNY). With a PhD in Geography from the University of Cambridge, Harvey has stood out over the course of the last 30 years for the publication of an extensive body of work with common foundations such as criticism of neoliberalism and imperialism and the geographic analysis of the city from a Marxist perspective.

His books, including *Social Justice and the City* (1973), *The Limits to Capital* (1982), *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989), *The Urban Experience* (1989), *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (1996), *Spaces of Hope* (2000), the geographical/historical work *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (2003), *New Imperialism* (2003), and the number of essays that he has published throughout his career have made David Harvey one of the most cited geographers world-wide.

Dialectical Utopias

The urban sociologist Robert Park defined the city as:

“man’s most consistent and on the whole, his most successful attempt to remake the world he lives in more after his heart’s desire. But, if the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live. Thus, indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself.”¹

The question of what kind of city we want cannot be separated, therefore, from the question of what kind of people I, you, we and they want to become: what kinds of social relations are valued, what production systems and labor relations are considered creative and fulfilling, what relation to nature is cared about, what aesthetic senses do people wish to cultivate, what technologies are considered appropriate and, more simply, how people want to live their daily lives. It would be alarming if there were social consensus on all these matters. The important thing is to put all these issues into the forefront of debate at a time when more and more of the world’s population is “condemned to live” in some sort of urban setting and when it is surely clear that we are not necessarily becoming better people because of it. We should at least agree that the right to make and remake the city and, thereby, ourselves, more after our heart’s desire, is one of the most precious of all our human rights.

But what does this mean? The extraordinary pace and scale of urbanization over the last

hundred years has made reflection on Park’s thesis difficult. We have been made and remade many times over by forces seemingly beyond our control. The city builders—the developers, financiers and construction interests aided and often abetted by state planners and municipal governments—have been impelled forward by the thirst for profit, the need to accumulate and then absorb ever-larger capital surpluses, backed by the coercive laws of capitalist competition. Concern for human well-being has been incidental, while the immigrants also flooding into cities, who have also radically transformed the urban scene, are more driven by desperation than conscious reflection upon Park’s thesis. The right to change the city is not an abstract right, however, but a right that inheres in daily practices. The dialectics of urbanization and social transformation are perpetually at work all around us and we both encounter and contribute to its effects—good, bad and indifferent—as we live, construct, work, shop, interact and circulate through our distinctive urban environments. But how can we become more conscious as to the nature of our task? How can we imagine modulating our behaviors and the urban world around us in such a way as to shape the city in aggregate more according to our heart’s desire? Can a return to the utopian tradition provide us with any clues? Urban utopias have, after all, been recurrent expressions throughout human history of human desire for a better if not perfected way of life.

Most of the projects and plans we designate as “utopian” are fixed and formal designs. They are what I call “utopias of spatial

¹ Park, R., *On Social Control and Collective Behavior* (Chicago, Chicago University Press), p.3.

form”—the planned cities and communities that have through the ages beguiled us into thinking that harmony will be established, that human desires will for once and for all be fully satiated if not happily realized. The problem with such utopias is that they end up being repressive of the human spirit and frustrate human desire for exploration and novelty. To the degree that they have been implemented, the results have been far more authoritarian and repressive than emancipatory. In these utopias history is supposed to stop which means that nothing new is supposed to happen, no new stories can be told. The only innovations allowed are those that support the pre-existing harmony. Like the static Christian concept of Paradise these utopias are so boring that no one wants to go there.²

Then there are utopias of the social process. In recent times, the neoliberals have sought to persuade us that freedoms of the market and of free trade coupled with private property and an entrepreneurial individualism will bring wealth, security and happiness to all, that the market process will deliver to us the cities of our dreams. But the practical effects of this neoliberal utopianism on our life chances, on our cities, on our security and on our prospects—have been far from benign. “There is,” the old saying goes, “nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of unequals.” Free markets cannot produce fairness when initial endowments are unequal, when monopoly power is exercised and when the institutional frameworks of exchange are affected, as they always are, by asymmetries in power and information. Many countries, in the name of the free market, promote gross violations of human rights, and undermine the right to subsist of those on whose labour competitive advantage often rests. The liberalization not only of trade but of financial markets across the globe has unleashed a storm of speculative powers, particularly in housing markets and the construction indus-

try, in which predatory capital has plundered the world to the detriment of all else (social relations and the environment in particular). A few hedge funds, exercising their right to make a profit and protected by the legal fiction that the corporation is in effect a private person, can rage around the world, speculatively destroying whole economies (such as that of Indonesia in 1997-8 and Argentina in 2001). Worse still, free market neoliberalism requires scarcity to function. If scarcity does not exist then it must be socially created. This is what private property and the profit rate do. Enclosure of the commons and the destruction of common property rights through privatization and commodification of everything is a necessary precondition for capital accumulation to proceed. Education, health care, water, sanitation have to be privatized and brought within the dominant regime of rights favorable to the circulation and accumulation of capital. What I call “accumulation by dispossession” becomes a dominant motif.³

The collective right to the city is lost. The city is turned over to the growth machines, the financiers, the developers, the speculators and the profiteers. The result is much unnecessary deprivation (unemployment, housing shortages, etc.) in the midst of plenty. Hence the homeless on our streets and the beggars in the subways. Famines occur in the midst of food surpluses. Basic needs, like clean water, are denied to those who do not have the ability to pay. The excluded are forced to drink from cholera infested rivers. This is what free markets actually do. And this is what attachment to the inalienable rights of private property and of the profit rate really means, no matter what the pious assertions emanating from the main centers of capitalist power. Even the World Bank admits that poverty, both absolute and relative, has grown rather than diminished during the halcyon days of neoliberalism on the world stage. But it then insists that it is only through the further prop-

² Harvey, D., *Spaces of Hope* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

³ Harvey, D., *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005).

agation of neoliberal rights of private property and the profit rate in the market place that poverty can be eliminated! Yet the actual result, as even the United Nations concedes, is the production of a “planet of slums.”⁴

For obvious self-serving reasons those of wealth and power support rights and freedoms that attach to the neoliberal dream machine, while seeking to persuade us of their universality and their goodness. Thirty years of neoliberal freedoms have brought us immense concentrations of corporate power in energy, the media, pharmaceuticals, transportation and even retailing and construction. The freedom of the market turns out to be nothing more than the convenient means to spread corporate monopoly power, condominiums and Coca Cola everywhere without constraint. In the United States, to take a paradigm case, it has also permitted the top one per cent of income earners to raise their proportionate claim on the national income from less than 8 per cent in the 1970s to close to 20 per cent today. Even more dramatically the top 0.1 per cent of income earners increased their share from 2 to over 6 per cent of the national income between 1978 and 1998 (today it will surely be even greater). This sort of thing has gone on everywhere where the turn to neoliberalism has occurred. Neoliberalism has simply been about the restoration of class power to a small elite of CEOs and financiers. With disproportionate influence over the media and the political process this elite seeks to persuade us as to how better off we all are under a neoliberal regime of political-economic power. And for them, living comfortably in their gilded ghettos, the world is indeed a better place. Contemporary cities are more segregated, fragmented and fractured by wealth and power than they have ever been. This is not the socially just city of my dreams.

“Each form of government enacts the laws with a view to its own advantage” says Thrasymachus in Plato’s Republic, so that “the just is the same everywhere, the advantage of the stronger.” Karl Polanyi put it another way: when the idea of freedom “degenerates into a mere advocacy of free enterprise,” this means “the fullness of freedom for those whose income, leisure and security need no enhancing, and a mere pittance of liberty for the people, who may in vain attempt to make use of their democratic rights to gain shelter from the power of the owners of property.”⁵ Neoliberal utopianism has sparked movements of opposition. Some of these claim that other processes, such as class or anti-racist or feminist struggles, will eventually lead us to the perfections of communism, socialism, anarchism, feminism, ecologism, or whatever. Unfortunately, these alternative utopian schemas of the social process turn out to be just as fatally flawed (as becomes evident on those rare occasions when moves occur to implement them). They abstract entirely from the problems that arise when spatial structures get created on the ground. The territoriality of political power and organization is viewed as neutral in human affairs (when we know in practice that spatial forms are constitutive of social relations). Utopias of the social process ignore what happens when walls, bridges and doors become frameworks for social action, when gated communities and state borders and boundaries get set up, becoming bases for exclusions and discriminations (look at the history of the Israeli Kibbutz that began as socialist and ended up corporatist and entrepreneurial).

Rights and freedoms are, of course, rarely, if ever, willingly surrendered by those in power. “Between equal rights,” wrote Marx, “force decides.” There is bound to be a struggle, but what should that struggle be about? If all utopias of spatial form are found wanting because they seek to suppress the force

⁴ Davis, M., *Planet of Slums* (London, Verso, 2006).

⁵ Polanyi, K., *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of our Time* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1957), pp.249-58.

of historical change, and all utopias of the social process are equally repressive because they deny the constitutive significance of urban spatial organization, then what conception of the city should we pursue?

The answer in part lies within Park's formulation. If, in making the city we re-make ourselves then, clearly, this is a dialectical proposition that requires a dialectical utopianism to match. History abounds with elements of that idea. No social order, said Saint-Simon, can change without the lineaments of the new already being latently present within the existing state of things. Revolutions are not total breaks but they do turn things upside down. Old rights can be resurrected and new rights can be defined: like the right to the city which, as I began by saying, is not merely a right of access to what the property speculators and state planners define, but an active right to make the city more in accord with our heart's desire, and to re-make ourselves in a different image.

A dialectical utopianism cannot be a purely individual affair precisely because the city is a collective product. A dialectical utopianism must be a collective project, a collective right the exercise of which depends crucially upon the creation of a collective politics of reshaping the city's spaces and places, environmental conditions and social practices in a new image. The creation of a new urban commons, including expressive spaces of public politics and contention, a public sphere of active democratic participation, requires the rolling back of that huge wave of privatization that has been the mantra of a destructive neoliberalism these last few years. Liberate the shopping malls from the

structures of surveillance and of power! We must imagine a more inclusive even if continuously fractious city based not only upon a different ordering of rights but upon different political-economic practices and more open access to the city's spaces. Individualized rights to be treated with dignity as a human being and to freedoms of expression are too precious to be set aside, but to these we must add the right to adequate life chances for all, to elementary material supports, to inclusion, to access and to difference. The task, as Polanyi suggested, is to expand the spheres of freedom and of rights beyond the narrow confines within which neoliberalism confines them.

The right to the city is an active right to make the city differently, to shape it more in accord with our collective needs and desires and so re-make our daily lives, re-shape our architectural practices (as it were), to define an alternative way of simply being human. This right has to be held perpetually open. If, as Alfred North Whitehead once put it, all nature is about the perpetual search for and creation of novelty, and if human beings, as is evident from our history, are astonishingly inventive and creative in the pursuit of that novelty, then the city can never afford to become a frozen and sclerotic spatial form. Holding city spaces open and flexible, building sites for public appropriation and contestation, folding worlds of memory and desire into built forms and spatial configurations of perpetual hope become integral to our practice of a dialectical utopianism.

If our urban world has been imagined and made, then it can be re-imagined and re-made, again and again and yet again.

Public Space

Zygmunt Bauman

Zygmunt Bauman (Poznan, Poland, 1925) is Emeritus Professor of Sociology, having served as Professor of Sociology and, at various times, Head of Department at Leeds from 1972 until his retirement in 1990. He was formerly of the University of Warsaw until 1968 and the University of Tel Aviv, and held several visiting professorships, in Australia and elsewhere, before coming to Leeds. He is now Professor Emeritus also at the University of Warsaw.

Zygmunt Bauman is known throughout the world for works such as *Legislators and Interpreters* (1987), *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989), *Modernity and Ambivalence* (1991) and *Postmodern Ethics* (1993).

Zygmunt Bauman was awarded the Amalfi European Prize in 1990 and the Adorno Prize in 1998. It is difficult to think of higher honours being bestowed on a sociologist, in this case of European and indeed world standing.

'Agora' is the place where *oikos* (the household, realm of the 'private') and *oikoumene* (the polity, realm of the 'public') meet. They meet to talk, and the explicit or implicit purpose of exchange (in all its forms—of formal speeches met with applause, hisses or cat-calling, of cool or heated argument, of harangue or pep talk, negotiating or quarrelling etc.) is arriving to a satisfactory or at least acceptable two-way *translation*: of private worries and wishes into public issues, and of public needs and ambitions into private rights and duties. It is on the agora that the compact space integrating private individuals into a social totality (be it a tribe, a local community, a nation-state, and—prospectively—humanity) is ever anew renegotiated, reformed and reconfirmed.

Agora must be therefore a space hospitable simultaneously, and equally, to the arrivals from private *and* public realms; but to be and to stay hospitable, it needs to staunchly defend its independence from both. It can't be property or merely an outpost of either of the two. If it were, the flow of translation would be constantly threatened with disruption and the outcomes could be distorted. In the extreme case, translation would grind to a halt and result in communication breakdown, as one of the two languages would eliminate the other which it was supposed to be meeting on equal terms.

Inviting to both the *oikos* and the *oikoumene*, agora must remain therefore vigilant and wary of the appetite for conquest that may prompt one or the other of the partners-in-dialogue to appropriate the meeting space fully to itself, take it under its own exclusive administration and permanently limit the right of entry of the other partner, reserving

to itself the monopolistic or almost monopolistic entitlement to authoritative translation. Just like the wind exists solely through the action of blowing, and river through flowing, agora exists only through the activity of free and continuous, unconstrained and uninterrupted translation.

Ideally, both borderlines therefore, separating agora from the domain of the private on one side and from the domain of the public on the other, are marked by heavy two-directional traffic. Occasionally, however, the traffic across one or the other borderline may be reduced to a trickle that might render translation, that *raison d'être* of agora and its modality of being, inadequate or ineffective; it may be even wholly arrested. None of the borderlines is anything but securely fortified; poorly guarded and eminently permeable, both remain vulnerable and are permanently exposed to invasion. As the need to leave the translation to the hazards of free initiative and free opposition may be by each side felt cumbersome and discomfiting, suppressing that need and hopefully getting rid of it altogether at least for a time being by invading and conquering the agora is at all times tempting to the actors of the private as much as of the public realms. Agora is never safe and hardly ever feels self-confident. It can't count on good will of the occupants of either of the two neighbouring realms and on their voluntary submission to the code of behaviour (to the rule of mutual respect in particular) that must be observed if the dialogue is to continue unabated. Agora's survival depends solely on its own spirit of independence and its own pace and vigour.

Through most of the 20th century, the most perceptive and insightful minds of all and

any political/ideological denominations focused their worried attention almost exclusively on the borderline/frontline separating/connecting agora and oikoumene, in their modern rendition of, respectively, *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*¹ and nation-state. Most of that century was lived in the shadow of two totalitarian powers bent on world-wide rule, and of their fresh, traumatic memory.

The impact of both totalitarian regimes spread well beyond their state borders. The radical and ruthless totalitarian responses to the vexing uncertainty associated with the social settings centred around free-wheeling agora-type polylogue (settings known under the name of ‘democracy’) were looked to by many denizens of nominally democratic regimes as models to copy; reporters of the most prominent press organs of the democratic countries, those very symbols of the democratic spirit that a few decades earlier seemed to overwhelm the post-Enlightened world and be perceived as the pinnacle of political/ethical progress, waxed lyrical when painting the picture of order, stability, social peace and citizen discipline that descended upon Italy or Germany in the aftermath of the brutal dismantling of democratic institutions and the invasion and conquest of the agora by the state. One could say, paraphrasing Marx, that for the better part of the past century a spectre hovered above Europe: the spectre of totalitarianism, whether in its fascist or its communist version. And the most conspicuous mark of totalitarianism was the uncompromising colonization of the agora by the state and its submission to the state’s exclusive authority.

The temptation to invade and colonize the agora and the threat that the states may succumb to that temptation looked all the more realistic for the realism of the state ambitions to exclusive and undivided *territorial sovereignty*. Though at all times realities of power

stopped short of the ideal advanced by the claim to sovereignty—they came closer to such full and uncompromised model of state sovereignty than at any other period of history; and certainly much closer than at our time of accelerated globalization, planet crisscrossed by information high-ways and the falling defensive value of space. Towards the end of the nation-building process associated with the ‘solid’ phase of modernity, the possibility to socially, culturally and economically integrate large territories and their populations into political totalities was matched by the technical capacity to surround such totalities by nearly impermeable borders within which full sovereignty, and the tripod of the economic, cultural and political autarchies on which it was presumed and had to rest, could be effectively pursued, established and henceforth defended.

While a vigorous and resourceful agora composed of the network of autonomous associations and institutions seemed the most reliable and durable means to fulfil that possibility, the ‘totalitarian inclination’ (as Hannah Arendt called it), the tendency to proceed through *shortcuts*, rather than follow twists and turns of lengthy and risks-peppered routes, had to be reckoned with—given the rising capacities and resourcefulness of state powers. ‘Shortcuts,’ to borrow Jürgen Habermas’ terminology, boil down to multiplying the ‘communicative distortions’ by preventing all or some postulates about to enter the agora from the other, ‘private’ end, from being articulated; and in case such articulation has already occurred, by pre-empting the chances of voicing them. Regimentation of the media and the censorship of their contents are the best known and once most commonly used tools of intentional distortion, though there are also less crude, less salient and less obtrusive (and therefore less likely to arouse resistance) means to the same effect, amounting to (as Thomas

¹ Its English equivalent, ‘civil society’ is rather misleading. In that translation, the personal union between the owner/manager of the *oikos*, and the citizen of polity, presumed by the compression of their names in German, has been lost.

Mathiesen put it),² ‘silent silencing’—a process ‘that is quiet rather than noisy, hidden rather than open, unnoticed rather than noticeable, unseen rather than seen, non-physical rather than physical.’ ‘Silent silencing’ is structural; it is a part of our everyday life; it is unbounded and is therefore engraved upon us; it is noiseless and therefore passes by unnoticed; and it is dynamic in the sense that in our society it spreads and becomes continually more encompassing. The structural character of the silencing ‘exempts’ representatives of the state from responsibility for it, its everyday character makes it ‘inescapable’ from the point of view of those being silenced, its unbounded character makes it especially effective in relation to the individual, its noiseless character makes it easier to legitimise, and its dynamic character turns it into a mechanism of silencing which may be increasingly trusted.

This more sophisticated and refined (but for the same reason more difficult to note and resist) method of communicative distortion will in all probability rise in importance at the expense of the orthodox expedients. For once, it is potentially more effective since more radical: it casts political repression outside the realm of political discourse and action recognized as political practice, striking at the point where the postulates meant to be barred entry to the agora had not yet reached the threshold of articulation and so of politics. Besides, and yet more importantly, whatever the advantages of ‘silent silencing’ might be, the orthodox alternatives like media-regimentation and censorship become increasingly difficult to apply with any measure of success, in view of the globalization of the information flow having progressed by now far beyond the reach of the state-managed controlling powers. Those alternatives are however turning also increasingly irrelevant, and arguably even counter-productive: ever more intense production and ever faster distribution of information (‘distribution’ in

the sense of ‘making available,’ but not necessarily in the sense of ‘delivery,’ let alone ‘acquisition,’ not to mention ‘retention’) has transformed the information from the most valuable source of knowledge into the major impediment to knowledge-formation. When one Sunday issue of the New York Times contains more bits of information than a most exquisitely educated man of the Renaissance encountered in the course of his entire life, and since the volume of information created in the last 30 years exceeded the volume produced in the preceding fifteen thousand years of human history, information and knowledge have parted their ways and the gap between them seems to be widening unstoppably.

Among the principally anti-agora (since communication-distorting) factors, two other phenomena perhaps may currently keep the fear of the state-invasion of agora alive: *state secrets* and *political lies*—both fast growing in volume, frequency of deployment, and in (arguably) their impact on the effectiveness of political debate.

Secrets have been shown already by Georg Simmel to be avidly sought by all sides in a conflict for the advantage one may obtain over an adversary deprived of access to potentially significant factors of the situation and thus compelled to grope in the dark where and when the other side can move with confidence. In addition, the very awareness (or just a mere suspicion) that the ‘other side’ holds some (unknown and un-definable) parts of the scene in darkness, generates an atmosphere of uncertainty and may in consequence eat deeply into the self-confidence and resolve of its potential detractors. These are general and extra-temporal effects of secrecy. In our times, however, thanks to the growing technical facility of gathering, storing and processing of information, also the realm of secrecy may have grown enormously in size. It may now (and in all proba-

² See Thomas Mathiesen, *Silently Silenced: Essays on the Creation of Acquiescence in Modern Society*, Waterside Press 2004, pp. 9, 14.

bility does) include 'personal,' often intimate and potentially defaming and compromising information, which again may (and probably does) expose the individuals falling out of line, and/or advocating demands unpopular with the powers that be, to the menace of an instant retaliation or even pre-emptive incapacitation; one more blow to the already shrinking self-confidence and resolve of the potential actors of the agora.

Political lie is on the face of it the opposite of secrecy (contrary to state secrets, it is voiced loudly in the name of 'public awareness' and hammered home with unremitting vigour 'for the subjects' own good'), though its effective deployment in the assault against freedom of the agora wouldn't be feasible if not on the assumption that the state knows things which its subjects are unable to learn and better not know unless knowing is needed 'for their own good.' Contrary to secrecy (that is, the state withholding a piece of information which it has), in the case of a political lie the state fabricates a piece of information it only pretends to possess, though again for 'the subjects' own good' it can't disclose its contents and sources; all and any questioning by the sceptics is thereby disqualified in advance and bound to remain unanswered. Resorting to a political lie involves little risk; since all potential proofs and arguments are ensconced firmly in the inaccessible realm of state secrets, the state's bluff can't be called, at least not 'beyond reasonable doubt.' In case the deception is unmasked and laid bare by the subsequent events which the state can't control (like in the case of the weapons of mass destruction which Saddam Hussein was allegedly able to shower on the British isles in less than an hour), the state can still count on the lamentably brief and still shrinking span of public memory and the notorious drifting habits of public attention. The lie will be quickly forgotten, or at the moment of its disclosure it won't be any longer in the focus of public concern. In most cases, the queries will never be definitely answered and sceptics would never be able to prove that their doubts were well founded—at any

rate not before the end of the statutory period (30 years in Britain) after which the state archives must be opened to public scrutiny. If the state warnings of an imminent disaster are not confirmed (like in the case of temporary closing of airports and introduction of new stringent and severe 'security measures' following the announcement of the discovery of a 'liquid bombs' plot), one would never be able to decide with certainty whether the threat failed to materialize thanks to the government's vigilance and efficiency of its counter-measures, or because it was based on mistaken, sloppily gathered and otherwise unreliable information—or even wholly invented.

All this warrants the expectation that resorting to political lies will in the foreseeable future become more common in governmental practices. In the times of the states urgently seeking new foundations for their authority and demand of obedience (the extant foundations, the promise and to a large extent the practice of the 'social state' insuring the citizens against blows of fate and individually suffered, though socially-caused misfortune, having been progressively weakened and feared to be dismantled altogether), care of personal safety (protection against food, drugs, fumes harmful to the body, against sexual molesters, paedophiles and rapists, prowlers, stalkers, obtrusive beggars, uncivil behaviour in public places, speeding drivers, thieves, burglars, armed assailants, terrorists, tobacco smokers, etc.) seems to be an attractive alternative. To render this new legitimation of state authority effective, governments are tempted however to exaggerate the volume and intensity of the threats to safety; they are also in desperate need to demonstrate in public their own resolve and industry in fighting the menace back, nipping the danger in the bud. In the effort to satisfy both needs through maintaining the mood of constant emergency, uncertainty and anxiety, political lie proves to be an ideal expedient; a stratagem likely to be invented, were it not already firmly entrenched in political practice. State secrecy, political lie, and the promo-

tion of personal safety to the rank of top-priority public issue have a debilitating impact on the agora. They stem the articulation and advancement of alternative public issues, pre-empting thereby the possibility of submitting their gravity and urgency to the public consideration and formation of an informed and balanced public opinion. In the long run, they undermine the public skills of the two-way, private interests vs. public issues, translation: that life-blood of agora, and through it of viable democracy, and the indispensable condition of effective communication between *oikos* and *oikoumene*. In this way they clear the space of the agora for another invasion and conquest—though from the least expected side: invasion of the individual private interests and concerns no longer arriving at the agora to seek their translation into the vocabulary of communal tasks, but to have their privacy and their individuality, willy-nilly and by default rather than by design, coupled with the futility of any attempt to seek collective solutions to individual problems, reconfirmed and reinforced. I would suggest that this not-so-long-ago unanticipated invasion, currently in full swing, constitutes the principal and the most awesome and least resistible threat to the liveliness and effectiveness of the agora. But what are the sources of this novel threat?

The consistent emaciation of the nation-state sovereignty following the ceding of many of its powers to the supra-national agencies and other powers evaporating into the global 'space of flows' (to use Manuel Castells' term), has a disabling impact of its capacity to handle many of the functions it previously performed or intended and promised to perform. Remaining powers of the state fall short of the volume which the state organs and institutions would require to embrace the entire range of their past functions. Under changed circumstances, the governments of the nation-states find themselves compelled to 'contract out' a large and growing part of their traditional repertoire to the politically uncontrolled market forces, while 'subsidiarizing' much of the rest to the realm of 'life

politics,' the domain of individual initiative, individual resources and individual responsibility, enclosed inside the confines of the *oikos*.

The latter process ostensibly 'empowers' the universe of *oikos* and its residents: indeed, the widely advertised twin trends of 'deregulation' and 'individualization' were widely portrayed as decisive steps towards emancipation of the individuals from personally debilitating dependency, obtrusive and obnoxious interference of the 'nanny state', and *summa summarum* as an unprecedented expansion of the individual powers to choose and act on the choices made. Numerous observers however report that the individuals, the targets of the allegedly emancipating exercise, find the resulting life challenges overwhelming and in their own way incapacitating, exceeding their skills and resources and in the end disempowering. Throwing the agora wide open to private concerns is one aspect of the process; but provision of a protective shield against the eventuality of the individually suffered troubles setting the agenda of communal tasks is another. Any attempt to translate individual problems into public issues is likely to be reflected back into the sphere of 'life politics' and returned to the list of tasks which the individuals need to face up to and attempt to fulfil on their own, accepting full responsibility in case they end in failure.

Individuals are left alone, sentenced to self-concern, self-reference and self-help. Bereaved of the pre-designed, pre-fabricated and pre-established community of the kind to which they belong before they begin to act, they need to weave their own protective social nets spinning the yarn of admittedly thin and friable inter-personal bonds (and the bonds need to be tied up loosely, to make them easy to untie when the need comes as it surely will). Once they enter one or another of the plentiful 'local initiative' *agorae*, individuals meet only each other, except for a few professional or amateur *compères*, animators or counsellors plotting and boosting

their gambits and pronouncing on their results. Anything recognizable as *oikoumene* is there nowhere in sight. Whatever 'totality' may be spotted inside an agora, can only be an interim side-product of their interaction, as volatile and frail as the nets they weave and the yarn they use to weave them. Such 'totality' is always both not-yet-complete and until further notice, eminently revocable on demand, presumed from the start (and hoped) to last only as long as desired, and not a moment longer. Such 'totality' is not expected or wished to replace the absent community; its role is to cover up the void left by the demise of the ready-made and ready-to-use communities of yore. A task that is hopeless, and for that reason needed to be endlessly repeated.

I suggest that the 'totalities' daily emerging and vanishing inside the present-day *agorae* are best called 'cloakroom communities' (this metaphorical term refers to the 'unity of purpose' emerging, for the duration of a performance, in the cloakroom of a theatre—when numerous individuals coming together from far and wide assemble for a short while in one room to hang their coats, only to take them again off the pegs after the last curtain and disperse, each in his or her own direction).

Cloakroom communities are communities à la carte. They share with the 'communities of belonging' the quality of bringing people together, imbuing them with a shared purpose, inspiring synchronized actions, and legitimizing (through the sheer size of the company in which the actions are performed) the pattern of conduct individually (though in a strikingly similar fashion) followed by all the individuals present. They do not share however, and emphatically so, the authority of 'communities of belonging' to determine the composition of membership, and above all to render the membership (described appropriately as 'belonging') an *obligation* as much as representing it as a *right*. Unlike in the case of the communities of belonging, 'belonging' in cloakroom communities (whatever that term may refer to in their case) neither *precedes* the interactions nor pre-determines

their character, but emerges *in their course* and grinds to a halt and 'becomes history' the moment the interactions end.

Symptomatically, the term 'community' is being currently replaced in the social-scientific as much as in the vernacular vocabulary by the concept of 'network.' If the idea of community traditionally conveyed the image of closed exits, of a pre-determined and difficult to interrupt duration of stay, the 'network' is made of the acts of connecting as much as disconnecting. If the membership of the orthodox community was 'objectively' defined, pre-given and not a matter of personal choice, the network is wrapped around the individual, put together through individual action and its composition remains perpetually changeable; the exit from a cloakroom community is as easy as entering it. The *raison d'être* of the orthodox community was to assure that inter-human bonds last and the members stay together bound by mutual loyalties and obligation they are not free to renounce. In the networks and in cloakroom communities no bonds are expected or wished to tie members interminably, let alone forever; they are all in principle re-negotiable and can be terminated at a moment notice.

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The persistent popularity of the 'Big Brother' shows can be only explained by its being the contemporary version of the 'morality play', representing in a condensed and reduced to the bare essentials form the inner logic and the often unnoticed yet faithfully followed patterns of the viewers' daily life.

The millions addicted to the successive instalments of the show find no difficulty in identifying with the plight of the characters of the 'Big Brother' interminable saga: they recognize in the lot of the 'Big Brother' House inmates their own experience and discover its heretofore overlooked and un-guessed or only half-intuited sense. The 'Big Brother' shows consistently hammer home—and hammer unashamedly, blatantly, in full light

and leaving little to imagination—the hidden truth of a world spattered by entries and exits to and from the endemically brittle and short-lived cloakroom communities.

Indeed, with every successive round another random collection of individuals settles for a while in the Big Brother's House with no history of previous contacts and no mutual bonds to justify their new (admittedly temporary) togetherness. They all carry their own biographies, as different as individual biographies might be, and so also their own idiosyncratic, variegated experiences, characters, temperaments, expectations, preferences... Whatever will unite or divide them in the coming weeks, they obviously must first conjure up, sustain through their own effort and negotiate from scratch. The inmates are not given much time to accomplish such complex and daunting tasks. Hospitality of the house owner and manager is not assured: on the contrary, inmates have been told in no uncertain terms that whatever they do their stay in the house will be limited, that it is not up to them to determine that limit, and that the limit to negotiation is itself non-negotiable. How they proceed is their choice, but to go on or fall out is not matter of choice...

The sluggish and inept among the inmates will be promptly eliminated from further trials. If they wish to stay, they must outwit the rest of the bunch before they are outwitted by them. Exclusion from the game does not depend on how eager and clever they themselves are—but on who will prove to be more eager and clever than others. The day of exclusion must arrive and will, inevitably; in fact, every week one member of the bunch must be banished from the company, whatever is the number of individuals who happen to fall below the standard of wit, zeal and cunning. It is not so much the 'deserving' by its victims, as the non-negotiable order of things that is the ultimate cause of exclusion. And it is the regular, repetitive ceremonies of exclusion that provide the highlights of the show. These are the days which the addicts wait for with bated breath; these are

the events on which bets are made and the inmates together with those watching their trials and tribulations on TV screens, work towards and think toward...

After the series of exclusions has run its course, the inmates disappear from view, sinking back into that nowhere from which they emerged at the start of the show. While the watchers, losing the focus that for a time patched together their scattered concerns, will also fall apart and scatter, each pursuing as before his or her own targets and trajectories. Hopefully, however, the time spent watching and debating the 'Big Brother' drama won't be wasted. The watchers will end up enriched. They will be able now to better answer the question of what life is like: life is as seen on the reality TV show called 'Big Brother.'

'Big Brother' is a portrayal of contemporary life. I suggest that it may serve as well as a likeness of the contemporary agora. Like the closely watched and guarded scenery of the 'Big Brother' esoteric world presented to viewers under the rubric of 'reality TV,' contemporary equivalent/replacement/substitute for agora is entered solely by private interests, concerns and undertakings—with 'public issues' and its would-be spokesmen keeping their distance, letting private pursuit to 'find their own value' in mutual rivalry and competition, keen to manifest their neutrality and sticking to a 'don't phone us, we'll phone you' rule. Private interests and ambitions leave the contemporary agora reconfirmed and reinforced in their *quo ante* condition: that of the self-sustained and self-propelled individuals who in the efforts to resolve their individual problems, however articulated, can derive little from the company of others except the strengthening of their own resolve to concentrate on individual interests and pursue them at whatever cost to others; and who can gain even less from loyalty, cooperation and solidarity, while nothing at all from a long-term (let alone indefinite) commitment to loyalty, cooperation and solidarity.

Resolving of the conflict between commitment and choice is indeed the constant theme of the whole (and growing) family of 'reality TV' shows for which the recurrent ritual of the 'Big Brother'-style war of attrition waged by all against all stands out as the most popular and publicly acclaimed member. The conflict between commitment and choice (one of the many manifestations of the principal opposition between security and freedom) is all too real, of course. Wider commitment narrows the choice, stronger choice weakens commitment. Freedom of choice makes commitment unsafe, while commitment makes unsafe the feasibility of choice. The ideal (let alone holding) resolution of that conflict is inconceivable, since the two competing values of freedom and security are equally indispensable for a decent and agreeable life, while their reconciliation is as plausible as squaring a circle or construction of a *perpetuum mobile*. No resolution, long lasting since prompting little or no dissent, is likely ever to be found—only settlements may be put in place ('settlements' are not expected to last; they are interim compromises deemed to be, and often explicitly presented as, conditional, transient and above all revocable). Any mutual balance between commitment and choice is bound to be sooner or later found unsatisfactory, any settlement will be sooner or later called and pressed to be renegotiated, and the search for an (in-achievable) ideal formula will go on. In the contemporary variety of the agora, however, the die is loaded before being cast. Invariably, it is the commitment that is singled out as in need to justify itself in terms of a service rendered to choice, while being also denied the right to expect and to demand the same from its adversary. In case of a clash between the two, the outcome in favour of choice is preordained by the rules of the life game. In the never-ending strife between freedom of choice and security of being, reality 'as seen on TV,' as much as the reality daily experienced by the TV viewers, take sides.

And so did all realities known to be created to-date for human cohabitation and through

it. None of the known realities had ever reached the extreme it would arduously and self-confidently advocate and/or enforce. But each twisted the balance between the competing values towards one or the other pole. Each made easier and more likely the preference given to one value, and more difficult and unlikely a preference given to the other. But in no case has the war of attrition between two inextricably linked values reached its ostensible objective. However severe the constraints imposed and however indefatigable, overwhelming and unscrupulous the forces trying to impose them, human freedom proved to be indestructible; even the commandants of concentration camps and gulags never fully managed to extirpate it. Whereas however oppressive the unconditional commitment might feel, its attraction was unlikely ever to fade out completely; it proved to be certain to survive, even if only in a rudimentary form and even if relegated to the margins, the most virulent resentment. In the future of the stormy relations between 'individual' and 'community,' as much as in their long history, the cries 'come back community, all is forgiven,' are likely to be heard intermittently with, or alongside, the trumpets of individual freedom fighters.

Contrary to the suggestion hammered home by the most popular varieties of contemporary agora, what has been argued thus far in no way implies that the current triumph of choice over commitment is final or complete. The court is still in sitting, and will remain sitting for a long time to come, perhaps forever. With all the current pressures (whether coercive, persuasive, or brain-washing, that is mixing persuasion with coercion), surrendering a part or even the totality of freedom to choose in the name of commitment has not been made impossible. It has been only made more difficult, more risky, and more costly (to wit, less popular...). Forced to counter awesome odds against which it finds itself standing, it seems unlikely to be the course of action taken by the 'statistical majority' of contemporary men and women and in a 'statistical majority' of their life situations.

Organizing Heterogeneity: Migrations, Demographic Changes and Cultural Consequences¹

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¹ The author would like to thank Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer, Lisa Hanley, Galina Levina, Boris Koptin, Renata Kosch-Harmaty, Liz Malinkin, and Meijan Massoumi for their assistance in the preparation of this chapter.

Organizing Heterogeneity: Migrations, Demographic Changes and Cultural Consequences

A curious story appeared in the Montreal press a couple of winters ago.² During the depths of a typically-harsh Quebec February, Filipino and Hispanic parents trekked with their sick children through snow filled streets to a small apartment complex in the fringe neighborhood of St. Laurent. Desperate mothers and fathers beseeched an icon-like portrait of the Virgin Mary to cure their ill offspring. Abderezak Mehdi, the Muslim building manager of the low-rise apartment building, had discovered the Virgin's image in the garbage. According to Mehdi and Greek Melkite Catholic priest Michel Saydé, the Virgin shed tears of oil that could cure the ill and tormented. Michel Parent, the chancellor of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Montreal, cautioned skepticism, noting that "while it is true that nothing is impossible for God, historically, that is not how God acts." This little scene of healing unfolded in a dreary neighborhood built at a time when Montreal was starkly divided between speakers of French and of English—the so-called francophones and anglophones of mid-twentieth century Quebec. Over the past three decades or so, those earlier linguistic boundaries have been submerged within a new mélange of overlapping cultures and religions that so characterizes life in Montreal at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Filipinos, Hispanics from various corners of the globe, Greek Melkite Catholic priests, and Roman Catholics now seek out St. Laurent in search

of a Christian miracle icon uncovered by a pious Muslim.

French Canada's metropolis is hardly unique. Migrants of all sorts—immigrants, emigrants, refugees, displaced persons, guest workers—have become a significant presence in urban communities everywhere. According to the United Nations Population Division, some 200 million people—or 3 percent of the world's population—live outside of the country of their birth.³ Such projections could well underestimate those living in a new country without complete documentation, and fail to capture migrants moving within the borders of any given state. The people of the world are in constant motion, with no society on earth being left unaffected.

Diversity in Motion

People don't just move; they resettle in a particular place. In a world in which, for the first time, most humans live in cities, migrants increasingly make their homes in urban neighborhoods of one sort or other. New arrivals—be they from abroad, from another town or city, or from the countryside—disrupt long-standing systems of economic and political dominance. Their very presence forces host communities to confront once dormant issues often assumed to have been resolved in some distant past.

² This story was originally reported in Ann Carroll, "Faithful Flock to See Virgin Mary's Tears of Oil," *Montreal Gazette* (February 28, 2004). This account has appeared previously in Blair A. Ruble, *Creating Diversity Capital. Transnational Migrants in Montreal, Washington, and Kyiv* (Washington, D.C./Baltimore, Maryland: Woodrow Wilson Center and Johns Hopkins University Presses, 2005), pp. 43-44; and in Blair A. Ruble, "Mélange Cities," *The Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 3 (2006), pp. 56-59.

³ Jason DeParle, "In a World on the Move, a Tiny Land Strains to Cope," *New York Times* (June 24, 2007).

The processes by which migrant communities become incorporated into a particular urban region vary from city to city. The history of place, community identities, and public policy all impact this process. In addition to confronting language barriers, racial discrimination, unfamiliar cultures, and hostile labor markets that make integration a great challenge, migrants are faced with finding an appropriate balance between maintaining cultural and ethnic integrity while simultaneously accessing the social, political, and economic opportunities of their new city. The need to address issues of process and integration grows in importance as the forces of globalization amplify income disparities in urban areas; as opportunities for employment, education, and basic services become constricted. How do urban communities and migrants adjust as they accommodate the new realities of this century's massive transnational migrations?

To be successful in a time of such a rapid global flow of people as the early twenty-first century, urban communities simultaneously must accept difference and identify shared points of reference. Local legends, memories, and telling of history must go beyond exclusionary understandings of society to accept an inclusive pluralism. In other words, civic identity must embrace a variety of urban groups and individuals. Even if they have been divided in the past, cities must create a shared sense of responsibility for a common future. Urban communities must expand their repertoires of responses to diversity in order to accommodate new arrivals even as migrants must adapt to their new surroundings. Local strategies to promote "diversity capital" must seek to maximize the benefits and to minimize the disruptions of the global forces which promote migration in every region of the planet.⁴

Expanding a community's stock of diversity capital depends on a holistic strategy of addressing multiple human needs simultaneously. Communities must reconfigure local life in order to promote accommodation of diversity and to acknowledge every resident's inherent "right to the city."⁵ They need to provide protected meeting places in which people of difference come and go, and interact with one another without coming into conflict and confrontation. Community residents need to learn how to use space—both literal and figurative—in new ways. Schools need to educate students to accept diversity as part and parcel of the world around them. Diversity must be transformed from being seen as a threat to the well-being of a community into becoming recognized as an opportunity for economic success.

Such changes in how life is lived are not easily secured. Cities everywhere are littered with unsuccessful attempts to accomplish any of these goals; failures that all too often have been compounded by outbursts of communal violence. Achievement of even partial and temporary success in accommodating the diversity created by newly arriving migrants—both domestic and transnational—must stand at the center of any effort to reconsider how to organize heterogeneity. The case studies to follow suggest some possible avenues toward the accommodation of difference.

Reshaping Space, Learning from Quito

Reconfiguring public space so as to encourage various communities within a city to share in a mutual communal experience presents a bedeviling challenge to municipal leaders at a time when those with means seek to separate themselves from society at

⁴ For further discussion of the concept of "diversity capital," see Blair A. Ruble, *Creating Diversity Capital. Transnational Migrants in Montreal, Washington, and Kyiv*.

⁵ For further discussion of the concept of the "right to the city," see Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City. Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2003).

large. Political and economic rewards favor efforts to privatize space by granting privilege to commercial projects, or by building walls and gates around the preserves of the well off. The resulting fragmented landscape accentuates difference rather than promoting a sense of shared destiny. This is especially so in cities struggling to manage migration from an impoverished rural hinterland while simultaneously establishing connections to a global capitalist economy.⁶ Unsurprisingly, few have attempted to re-invigorate their city-centers to attract international capital while broadening the presence and participation of their most impoverished residents. Quito, Ecuador, marks an important counter-example to the explicit global pursuit of social exclusion.

As elsewhere in Latin America, Quito is divided into distinct spatial zones, with poor squatter settlements being found in peri-urban areas and on the city outskirts. A deteriorating historic city-center dates back to Colonial and Pre-Columbian days, while middle class and wealthy residential areas in between are separated from the remainder of the city by myriad physical, psychological, and symbolic barriers.⁷ Such divisions have a long history. Spanish colonizers transformed the city—which had emerged as a major center within the northern Inca Empire by the end of the fifteenth century—into a major colonial center laid out in accordance with the Greek-inspired Laws of the Indies of 1523. An outburst of post-colonial industrialization led to the city's dramatic expansion

at the turn of the twentieth century, to which automobile-oriented modern development added alternative commercial centers and residential neighborhoods for the rich at century's end.⁸

By the 1990s, Quito's historic city-center remained the focal point of local political and religious life, while a new commercial center to the north had emerged as the home to major international corporations. Migrants fleeing rural poverty were drawn to the city's colonial squares and monuments as Quito's oldest neighborhoods became home to a vibrant informal economy dominated by street vendors. Municipal leaders began to find ways to attract international tourists and the local bourgeoisie to return to a city-center which provided the symbols of a once-shared past.

The desire to leverage the symbolic value of a distinguished historic neighborhood was not particularly unusual for a continent in which local elites had long been trying to integrate heritage preservation into economic development plans.⁹ Typically, such plans sought to displace poor and unpicturesque indigenous residents through various forms of social control and coercion in order to increase the comfort level of middle class visitors.¹⁰ Quito elites moved in the opposite direction. They draw on discussions of the historic city-center's future to create civic symbols shared by all Quito residents, and to increase citizen participation among previously displaced communities.¹¹

⁶ Susan Chrisopherson, "The Fortress City: Privatized Spaces, Consumer Citizenship," in Ash Amin, editor, *Post-Fordism: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), pp. 409-427.

⁷ For further discussion of Quito's development, see Fernando Carrión and Lisa M. Hanley, *Urban Regeneration and Revitalization in the Americas: Toward a Stable State* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2007).

⁸ Lisa M. Hanley and Meg Ruthenburg, "The Symbolic Consequences of Urban Revitalization: The Case of Quito, Ecuador," in *Ibid.*, pp. 177-202.

⁹ Fernando Carrión M., "The Historic Center as an Object of Desire," in *Ibid.*, pp. 19-65; Eduardo Kingman Garcés and Ana Maria Goetschel, "Patrimony as a Disciplinary Device and the Banalization of Memory: An Historic Reading from the Andes," in *Ibid.*, pp. 67-78; and, Silvia Fajre, "Cultural Heritage and Urban Identity: Shared Management for Economic Development," in *Ibid.*, pp. 143-150.

¹⁰ As has been the case in Ecuador's largest city, Guayaquil, during the past fifteen years. See X. Andrade, "'More City', Less Citizenship: Urban Renovation and the Annihilation of Public Space," in *Ibid.*, pp. 107-141.

¹¹ Diego Carrión Mena, "Quito: The Challenges of a New Age," in *Ibid.*, pp. 151-156.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, Quito's political leaders embraced a strategic vision for their city that was predicated on "reclaiming" the city-center. The goal was to expand citizen participation in municipal affairs through discussions of how the historic center might revitalize. A diverse citizenry gave voice to very different notions about what historic preservation might mean. For example, disparate responses emerged concerning the appropriate balance between preserving the city's indigenous and colonial heritages. Local officials tried to maximize participation and transparency as a way of bringing together the public and private sectors in a shared development strategy. Leaders harnessed transportation, public safety, and environmental policies to promote stable job creation as well as to give expression to collective interests.¹² Informal vendors were brought into extended negotiations which concluded with their moving into more formalized markets and shops.¹³

Quito's efforts have not been wholly successful. Crime has dropped in the historic center, tourism has increased, and informal vendors have been incorporated into a thriving commercial economy. The center's symbolic images and public spaces have begun to create a sense of what it means to live in Quito that is shared by tens of thousands of city residents who have little else in common. Nonetheless, barriers to entry into the formal economy remain high, often forcing the city's poorest residents farther to the periphery of the physical city and the margins of society.

Quito society remains fragmented by social class, ethnicity, language, race, and region; Quito identity remains highly contentious and contested.¹⁴ The Quito experience demonstrates both the possibilities for and the limits imposed on promoting inclusive public space in the absence of deeper structural changes within society.

Teaching Diversity, Learning from St. Petersburg

Urban social fragmentation of a different sort has been taking place in Russia's second largest city, St. Petersburg, over the past decade-and-a-half. The trauma accompanying the collapse of the Soviet Union accelerated a general decline in the health and in the size of the city's population. During the early 1990s, male life expectancy and births fell in the city at a faster rate than in all but a handful of the country's eighty-nine regions.¹⁵ Rampant heart disease, accidents, and cancer have continued to cut the lives of Russian men tragically short ever since. After reaching 65 years of age in 1987, male life expectancy in the Soviet Union and, subsequently, Russia fell to less than 59 years of age by 2003.¹⁶ This pattern of high male mortality was accentuated within the city of St. Petersburg.¹⁷ As elsewhere in the country, birth and fertility rates declined simultaneously.¹⁸

The combined impact of these trends on the city's population has been devastating. From

¹²Ibid.

¹³Lisa M. Hanley and Meg Ruthenburg, "The Symbolic Consequences of Urban Revitalization: The Case of Quito, Ecuador," in *Ibid.*, 214-215.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.

¹⁵Peder Walberg, Martin McKee, Vladimir Shkolnikov, Laurent Chenet, David A. Leon, "Economic Change, Crime, and Mortality Crisis in Russia: Regional Analysis," *British Medical Journal*, v. 317 (7154); August 1, 1998.

¹⁶Irina Titova, "Russian Life Expectancy on Downward Trend," *St. Petersburg Times* (January 17, 2003).

¹⁷Vladimir M. Shkolnikov, Alexander D. Deev, Øystein Kravdal, Tapani Valkonen, "Educational differences in male mortality in Russia and northern Europe. A comparison of an epidemiological cohort from Moscow and St. Petersburg with the male populations of Helsinki and Oslo," *Demographic Research*, vol. 10, article 1, pp. 1-26 (January 9, 2004).

¹⁸Julie Da Vanzo and Gwen Farnsworth, *Russia's Demographic "Crisis"* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1996).

the time the city's fifth millionth resident was born in February 1988 until the official October 9, 2002 census, St. Petersburg's population plummeted by nearly 350,000 residents to 4,661,219.¹⁹ By 2007, the city's population had fallen further to 4,596,000, which still makes St. Petersburg the fourth largest city in Europe after London, Moscow, and Paris.²⁰

Hidden within this picture of decline is the arrival of thousands of new Petersburgers who have moved to the city—often from beyond the borders of the Russian Federation—in response to the demand of local employers for labor. The city's economy entered a period of explosive growth around 1999 led by an expanding port, together with rapidly recovering shipbuilding and automotive industries.²¹ As a consequence of these various trends, what had been an almost exclusively ethnic Russian city at the end of the Soviet period has become home to over one-million non-Russians.²²

Not everyone in the city has been pleased by these developments. Racist thought has deep intellectual roots in Russia, as elsewhere.²³ An increase in racial and ethnic

hostility in Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union appears to be enlivened by similar trends in Europe.²⁴ All too frequently, thought has led to action. Increasing "skin-head" violence has challenged authorities throughout Russia.²⁵ St. Petersburg in particular has been plagued by violent and repugnant racist and xenophobic attacks on individuals who do not appear to be "Russian." Russian and international media reports about such incidents threaten the city's efforts to attract the very domestic and transnational migrants that are essential for the city to sustain economic growth.²⁶

City officials have become acutely concerned by the rise of inter-cultural tensions and ultra-nationalist tendencies within their community. The particularly horrifying murder on February 9, 2004 of a nine-year-old Tadzhik girl, Khursheda Sultanova, by a group of local teenagers prompted St. Petersburg City Governor Valentina Matvienko to speak out for the first time against growing racist violence in her city.²⁷ Local community and political leaders began struggling with how best to formulate a systematic response to inter-cultural conflict.

¹⁹Pavel Viacheslavovich Rusakov was born to great fanfare as Leningrader number 5,000,000 on February 25, 1988. "S dnem rozhdeniia, Leningradets!", *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (February 26, 1988). The official figure from the 2002 Russian Federation Census may be found in Russian Federation Federal State Statistics Service, *Numbers and Distribution of the Population: Results of the All Russian 2002 Census* (Moscow: Russian Federation Federal State Statistics Service, 2004), Vol. 1, p. 93.

²⁰For the current population of St. Petersburg, see the St. Petersburg City Government's official website [<http://eng.gov.spb.ru/figures/population>].

²¹According to the St. Petersburg City Government's official website, industrial production grew by 131.4% in 2002 alone [<http://eng.gov.spb.ru/figures/industry>].

²²Interview with Boris Aleksandrovich Koptin, Head of the Administration for Contacts with National Associations of the St. Petersburg Government Committee for External Relations, St. Petersburg, Russia, April 25, 2007. For further discussion of the city's evolving ethnic composition throughout its history, see: Blair A. Ruble, *Leningrad. Shaping a Soviet City* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 54–56; N. V. Iukhneva, *Etnicheskiĭ sostav i sotsial'naia struktura naseleniia Peterburga: Vtoraia polovina XIX – nachalo XX veka: Statisticheskii analiz* (Leningrad: Nauka – Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1984); and, G. V. Starovoitova, *Etnicheskaia grupa v sovremennom Sovetskom gorode. Sotsiologicheskie ocherki* (Leningrad: Nauka – Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1987).

²³For a discussion of the roots of racist thought in Russia, see V. A. Shnirel'man, *Ocherki sovremennogo racizma* (Petrozavodsk: K. R. O."Molodzeĭnaia pravozashchitnaia grupa," 2007).

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 30–37.

²⁵For discussion of an emerging "Skinkul'tura" in Russia, see V. A. Shnirel'man, "Chistol'shchiki moskovskikh ulits: skinkhedy, SMI i obshchestvennoe mnenie" (Moscow: Academia, 2007).

²⁶See, for example, "Four Get Lengthy Terms in African's Slaying," *Moscow Times* (June 20, 2007).

²⁷V. A. Shnirel'man, "Chistol'shchiki moskovskikh ulits: skinkhedy, SMI i obshchestvennoe mnenie," pp. 86–87.

In July 2006, the Government of St. Petersburg launched a “tolerance program” aimed at “promoting harmony of inter-ethnic and inter-cultural relations, and preventing ultra-nationalist tendencies, and strengthening tolerance for all in St. Petersburg.”²⁸ City authorities formulated the program on the basis of extensive consultation with local law enforcement agencies, academic specialists, civil society leaders, and educational officials.

Among the program’s goals are enhanced coordination among city agencies on questions of tolerance, expanded initiatives to integrate nationalities living in the city into public and cultural life, greater effort to preserve and develop the cultural heritage of all groups within the city, stronger enforcement of laws intended to prevent ethnic violence and punish the perpetrators of hate crimes, as well as improved communication between various communities and local authorities through the establishment of a “St. Petersburg—A City of Peace” hotline.²⁹ The city has made funding available to encourage local ethnic associations—especially those representing the city’s 200,000 Azeris, 150,000 Tatars, as well as many smaller groups such as Petersburg’s historic Jewish community—to organize cultural festivals.³⁰

More ambitiously, city officials are working with the Russian Federation Ministry of Education to introduce a comprehensive tolerance curriculum throughout the city’s school system. This effort is intended to integrate “a positive understanding of ethnic and religious diversity, interest towards other cultures, re-

spect for their values, traditions and special features of their ways of life” into every aspect of the school curriculum, in all disciplines, throughout the entire primary and secondary school program. Simultaneously, the school curriculum is to be re-designed to promote the rejection of chauvinism and extremism. School children and youth are to be taught skills to interact more peacefully with others who are different from themselves.³¹

Beyond making diversity and tolerance seem “better,” concerned St. Petersburg officials and residents are trying to make diversity and tolerance seem “cool.” Non-governmental organizations such as Funky Tolerance sponsor events around the city encouraging young people to embrace tolerance as “hip” and “fun.” Their chat-rooms, parties, and concerts are increasingly popular among students, young managers, and other members of a growing local middle class who are in search of a good time with sufficient wealth to connect on the internet, in local basement pubs (*traktir*), and at concerts.³²

The relatively spontaneous socializing spawned by Funky Tolerance and other self-organized initiatives bring together small groups of rising elites from different ethnic, religious, and sexual communities. City officials want to associate more wide-spread cross-cultural interaction with a good time as well. Working with local ethnic associations, the St. Petersburg government has supported a variety of festivals promoting cultural diversity throughout the year. By far the largest and most successful among these efforts has been a local staging of the Tatar summer festival

²⁸Pravitel’stvo Sankt-Peterburga Komitet po vneshnim sviaziam, “Programma garmonizatsii mezhetnicheskikh i meshkul’turnykh otnoshenii, profilaktiki proiavlennii ksenofobii, ukrepleniia tolerantnosti v Sankt-Peterburge na 2006 - 2010 gody (programma “Tolerantnost’)” (Sankt-Peterburg: Pravitel’stvo Sankt-Peterburga, 2006).

²⁹Ibid, pp. 8–19.

³⁰Interview with Boris Aleksandrovich Koptin, April 25, 2007.

³¹Pravitel’stvo Sankt-Peterburga Komitet po vneshnim sviaziam, “Programma garmonizatsii mezhetnicheskikh i meshkul’turnykh otnoshenii, profilaktiki proiavlennii ksenofobii, ukrepleniia tolerantnosti v Sankt-Peterburge na 2006 - 2010 gody (programma “Tolerantnost’),” pp. 12–13.

³²E. E. Chebotareva, “Funky Tolerance: Conceptual Analysis of Corporate Management in Multi-Cultural Surroundings,” conference paper, International Academic-Practical Conference on Tolerance and Intolerance in Modern Society, St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia, April 25–25, 2007.

Sabantuyi held at the height of the city's famous "white nights" in mid-June.

Celebrated in villages of the mid-Volga before the arrival of Islam, Sabantuyi merged with other local festivals during the late nineteenth century to become a symbol of Tatar nationhood.³³ Further secularized during the Soviet period, Sabantuyi is now an annual celebration of Tatar traditions, song, dance, food, and play. Most Sabantuyi festivals include a distinctive form of Tatar wrestling, horse racing, and more light-natured competitions; together with lots of food and music ranging from folk choruses to raucous rock music. Russian Federation Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin have embraced the celebration as a seemingly benign way to demonstrate their country's diversity; though Sabantuyi retains a strong sense of an autonomous Tatar identity.

The St. Petersburg Sabantuyi is held outside the city in the neighboring Leningrad Region with governmental support from the city, region, federal, and Tatarstan administrations as well as corporate support from major local firms.³⁴ More than 60,000 attended the 2006 Sabantuyi, with perhaps twice as many people making their way an hour or so north of the city in 2007 to a field along the Siargi highway outside of the village of Kuzmolovo. Once there, Petersburgers spent the day enjoying rides, exploring Tatar cultural exhibits, and listening to a variety of music from three large stages.

For local officials, the Sabantuyi celebrations represent an effort to make diversity seem "normal" and "comfortable." They view the festival's obvious popularity as an opportunity to spread the word that living with people who are different—at least in the controlled environment of a corporate and municipal-

sponsored gathering – is not threatening. This domesticated form of cultural interaction is seen as re-enforcing their city's strengths. Not the least, officials believe, Sabantuyi helps people realize that "diversity can be fun."³⁵

The initiation of the city's tolerance program might appear to be surprising in light of a widely-held image of contemporary Russian political development that accentuates a turning away from civil society institutions, a tendency toward nationalist rhetoric, and a growing separation between state and society. The Petersburg experience suggests that this conventional understanding of contemporary Russian politics is limited. More significantly, the Petersburg tolerance program indicates that city officials need not be inhibited in their efforts to address the challenges of heterogeneity by the limitations of a larger national political environment.

The impact of St. Petersburg's tolerance program remains far from certain. Ethnically and racially inspired gang attacks continue with disturbing frequency on the city's streets, public transportation system, and in parks and other public spaces. Police response to such incidents remains disappointing, while the judicial system struggles to handle trials with dispatch. Budgetary allocations to support program activities have been inadequate.

Profound change has taken place in St. Petersburg's response to cultural and racial intolerance over the past two-to-three years. The city government and its leaders are firmly on record as condemning intolerance and violence. City agencies actively promote opportunities to highlight the contributions of various economic groups to the city's overall well-being. City officials publicly embrace diversity more enthusiastically than ever

³³"Saban tuyi," in *Tatar Encyclopedia* (Kazan': Institute of the Tatar Encyclopedia, Tatarstan Republic Academy of Sciences, 2002).

³⁴For example, the Interleasing Group was a major corporate sponsor for the 2007 St. Petersburg Sabantuy (www.ileasing.ru).

³⁵Interview with Boris Aleksandrovich Koptin, April 25, 1007.

before in Russian history. Finally, serious long term efforts are underway to insure that future “Petersburgers” consider diversity to be a normal state of being in the twenty-first century.³⁶

Profiting from Diversity, Learning from Montreal

Montreal has evolved over the past third-of-a-century from a city divided between two founding linguistic and cultural communities—French and English—into a complex inter-cultural metropolis rooted in generally shared knowledge of French.³⁷ In most recent years, the city’s economy has expanded as business, community, and political leaders have learned how to capitalize on these changes. Indeed, transnational migration to Montreal during the first years of the twenty-first century has become essential to the city’s well-being given otherwise precipitous projected declines in total population and labor force.³⁸

Recent migration within Canada has changed in three dimensions which have reshaped the urban experience of Montreal.³⁹ First, transnational migrant flows have shifted from Montreal to Toronto and the Canadian west as the economic uncertainties generated by debates over Quebec sovereignty devalued the Montreal region as a receiving area for migrants from abroad.⁴⁰ Second, migrants to Montreal—as everywhere in Canada—increasingly have arrived from the Caribbean Basin, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.⁴¹ Third, Montreal’s migrants have come more and more from French-speaking societies in Africa, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia.⁴² One consequence of these trends emerged in the 2001 Canadian Census count, which revealed that “visible minorities” had come to making-up nearly a fifth (18.7%) of the city’s overall population.⁴³

This transformation is most evident in Montreal’s leading transnational neighborhoods such as Côtés-des Neiges and the neighboring Notre-Dame de Grâce.⁴⁴ At times known as Montreal’s “Bronx,” Côtés-des-Neiges in

³⁶The goal of making diversity “normal” for the city’s schoolchildren is viewed as an essential objective for the program. Ibid.

³⁷For further discussion of these trends within Montreal, see Blair A. Ruble, *Creating Diversity Capital. Transnational Migrants in Montreal, Washington, and Kyiv*, pp. 34–44.

³⁸A point made in a number of studies, as reported in Radio-Canada, “L’immigration: apport essentiel à l’économie montréalaise” (30 December 2003).

³⁹Peter S. Li, “Deconstructing Canada’s Discourse of Immigrant Integration,” *Journal of International Migration and Integration/Revue de l’intégration et de la migration internationale*, vol. 4, no. 3 (2003): 315–333.

⁴⁰By 2001, 43.7% of the population of metropolitan Toronto was foreign born, as was 37.5% of Metro Vancouver’s population. Both figures are markedly higher than the estimated 18.4% of the residents of metropolitan Montreal (and only 2.9% of the residents of the Quebec City region) who were born outside of Canada. The 2001 Census figures are available on line on the Statistics Canada website at <http://www.statscan.ca>.

⁴¹D.F. Levy and L.S. Bourne, “The Social Context and Diversity of Urban Canada,” p. 23. For more extensive discussion of the Asian immigrant experience in Canada, see the essays contained in Eleanor Laquian, Aprodicio Laquian, and Terry McGee, editors, *The Silent Debate: Asian Immigration and Racism in Canada* (Vancouver, B.C.: Institute of Asian Research, the University of British Columbia, 1998).

⁴²Denis Helly, *L’immigration pour quoi faire* (Montreal: Institut Québécois de Recherche sur la culture, 1992).

⁴³L’INRS-Urbanisation, Culture et Société, *Portrait des populations immigrante et non immigrante de la ville de Montréal et de ses 27 arrondissements* [www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/diversite/portrait.htm]. The Canadian Census identified Canadians of “Black, South Asian, Chinese, South East Asian, Arab and Middle Eastern, Latin American, Korean, Japanese, and Filipino heritage” as constituting the country’s “visible minorities.”

⁴⁴Côte-des-Neiges has been the subject of extensive social science research in part because of its diverse and complex character and, in part, because of the presence in the neighborhood of l’Université de Montréal and its faculty and students. An excellent collection of articles examining various aspects of neighborhood life during the 1990s may be found in: Deidre Meintel, Victor Piché, Danielle Juteau, and Sylvie Fortin, editors, *Le Quartier Côtés-des-Neiges à Montréal. Les interfaces de la pluriethnicité* (Montréal/Paris: L’Harmattan, 1997).

particular, has become home to Africans, Arabs, Cambodians, Jews, Philippines, Lao, Vietnamese, Chinese, Latin Americans, Portuguese, Haitians, and members of various other groups living in close proximity to one another.⁴⁵ By the 1990s, Côtés-des-Neiges and Notre-Dame de Grâce were home to over 154,000 residents who sustained flourishing small business districts dominated by ethnic entrepreneurs.⁴⁶ Local businesses were producing sufficient advertising revenues during the early 1990s to support two-dozen ethnic and neighborhood newspapers published in various African languages, Arabic, Cambodian, Hebrew, Philippine languages, Lao, Vietnamese, Chinese, Latin-American languages, Creole French, Québécois French, and English.⁴⁷

Montreal entered the twenty-first century with an astonishing mixture of ethnic, religious, racial, and linguistic communities—often without well defined boundaries among them. Given the historic enmities between anglophones and francophones—as well as between Roman Catholic and Protestant communities—“it is,” in the words of *La Presse* journalist Laura-Julie Perreault, “something of a miracle that Montreal did not become a Second Northern Ireland.”⁴⁸ Instead, as Perreault reports, the city’s 350 year old multi-confessional regime has become a marketing tool for the city’s burgeoning tourism industry. The result is not always blissful, as one can see in Stephen Henighan’s popular novels of late twentieth-century Montreal. To quote from the author of a review of Henighan’s 2004 story *The Streets of Winter*, Montrealers “are unable,

or unwilling, to relinquish the individual and cultural prejudice, nostalgia and expectation that alienate them in their quests for ‘*le vrai Montréal*.’” Once starkly divided by language, Montreal has become converted into “a grid of many solitudes.”⁴⁹

This “grid of solitudes” has recovered some of its historic economic dynamism in part because new Montrealers have been arriving every day. Migrants from around Quebec, Canada, and beyond represent critical new additions to a labor force that otherwise would be in precipitous decline. The future growth of Montreal’s regional economy depends on upgrading the skill profile and injecting younger workers into an aging population that has lagged behind other Canadian and US metropolitan regions in educational attainment.⁵⁰ Migrants have enhanced economic vitality in the city and region and must continue to add value to the local economy if the city is to thrive. The Montreal experience demonstrates the need to inculcate migrants into urban economic development strategies. Diversity must become recognized as an opportunity for economic success in order for the city and region to develop economically.

Multiplying Investments in Diversity

The experiences of Quito, St. Petersburg, and Montreal suggest that urban political and community leaders in many cities of the world are struggling to organize twenty-first century heterogeneity in a way that enhances everyone’s well being. These experiences are

⁴⁵Myriame El Yamani with the assistance of Jocelyne Dupuis, “La construction médiatique du ‘Bronx’ de Montréal,” in *Ibid.*, pp. 29-52.

⁴⁶Daniel Juteau and Sylvie Paré, “L’entrepreneuriat à Côtés-des-Neiges: le périmètre Victoria/Van Horne,” in *Ibid.*, pp. 129-160.

⁴⁷Myriame El Yamani with the assistance of Jocelyne Dupuis, “La construction médiatique du ‘Bronx’ de Montréal,” p.35. For a broader discussion of Montreal’s “ethnic” press, see Sylvie St-Jacques, “Des nouvelles de leurs mondes,” *La Presse* (April 21, 2004).

⁴⁸Laura-Julie Perreault, “Embouteillage sur le prie-dieu montréalais,” *La Presse* (June 12, 2004).

⁴⁹Karen Solie, “The Many Solitudes of Montreal,” *Globe and Mail* (June 12, 2004).

⁵⁰“OECD Territorial Review of Montreal,” *OECD Observer Policy Brief* (Paris, OECD, 2004), pp. 2-3 [www.oecd.org/publications/Pol_brief].

only small examples of a developing trend in urban governance world wide. Momentum is growing to expand the repertoire of responses to social and cultural diversity. Cities are seeking to create better environments for the adaptation of communities and migrants—both domestic and transnational—to one another, thereby increasing diversity capital. Successful politicians in very different cities are making explicit decisions to oppose a global trend toward social fragmentation and isolation.

These brief case studies reveal how difficult a task the reorganization of urban communities for heterogeneity can be. Public space has been reconfigured in Quito to be more inclusive; school curricula have been rewritten in St. Petersburg to promote tolerance; and entrepreneurship in Montreal among transnational migrants has created more

jobs. Few visitors and residents would mistake these cities for an urban ideal.

Policies fall short because improvement in any single urban domain produces the demand for improvement in other areas. More inclusive public space must be populated by better educated residents if jobs are to be produced; urbanites educated in the way of tolerance must have the physical space and the economic opportunity to engage other groups for the city to change; and new businesses must be accessible to diverse residents who have the education to sustain further growth. The task of organizing a city's heterogeneity in a period of rapid demographic change requires long term, multi-faceted, complex strategies which only emerge when the city itself becomes a shared focus of concern and attention. The city must become an agent of organization and education, and not just an object acted upon by others.

The Media, the City and Education. Between Hyperactivity and Indifference

Josep Ramoneda

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The Media, the City and Education. Between Hyperactivity and Indifference

1

In a book about his native city (Nantes), Julien Gracq, a peculiar French writer who has always been regarded as completely out of step with the times, discusses the form of the city.¹ The form of a city is related to how it is represented but also to the way its people live. When a city loses its form (its own unique calligraphy), it ceases, in a sense, to be a city and becomes an “urbanal” space, to use an expression coined by Francesc Muñoz. This expression refers to the multiplication of residential spaces without civic will—a consecration of the worst version of middle-class individualism—that expand around cities in a series of concentric circles of housing, like ripples in a pond.

The form of the city is a subject that draws little media attention. It is probably a matter too subtle to capture. As we already know, media simplification leaves little room for nuances. The form of the city is physical, but this physicality is lived, inhabited. The plan developed by 19th-century Catalan town planner Ildefons Cerdà is not the form of Barcelona: the city’s form is seen in the Eixample district, the Cerdà plan worked on and made tangible by people. A city is not given its form by the emblematic buildings, museums, stores, bars and restaurants featured in tourist guides. While this picture of the city may serve marketing purposes, its form is more complex—difficult to turn into something monumental or boil down to an image. If we had to choose an image to define the form of Barcelona, the Eixample would be

far more useful than the Sagrada Família, and the Gràcia district than La Pedrera (a building designed by Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí). The form of Barcelona is essentially that of a collection of towns caught in a web—the Eixample—that informs this new life. This is why Barcelona has often been pluralized in narrative: “Barcelonas” (Manuel Vazquez Montalbán) or the “Barcelonas” of Barcelona. The result is a peculiar form in which the underlying rationality has only partially penetrated the much more twisted spaces of the old towns that now make up Barcelona. This dual nature is the form of this city. It is in this context that the city is now absorbing an unprecedented wave of immigration from abroad, which spreads over the existing form, validating the idea articulated by Dipesh Chakrabarty: that we always live in places previously inhabited by others.² This is precisely why the form of a city is like an accent that emerges from its architectural and urban form to mark and determine the city’s spirit. It is this local accent that makes the city different from others. Do the media convey the form of the city? Not much, I am afraid.

2

The media address citizens, and citizenship is the mainstay of the city. To date, no space has been known to be more open to broad recognition of citizenship than the city. States put many obstacles in the path of those who come from abroad and seek recognition as citizens. For states, the distinction between nationals and non-nationals is a vital one

¹ I am referring to the book by Julien Gracq entitled *La Forme d'une ville* (Paris: José Corti, 1986).

² Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Humanism in an Age of Globalization,” draft of a paper presented in Essen, 2006.

that defines “us” and in so doing contributes to collective cohesion. Even today, during a time when migratory movements are restricted, cities are more open-handed than states. In Barcelona, simply registering with the city authorities grants a person such basic rights as access to medical care. By taking this step, illegal immigrants set out on the path to citizenship.

The unequal relationship between the media and citizens determines what we call public opinion, something that plays a decisive role in the formation of current social truths. We are living in a stage of capitalism in which, in open societies like ours, people can say virtually anything, but the vast majority of what is said serves only to reinforce the status quo. This reflects the capacity of the system to incorporate and dissolve its cultural contradictions, something that now-largely-forgotten post-war authors like Daniel Bell and Herbert Marcuse were able to see.³ Thus, while many of us contribute to forming the social truth, very few have a hand in determining it. In societies dominated by television, simplification and banalization hold sway.

Television is a cold medium. As a result, it has a certain calming effect; TV is unlikely to get viewers up off the sofa. Everything becomes fiction as reality skates across the screen. Revolutions nurtured by television have tended to be more peaceful than those nurtured by radio. For the same reason, TV also has a certain demobilizing effect. Television is the medium of the totalitarianism of indifference, which at times seems to threaten affluent European societies.

Television simplifies and banalizes. It simplifies because it demands abbreviated language, leaving no room for nuances. No sentence should take more than ten seconds to

say. The ideal subject matter for television is simple confrontation turned into spectacle. In this sense, television can be viewed as an extension of the democratic arena. Indeed, if parliament is the dialectical sublimation of conflict, the world of television is another stage in the same exercise.

But at the same time, television banalizes. Cruelty as a repeated image gradually loses its impact. When atrocities become routine, they are dehumanized and turned into pure spectacle. And no matter how shocking an image may be the first time we lay eyes on it, once we have seen the same image (or similar ones) a number of times, it means nothing to us. This has a very serious consequence: the only way to regain the attention of viewers is to increase the dose. This is how we have ended up with snuff movies and people provoking real acts of violence so they can film them and get them on our screens. The Internet is full of this.⁴ When we are used to having our lunch and dinner every day while images of terrorist attacks are served up to us on TV, this escalation in pursuit of intense emotions has no limit. At the same time, citizens react to these images with growing indifference. This is the duality of television. On one hand, it creates social truth (it has even been said that something doesn't exist if it is not on TV). But on the other hand, it distances us from reality by turning everything into fiction.

The apparent transparency of television images belies a system of multilayered concealment: concealment by accumulation, concealment by speed (due to the way information is hyperbolized), concealment by obscenity (the exhibitionism of the image), concealment by simplification, and concealment by standardization. Television contributes to the degradation of *physis*.⁵ This has

³ See Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996), and Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

⁴ There is a very interesting essay on this subject by Michela Marzano: *La mort spectacle. Enquête sur l'horreur-réalité* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007).

⁵ These issues are examined in my book *Después de la pasión política* (Madrid: Taurus, 1999).

led some authors to invite us to create reality through literature as a form of resistance to the ecstasy (exasperation and fragmentation) of information and as a response to the euphemistic language of politics.⁶

The television paradigm dominates the public arena. It is true that prophecies announcing the death of old media when a new one appeared on the scene have never been fulfilled. Radio did not spell the end of print media; motion pictures did not do away with radio; and television has not brought about the demise of radio or motion pictures. Neither, for the moment, have cell phones and the Internet led to the disappearance of television, radio, motion pictures or the written press. But today it is the television paradigm that has the upper hand. One can easily see how the other media (even print media) attempt to adapt to its laws. This is clear in the way the layouts and fonts used in newspapers have evolved in recent years. Television is responsible for what communication strategists call the multiplier effect. The important thing is the way a piece of information spreads from person to person, the echo that reaches those who never read a newspaper.

3

In the panorama I have sketched out, what is the contribution of the mass media—press, radio and television (the Internet is another world)—to the education of people, and therefore to building citizenship?

According to Zygmunt Bauman, the city is a “place where strangers live together permanently while keeping their differences and without stopping being strangers.”⁷ In other words, it is a place where people relate to each other in many ways on many different levels. This implies enormous cultural com-

plexity. Cities mix cosmopolitanism with the discourse of identity, and in the minimal overlap between frames of reference there arise diverse forms of cultural transversality and new imaginaries which, though woven here, still contain the music of faraway places.

The first thing we need to bear in mind is that the mass media are a window onto the world beyond our private sphere, one that provides a volume of information most citizens never had access to before. This information may be superficial, banal, etc., but just watching television (as almost everyone does) enables people to learn things and have access to diverse information from around the world. Before the age of TV, this was a privilege reserved for a small minority.

Needless to say, this information comes in a flood and is not very organized from a pedagogical point of view. Moreover, it is oriented mainly towards entertainment and minimal socialization of people. But anyone who believes that things were better in the past is mistaken.

It is precisely this flow of information from the mass media that naturally gives rise to diversity in terms of the way people are and the opinions they hold. And it is not banal because much blood has been shed by humanity to achieve this recognition of “the other”—that there is not just one way of understanding the world. Thanks to the media, freedom of expression is becoming like a second skin for citizens. The absence of that freedom is experienced as an unacceptable mutilation.

More information and the consecration of diversity as a natural characteristic of any modern city—these two factors are taking us in the right direction when it comes to democratic education.

⁶ In connection with this point, see James G. Ballard’s introduction to his novel *Crash*.

⁷ Zygmunt Bauman, *Noves fronteres i valors universals* (New Frontiers and Universal Values), Breus, (Barcelona: CCCB, 2006).

4

Now we can move ahead a bit. Not all media operate in the same way. Print media are becoming more and more of a minority phenomenon, aimed at just one sector of the population: those who read. The function of the press, therefore, is an increasingly complementary one. Recently, some newspapers have opted to free themselves, as a way of surviving, from the fatal attraction exerted by the television paradigm, and shift their focus to the kind of reflection and debate more characteristic of democratic culture. Radio reaches the ears of listeners directly and evokes emotional reactions more readily than any other medium. The common view that radio is a “hot” medium is well-founded. In many ways it is a medium of combat and plays an important role in political battles. A particular experience I had illustrates the power of the voice: while preparing an exhibition entitled *West Portrayed by East*, we had to decide whether or not to include videos showing the execution of Western citizens kidnapped by Islamic terrorists. Given how graphic the images were, we tried using just sound. It was far more unbearable that way.

In any case, I will stick to television, which remains the main spiritual nourishment for citizens.

Georg Simmel said that the nervous stimulation of urban life generates unease in modern man.⁸ In my view, advertising and zapping have now made television a mechanism that can trigger a similar nervous response, giving TV the potential to draw viewers into a hyperactive state. This hyperactivity has a particular focus: the permanent dissatisfaction associated with the cycle of consumption; the need to struggle to make a new purchase before the one just paid for has even reached the buyer’s hands, and all at an ever-faster pace. In an age when the rhythm of life has become so accelerated, it seems to me that

this dynamic has serious consequences for the way people develop, duty-bound as they are to buy happiness over and over again.⁹ People find it more and more difficult to focus their effort or attention. The problem is not just that any form of contemplation or deliberation has been abandoned; what is worrying is the need to be paying attention to half a dozen things at the same time. There is no calm of spirit in front of a television screen. Everything leads to one extreme or the other: “hyper-action” or indifference. And, in a sense, one fuels the other. There is not much difference between taking an interest in everything and not taking an interest in anything.

Information is no longer the scarce resource it had been throughout most of human history. Instead we are faced with a superabundance of information, and the problem is how to orient ourselves in a sea of inputs. Information needs to be organized into hierarchies and structured. Television is the ultimate tool for establishing such hierarchies. This is why it has such a vital role to play in education. With this in mind, we can turn the question around: the impact of television can only be made into something positive by a highly effective educational system that puts people who are intellectually mature in front of TV screens. We are, however, exposed to television at an earlier age than to any other medium.

We have uncritically accepted one of the sacred cows of modern liberal society: the view that private media should have a free hand to do as their owners please in the no-holds-barred fight to win audience share, and that the role of public media, financed with the taxes paid by citizens, is to fill in the gaps that remain. The distinction is even more absurd when generally the only difference between public and private media is that the news programs on the former are overseen directly by the government currently in power. What obsesses TV broadcasters—public

⁸ Georg Simmel: “La metrópolis y la vida moderna” (The Metropolis and Modern Life).

⁹ See, for example, Pascal Bruckner, *La vida bona (La vie bone)* Breus (Barcelona: CCCB, 2006).

and private—is audience figures. Moreover, the audience they are chasing is the result of a distorted system, one in which programming is restricted and subject to strict guidelines, and demand can only make itself felt to a limited degree. The discourse on audience is based on a trap: broadcasters say they provide the programs people want to see, and viewers say they can only watch the programs offered, which, it must be said, are increasingly alike across all channels. Thus despite their key role in educating citizens, television programmers are focused on audience, not citizenship.

5

There is no determination to educate in television. Essentially there is a determination to do business and exert political control, arising from a complex balance between media owners (and their system of interests), the state (in its regulatory role), and media professionals. Television can have an enormous impact. It is therefore a tool that those with power want to keep under control. There are countless examples of television being used for political and economic ends. Sometimes those pulling the strings go too far, as occurred in the run-up to the 2002 French presidential election. For months, private television channels reported extensively on criminal activity. The aim was to create a climate of insecurity among citizens in order to make Jospin (the prime minister at the time) lose the election. The result, however, was that the general panic enabled Le Pen to make it to the second round. Suddenly, from the night of the election, crime was no longer a lead story on the news; it was as if criminal activity had miraculously vanished.

There is, however, a structural problem in the relationship between information and education. This stems from the very definition of news. The newsworthiness of an event depends on its singularity. As they say: if a dog bites a man, that's not news; but if a man bites a dog, that's news. This means information focuses mainly on the more nega-

tive side of things, but without providing any kind of critical perspective. This is why opinions based on what we see on television are often so wrong. If there is a terrorist attack in a country, for instance, only images of horror reach us; we know nothing of what normal life there is like the rest of the time. This brings us to what I believe is an essential point: television plays a fundamental role in constructing the ideology of fear so prevalent in the West, where, in the name of security, freedoms are curtailed every day and the general response is one of indifference. Fear, as we know, has a demobilizing effect: it is a close cousin to indifference and lack of solidarity. What is the point of an education that bolsters these two attitudes?

6

Conclusion: The society dominated by television has more information than any other that has preceded it. But this information does not necessarily empower citizens to emancipate themselves—to think and make decisions for themselves. On the contrary, it tends to activate what American sociologists call “frames”: the ways of interpreting and responding to events we have internalized simply because they have been instilled in us ever since we were kids. Television does not teach us to adopt a critical attitude. This must be learned before exposure to the medium; once someone is in front of a TV, it is too late. Television encourages accommodation and indifference. It also tends to isolate viewers, promoting uncritical individualism. It has few of the virtues of modern individualism, but it does have some of its vices, such as a lack of interest in others.

Television should be for adults, and even that is questionable. Fortunately, though, we live in an open society, and television is the most universally accessible medium. I have the impression that if we could teach people how to watch television, we could get more out of the medium in educational terms. But in that case, perhaps the first consequence would be that we would watch less.

Competition and Cooperation. Justice and Peace

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Competition and Cooperation. Justice and Peace

1. Introduction

Fifty percent of the world's population lives in urban areas. Urbanization has become a growing, tangible process over the past decades. In the mid 20th century, only 33% of the world's inhabitants lived in cities, whereas by 2030 the figure is expected to rise to 63%. As it progresses, urbanization shapes economic and social attitudes that, for better or for worse, depart from traditional parameters.

Indeed, on one hand, the benefits of large conurbations are undeniable in that they facilitate access to good medical assistance and improved educational possibilities, social services and cultural activities, while strengthening the social fabric and making available a wide variety of tools that promote the emergence of new ideas and alternative proposals.

But it is also clear that it is precisely in urban areas where inequality and lack of solidarity, consumerism, acts of violence, housing problems, residential ghettos and a growing proliferation of "non-spaces" in reference to large shopping malls, service stations, airports, and chains of coffee shops, restaurants, hotels and so-called leisure centers that could be found anywhere in the world, are most likely to emerge.

The city has become a paradigm of social change and all the risks that undermine justice, freedom, peace and environmental protection, which we will see below, appear there in their strongest form, just as proposals for change are logically formed in the critical conscience of society.

2. Ever-Growing Injustice

Despite the scientific and technological progress that would indeed make it possible, the basic needs of a large proportion of the world's population are not yet met. It is often the lack of political will, the lucrative goals of businesses and the selfishness of individuals that force thousands of millions of people to endure appalling living conditions. Among examples are those who die of AIDS due to lack of access to medication because pharmaceutical companies are careful not to share their patents; the inhumane working conditions that are exploited by offshore subcontractors of major companies; the shortage of resources to fight hunger when enormous amounts of money are spent on war; the irresponsible and immoral arms industry; the closing of borders to migrants; international trade under conditions of inequality; corruption combined with illicit business and tax havens; brain drain, financial speculation; abusive foreign debt; relentless exploitation of natural resources; environmental degradation; and indiscriminate urban development—these are just some of the mechanisms that generate such shortages. Furthermore, it is easy to verify that they have an even deeper impact when the population is concentrated in the periphery of large cities.

These mechanisms not only prevent many people from maintaining their dignity, but also lead to growing differences between those living in the North and South, in addition to differences within each country. While in the 1950s there was a rate of 30 to 1 in the per capita GDP between the richest 20% and the poorest 20% of the world's population, the difference is now 103 to 1. The same oc-

curs, although in a smaller proportion, with in countries where capital income grows as work income drops. Lastly, the same pattern is repeated in cities, and perhaps even more intensely.

3. Democratic Governability Called into Question

Strictly speaking, politics is the government of the “polis,” or city, and it is safe to say that the first democratic experiences occurred in cities. Nevertheless, the current formulations of representative democracy leave much to be desired at many levels. If we begin with political parties—one of the basic instruments of citizen participation—we immediately observe three major deficits: the lack of “primary” elections to choose candidates, the practical non-existence of open lists, and the “favors” that are offered to economic powers in return for funding.

Things do not appear to improve at state level, where we witness discrimination between first-class and second-class citizens, for example by not giving immigrants the right to vote. Meanwhile, it is practically impossible to undertake popular legislative initiatives, and municipalities—the first mainstay of democracy—receive only 16% of public money, compared to the 53% allotted to the central government.

On a European and global scale, we are forced to acknowledge the practical nonexistence of democracy. Clear examples are the European Parliament without legislative powers, the United Nations with one vote per state and therefore hugely disproportionate to their populations, a Security Council with an incomprehensible right of veto for five privileged countries, and institutions like those of Bretton Woods (World Bank and International Monetary Fund) in which the vote corresponds to the quota allocation. Not to mention that above formal organizations are factual powers ranging from the G8 to the Economic Forum in Davos, the Brus-

sels Chamber of Commerce to the Bilderberg Group, which determine appointments, policies, economic decisions and military actions with utmost impunity.

Furthermore, if people’s freedom is an imperative of democracy, we can see how it is quickly disappearing as social control increases. Cameras in public and private places, illegal phone tapping, photographic dissection of land, the monitoring of e-mails and Internet sessions, and the computerized storage of any kind of personal data: these are all operating at full speed and are justified through false fears of terrorism that are often promoted by governments and, when they are not, ultimately require a different kind of response. Again, city dwellers are hit hardest by these attacks on people’s intimacy and privacy.

4. Pacification Is Possible

It is doubtful whether wars have made any sense over the course of history, but clearly they now make less sense than ever before. During times when the economy was largely based on agricultural activities that were subject to the vicissitudes of the climate and natural phenomena, it may have become impossible for people to survive and, although not justifiable, their will to attack their neighbors in order to attain the goods they lacked may have been comprehensible. Nowadays, despite the millions of people who are starving, there are more than enough resources to satisfy the basic necessities of the world’s inhabitants. And when local or circumstantial deficits arise, they can be overcome thanks to modern communication systems, means of transport, scientific knowledge and other existing techniques. Thus, war is nothing more than intense selfishness and competitiveness taken to the extreme.

But wars do exist and among the reasons behind them are the economic interests largely linked to commodities and energy resources. These wars aim to maintain, or increase, the

welfare status of a fifth of the world's population in detriment of the rest. The armed conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and those waged in Angola and Somalia, closely follow this model of self-interest that is maintained internally in Algeria, Colombia, Congo Kinshasa and Congo Brazzaville, among other places. Occasionally, without turning into a war, these benefits for the privileged are upheld through dictatorial means based on torture, repression and extrajudicial murders, often with the backing of foreign powers. Such is the case of Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Myanmar and Uzbekistan.

Other times, wars are waged due to a series of political, social and ethnic conflicts that lead to social marginalization, territorial occupation, majorities that oppress minorities, and even minorities that oppress majorities. This has been the case of Israel versus Palestine, Serbia and Croatia versus Bosnia and Kosovo, the Russian Federation versus Chechnya, the north versus the south of Sudan, Morocco versus the Sahara and, until recently, Great Britain versus Northern Ireland.

Besides the origin of these conflicts, the main reason for concern is the obsession of most countries with having their war machines in permanent operation, which incites others to do the same. The war machines are almost always justified through the fabrication of false or exaggerated threats and nonexistent enemies. Working efficiently to ensure this is the case are a significant number of media companies often backed by major industrial corporations, important financial powers, heads of defense departments and the arms industry. For instance, the French press is largely in the hands of Serge Dassault (*Le Figaro*), a leading combat aircraft manufacturer, and Arnaud Lagardère (regional press and the Hachette publishing empire), the principal shareholder of the country's privatized war industries.

The arms cycle—a more polite way of referring to the war machine—is presented in different forms, each increasingly pernicious.

Firstly, according to estimates by international organizations, military expenditure currently stands at \$1.2 trillion per year, twenty-two times more than the amount the World Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) believes would be required to eradicate world hunger for a year. Secondly, the number of people who have joined the armed forces (some 26,000,000) is surprising when, according to the United Nations, half a million blue helmets would be more than enough to appease situations of conflict worldwide. Thirdly, there is the perverse research with military goals that, despite its unacceptable ethical dimension, is justified with the excuse that civilians will benefit from these innovations. In fact, benefits have proven to be scarce, technology transfer channels usually follow the path from civil to military, and arms-related discoveries have absolutely no respect for human life. Fourthly, the production and transfer of arms that often flows from North to South ensure ample profits for the rich, while causing wars in poor countries. Conversely, drug trafficking flows in the opposite direction; arms are frequently paid for with drugs, and drugs are often purchased with arms. The Spanish weapons industry is particularly shameful, as it is one of the world's largest exporters and a major supplier of ammunition for wars in Africa, as denounced by Intermón Oxfam.

However, if we say that pacification is possible, it is because, as long as we have the personal and political will to secure certain conditions, we truly believe this to be the case. As a basic principle, and as set out in the UNESCO Charter, we should remove wars from our minds. Nowadays, it is impossible to conceive a "fair war" and if we consider that the war waged in 1991 to reconquer Kuwait—which resulted in the casualties of three hundred American soldiers, 270,000 Iraqis and the subsequent embargo that, according to UNICEF, created over one million victims among children under the age of five—we must immediately reevaluate our moral beliefs. However, if the conflict has already begun, unconditional peace negotiations must be instantly instituted.

The peace process should continue with nuclear and conventional disarmament, reducing the contingent of armed forces, destroying arsenals and reconverting the military industry to benefit civil goals. Although these are usually political decisions, they must be exhorted by citizens through social movements and individual commitments. At this point, nobody can deny the moral justification of those who demonstrated against nuclear tests, the Vietnam War and the invasion of Iraq, to mention only a few specific cases. Similarly, today we all understand those who object to compulsory military service on moral grounds, and we are slowly acknowledging the reasons for fiscal, financial, labor and scientific objections to anything involving war provisions.

We have left a central factor until the end of this chapter: education for peace. Education for peace, and peace itself, needs to be understood in a broad sense that demands justice, disarmament, respect for human rights, social equity, development of peoples, care for the environment and many other requirements. In this respect, it comprises the education that leads to the fulfillment of these goals. But education for peace also calls for us to become aware of the privileges we enjoy as citizens of the North, to renounce competitiveness, eliminate any manner of discrimination, fanaticism and patriotism and hold the value of human dignity above any material, individual or collective gain. Education for peace also demands the disappearance of the ever-present virtual violence in films, comics, videogames, role-playing games, war toys and any educational or leisure instrument for children, youth or adults.

Complementing education for peace is research for peace, paradoxically undervalued compared to research for war, but essential if we wish to determine the origin of conflicts and their possible solutions. It is reassuring to know that working in this direction and following the models already established mostly in northern Europe is the newly launched International Catalan Institute for Peace (ICIP),

approved by the Parliament of Catalonia and based on the Law for the Fostering of Peace, and the subsequent creation of the Catalan Council for the Fostering of Peace, the consultative body that connects the civil society with political institutions in peace issues.

5. Immigration, the Keystone of City Life

The city is the migratory space par excellence. The injustice described in the second section and the wars analyzed in the third explain the driving forces behind migrations and population flows. We are interested in learning how the North can respond to these flows but, unfortunately, the response is very negative: we close our doors to the arrival of immigrants, which leads to mafia-controlled trafficking of humans who often end up dead; we do not give them the necessary documentation but instead put them in situations involving precarious work and social instability; we do not give them full rights as citizens and thus facilitate their mistreatment and discrimination.

Misconceptions must be reversed and we need to realize that migration—a practice as old as humanity itself—has always been motivated by hunger and war. We should also understand that aging societies like those in Europe require immigration as a source of youth and labor force. However, the real reason we must welcome them is because they have the right. To conclude, we should understand that, contrary to the cultural clash that is so often mentioned, migrations are at the origin of our habits, customs, traditions, artistic wealth and literary heritage.

It is also necessary to realize that mutual interrelations have not always come about in the same way. At times, processes of enrichment and respective osmosis have worked well enough, whereas in other circumstances they have given rise to conflicts, ghettos and situations of dominance. In our context, it has been a case of social rather than ethnic

discrimination. Thus, when we hear about the riots in the *banlieues* of major cities in France, we should realize the protests are actually against the faulty “social ladder” as a result of the labor and income policies of right-wing governments, rather than conflicts between groups from different ethnic backgrounds or territories.

Still, when walking around the Rambla del Raval area in Barcelona, one realizes that peaceful cohabitation is perfectly plausible and that we are still able to prevent the serious conflicts that have erupted in other European countries. But it will only be possible if we are capable of curbing the racist traits that appear in certain media, eliminating the xenophobic spirit of certain groups of the local population and instituting open public policies that are respectful to immigrants.

Before concluding this section, I would like to mention how unfavorably Spain has dealt with the issue of political asylum and exile over the past thirty years. Indeed, it is quite contradictory that as freedom practices in public life have improved, we have lost the ability to offer refuge to those who escape war and repression and come to our country not to improve their living conditions but to actually save their lives. The plurality and wealth that accompanied the arrival of those expelled by Latin American dictatorships in the 1970s have disappeared from our cities and, in absurd contrast to our situation at the end of the Civil War, we have refused to accept refugees, except in symbolic numbers, from Bosnia, Kosovo and Chechnya, not to mention those from Rwanda, Sudan, Iraq, etc.

6. Consumerism, Limiting Resources

Another of the major challenges that affect today’s societies and urban life in particular has to do with the exponential growth of consumerism and progressive depletion of resources, which was first observed in the 1950s and reached its height in the 1970s.

Indeed, once societies recovered from the devastation of the Second World War, the Western world, and particularly its companies, realized that consumption was the basis of profit and set in motion a careful and fervent plan using psychology and advertising techniques to motivate buyers, hypnotize them with products, offer them spaces that predispose their five senses towards the attention to goods, providing them with access, extended opening hours and easy payment terms, and luring them into a false sense of happiness.

This situation is beneficial to governments, regardless of whether or not they are democratic, because they create conformist citizens with uniform models of life, particularly in terms of consumption and leisure, who are rarely prepared to raise their voices against the system, especially if they are burdened with the responsibility of paying long-term mortgages, as occurs in Spain. France’s May 1968 was a clear warning of this situation, but it was only seized by certain minority groups; for the rest, the door to a single way of thinking was left wide open.

The results have not taken too many decades to become visible and we are now witnessing two things: firstly, that the current level of consumption cannot be generalized to the rest of the world. As stated during the Johannesburg Earth Summit in 2002, if all of humanity wanted access to the same natural resources (water, minerals, energy sources, wood, etc.) as those in the industrialized world—which account for a fifth of the total—we would need three planets. Consequently, from the viewpoint of justice as contained in the title of this section, the only way of applying it in the material area is by putting the theory of decrease into practice. In other words, we are not ethically authorized to grow any more—though we can, of course, continue to develop—when the majority of the world’s population will be forced to refrain from doing so. It is about time this idea were expressed by economic authorities and thus served as an example to business-

people and citizens alike, who must work to achieve the same goals.

Secondly, our injustice in terms of consumption will have an even greater effect on future generations. The symptoms are very clear: depletion of resources, loss of biodiversity, all kinds of pollution, global warming, etc. Furthermore, we are now beginning to witness resource wars, new diseases, lakes drying up, the disappearance of emerging areas, etc. Thus, we are in no way complying with the Indian proverb that says we must treat the earth well since it was not inherited from our ancestors but rather, is borrowed from our children.

7. All Is Not Lost

Although still going strong, today's socioeconomic system, which we have described in the previous sections, reached its height in the 1990s after the fall of the misnamed alternative to real socialism, which was in fact none other than state capitalism with a very high level of militarization. During the second half of the decade, signs of unrest were observed first in Chiapas in the south and later in Seattle in the north. These signs became established in January 2001 during the first of the World Social Forums, which under the well-known slogan "another world is possible" present a series of proposals for transforming the current globalization system.

While it could be considered an oversimplification, the series of contributions from the Forums, which began in Porto Alegre and have later been held at different levels in other cities around the world—once again, the role of the city—largely represent an attempt to build a community economy to replace the current one, which is seen as unjust and predatory.

Certain traits that can be inferred from the issues addressed point clearly in this direction. Good examples include: the improved

distribution of land for agricultural purposes, free transfer of technology, cancellation of foreign debt, growth of development cooperation, a curbing of the speculative rather than the productive economy, fair trade practices, promotion of ethical finances, establishing cooperative business formulas, distributing labor among all workers, responsible purchasing, promoting links with southern countries, occupation and recovery of abandoned factories, women's business ventures, creation of international taxation instruments, reconverting military expenditure towards social goals, basic income practices, soup kitchens, nonmonetary exchanges, and many others.

This new form of understanding the economy entails at least three requirements that correspond with the three social "partners": individuals, companies and the public authorities. Individuals, including not only consumers but also workers and investors, must replace the philosophy of "having" with that of "being," replace competitiveness with cooperation, and material profit with collective welfare. Companies must embrace the concept of social responsibility in the true sense of the term rather than as a marketing strategy, as so often occurs. Social responsibility should be applied to workers, customers, users, suppliers, commercial competitors, subcontractors, public tax offices and all levels of the government. Meanwhile, public authorities must ultimately understand that their purpose is to offer a public service to all citizens and not only to the most powerful and privileged, that taxation must be fairly distributed, and that economic, social and cultural rights must be as fully respected as civil and political rights.

In this context, the city is nothing more than a space for rather unfortunate verifications and a laboratory for tests that may actually become transformation tools. If that were the case, then we truly would be in a position to speak of educating cities.

Urban Culture: In Search of Authenticity

Sharon Zukin

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Urban Culture: In Search of Authenticity

With most of the world's population now living in cities, urban culture should be a powerful expression of collective identity. But few cities are sure of what their identity is. More vulnerable than ever to waves of migration and movements of capital, they are socially more diverse but increasingly look the same. Their cultural continuity is challenged by big changes over which they have no control: the end of traditional industries like textiles, steel, shipbuilding, and automobiles, the rise of influential transnational elites in finance and media, and the pervasive presence of new migrants in all areas of social life. Global media chains, aided by the World Wide Web, promote and popularize new attractions while making it possible to avoid face-to-face interactions. New forms of urban culture, from iconic architecture to fast food restaurants and hiphop bands, impose a universal modernism on city dwellers' local sense of space and time. Expressing the anxiety many men and women feel about these changes, urban culture suffers from a crisis of authenticity.

This crisis is most tangible in the city's center. By the 1960s, in the richest cities of the world, decades of disinvestment had left a legacy of empty warehouses, rotting docks, and partly empty office towers. Factories, offices, and richer residents were steadily moving to the suburbs and even to other regions of the world. The center they left behind was gradually pressed into use by creative artists and shoestring entrepreneurs, from immigrant street vendors to would-be gourmet chefs and art gallery owners. Their activities brought a new vitality to old neighborhoods, while in the central business district, bank headquarters, financial firms, and media startups arose like beacons of a new age to

come. Adventurous teachers, writers, lawyers, and business professionals moved into old houses and lofts, creating a new style of urban life between bohemian and bourgeois. The places they established—public places like cafés, restaurants, and boutiques, and the private spaces of their homes—soon attracted attention for their industrial chic design and camera-ready patrons. With the steady growth of media and the arts, these spaces acquired an irresistible dynamic: they were visible signs of a new urban culture.

By the 1970s, the gradual “upscaling” of urban spaces to artists' quarters and gentrified locales suggested a model that governments and private investors could follow: using *cultural* capital for broader urban redevelopment. This strategy promised to renew city centers without the trauma of tearing down historic buildings and displacing large numbers of long-time residents, but it deferred to the cultural tastes of a highly educated, relatively mobile group of men and women. In North America and Western Europe, their preference for old districts, historic buildings, and neighborhoods rich in aesthetic meaning defined authenticity in a new way. It also placed them in the midst of older, poorer, and less mobile city dwellers, whose right to the city depended on family, habit, and local social bonds.

At the same time, a wider initiative to reshape the city center began in the United States, where since the 1950s shoppers had deserted downtowns for suburban homes and shopping malls. Local real estate developers and government officials dreamed of turning the city center into a new kind of shopping space that would bring back middle class residents and also attract suburban

visitors and foreign tourists—remaking the old downtown into a “festival marketplace.” Like gentrification, these downtown developments also followed a cultural strategy. Their developers used old buildings as both an historic backdrop of local identity and an aesthetic marker of distinction. The festival marketplace relied on a new awareness of the cultural value of historic heritage in the form of “landmark” architecture. But it also reflected the growing importance of shopping malls as sites of both individual leisure consumption and public culture.¹

Although the new downtown shopping centers brought record numbers of shoppers to the city center, these shoppers did not circulate around the old city streets. Developers of new urban marketplaces created self-enclosed, almost “gated” spaces where shoppers could browse, buy, eat, drink, and visit an art museum, movie theater or aquarium, embraced by a feeling of security, abundance, and fun. The unknown dangers of city life were controlled by private security guards hired by the real estate developers who owned and managed the space, as well as by local laws prohibiting the presence of homeless men and women, beggars, and other disturbances. As a result, critics complained that these projects imposed a Disneyland-type social order on the unruly city center, depriving residents and visitors of spontaneous encounters with unexpected strangers and causing the city to lose its authentic experience of Otherness. Festival marketplaces in historic centers “staged” authenticity as a consumption experience, very much like Disneyland’s famous entertainment complex with a “wienie” (hot dog, or big attraction) at the center, in Walt Disney’s famous phrase.

But this sort of staging convinced both developers and shoppers to take the risk of investing in city life. The commercial success of Faneuil Hall in Boston, Baltimore’s Inner Harbor, and Horton Plaza in San Diego soon encouraged imitations in many U.S. cities, and spawned even more ambitious spaces, with aquariums, IMAX theaters, convention centers, and shops, from Barcelona to Singapore.²

Times Square

The remaking of Times Square, the famous entertainment zone in midtown Manhattan, shows how the staged authenticity of central spaces poses a dilemma for those who want to retain the city’s old popular culture but recognize the need for economic renewal. During most of the 20th century, Times Square was a vigorous entertainment center—everything from Broadway shows and movie theaters to bright neon lights, billboard advertisements, and milling crowds—at all hours of the day and night. At the beginning of the 1900s, its cosmopolitan aura enabled New Yorkers to call it, with some exaggeration, “the crossroads of the world.” In terms of national aspirations, Times Square was both the geographical and metaphorical center of American popular culture. Men and women gathered there to read the latest headlines spooling off the huge, electric Motogram sign, and it was in Times Square that Alfred Eisenstadt took his famous photograph, published in *Life* magazine, of a sailor sweeping a young woman off her feet and kissing her to celebrate the end of World War II. Times Square continued to draw visitors, including families with children, through the 1960s.

¹ Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers’ Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2003); Bernard J. Frieden and Lynne B. Sagalyn, *Downtown Inc.: How America Rebuilds Cities* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1989).

² Sharon Zukin, *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); John Hannigan, *Fantasy City* (New York: Routledge, 1998); Don Mitchell and Lynn A. Staeheli, “Clean and Safe? Property Redevelopment, Public Space, and Homelessness in Downtown San Diego,” in Setha Low and Neil Smith, ed., *The Politics of Public Space* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 143-75. “Staged Authenticity” from Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999).

But as a heavily traveled, carnivalesque area of the city, it also drew men and women looking for casual encounters with strangers, often involving the rough trade of sex and drugs. Because private real estate developers showed no interest in the area, the city government proposed several different projects, none of which attracted much attention—until the 1980s, when corporate investors made their own plans for a new Times Square featuring office towers: definitely not a festival marketplace, and not at all consistent with Times Square's authentic roughness and neon glitter. This plan stirred so much opposition that the project was delayed for several years, until potential financing disappeared in the stock market's decline.³

Much of the opposition came from the men and women who supported historic preservation and led many of the city's cultural institutions. Spearheaded by the Municipal Art Society, opponents campaigned to protect the authenticity of Times Square by aesthetic means: by preserving its *look*. They proposed a law requiring each building in the district to wear a large illuminated sign on its façade—making each building, in effect, a giant electronic billboard. Broadway theaters, threatened with being sold by those who owned the land on which they stood and swallowed up by new office development, inspired another new law. This law enabled theater owners to sell “air rights,” important for the opportunity they offer to build a much taller building on the site, to owners of nearby properties. The sale of air rights would protect the concentration of low-rise theater buildings on the side streets while skyscrapers rose on the broad avenues around them, beginning on Broadway itself. At the same time, the New York City Police Department began vigorous sweeps of the sidewalks and porno shops, removing the pimps, hustlers, and hyperventilating, overwhelmingly male

customers who made 42nd Street after dark so menacing, especially to women. For added force, the city government condemned properties occupied by porno shops that refused to change their stock or close, using the law of eminent domain to seize them “for the public good” and sell them to real estate developers who would replace them with less troublesome businesses.

The combination of “aesthetic legislation,” policing, and eminent domain prepared Times Square for a change of popular culture, one that relied, not coincidentally, on the Disney Company. The well-known New York architect Robert A. M. Stern linked these strategies, for he both served on Disney's corporate board and oversaw a local planning study of how to preserve the Broadway theater district. Stern recalls noting, when passing through Times Square one day in the late 1980s, how many people, especially women, came to matinee performances at the area's theaters by chartered bus from their homes in the suburbs. He then came up—so he recalls—with the idea of building attractions that would make Times Square safe enough for these visitors to feel at home there. Luckily, by the early 1990s, the Disney Company was also thinking about expanding their business by producing shows for the commercial theater that would feature their film characters and theme park rides. Placing Disney on Broadway, then, was an attractive prospect for both the urban planners and the corporation.

Locating Disney in Times Square suggested a healthy synergy between the family-oriented popular culture of Disney entertainment and the moral renewal the city government desired. With new laws protecting space in the district for legitimate Broadway theaters, private developers began to plan new entertainment facilities for corporate tenants who

³ William R. Taylor, ed., *Inventing Times Square: Commerce and Culture at the Crossroads of the World* (New York: Russell Sage, 1991); Lynne B. Sagalyn, *Times Square Roulette* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2001); Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities* (Oxford and Cambridge MA: Blackwell, 1995); Marshall Berman, *On the Town: One Hundred Years of Spectacle in Times Square* (New York: Random House, 2006).

wanted to be near the Disney beachhead. In the 1990s, when Disney still seemed an invincible corporate giant with universal popular appeal, the company opened a Disney store on Times Square and renovated a historic theater, the New Amsterdam, next door, for the premiere of “Beauty and the Beast.” They were soon joined by the youth-oriented cable music network MTV and a slew of themed restaurants, bars, and performance spaces with well-known brand names—from Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum and Virgin Megastore to B. B. King’s Blues Club and a Hello, Kitty store.

By the usual measures of urban redevelopment, Times Square is a rousing success. Every year, 26 million visitors come to gawk at the bright lights, eat at the restaurants, shop at Toys ‘R’ Us, and, perhaps, go to the theater—at least to the Disney theater. The area’s economic impact, according to the Times Square Alliance, a local business group, equals the combined economies of Bolivia and Panama. While the cultural attractions bring crowds that fill the square from 42nd to 50th Street, day and night, the area is ringed by corporate office towers for the main job-providing sectors of the city’s symbolic economy—media and finance. The headquarters of Condé Nast, the Hearst Corporation, and the New York Times are nearby, as well as the headquarters of NASDAQ, offices for financial firms Lehman Brothers and Morgan Stanley, and corporate law firms. Times Square’s promoters claim that the renewal has kept the district’s unique populist appeal while cleaning it up for the public and making it a good location for the headquarters of high-status transnational corporations.

But is the new Times Square authentic? From the beginning of its renewal, critics have complained bitterly of “Disneyfication”—a bland, mind-numbing sameness of corporate brand names, bad food, and banal entertain-

ment. Branches of transnational businesses like Madame Tussaud’s deny the unique location, detaching it from New York’s history and from the area’s pop culture roots in live performance. Despite its pulsating neon billboards and the crowds that make the asphalt ripple with expectation, Times Square has become a fast food franchise of popular entertainment. It is a modern, standardized expression of urban culture that, despite the prominence of its live-action events, like the dropping of a glittering ball from the top of the Times Tower on New Year’s Eve, risks being a cliché.

Authentic urban culture should carry the force of destiny. We see it in old buildings, narrow streets, and the sheer variety of people, trades, shops, and sights that we encounter in a big city. It’s a brick-and-mortar feeling in our bones that we can’t separate from the city’s historic scale of low buildings, mom-and-pop stores, and crowded streets: it’s a different aesthetic. It’s also a social feeling, an unforced sense of civic pride among strangers and a fierce social bond among locals. Both socially and aesthetically, the desire for authenticity is a cry against modernity—against the sameness of impeccable new buildings, inescapable branches of chain stores, and an oppressive high-rise grid of towers in the sky. But the idea of authenticity is also rooted in modernity. Being truthful to an innate or historic character can only be valued in an era when everything is seen as changing and everyone is seen as capable of being false. Authenticity is the *appearance* of truthfulness. If we seek authenticity in cities today, we are rebelling against the falseness that we see in the staged hominess of the suburbs and the staged history of Disneyfied centers. We are trying to escape the mass production of pleasure—even if this leads us to the mass consumption of old brownstone houses, cast-iron loft buildings, and cobblestone streets.⁴

⁴ For similar thoughts, see Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982) and Richard Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye* (New York: Norton, 1990). In *Real Black: Adventures in Racial Sincerity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), John L. Jackson, Jr., uses *sincerity* to indicate an individual’s *performance* of an authentic identity.

Although we value it as “real,” authenticity never emerges on its own. It is always produced by men and women who recognize it, write about it, nurture it, and sell it to others. In its narrowest meaning, authenticity is a stamp of approval given by experts to unique objects—like the *authenticated* Rembrandt portrait—but in a broader aesthetic sense, it can also be a music critic’s recognition of a singer’s *authentic* genre sound or a restaurant critic’s praise of an *authentic* culinary style. With clever producers and a good marketing campaign, authenticity can be manufactured. It’s a “renewable resource,” as the sociologist Richard Peterson says, and in this contradiction we find both authenticity’s unique originality and its potential for innovation. There’s nearly always an act of discovery involved in authenticity—unearthing the diamond in the rough, finding the rare vinyl recording, or happening upon the once famous blues singer at a cheap music club. Authenticity, then, implicates the cultural consumer. In contrast to the staged authenticity of new-style blues clubs aimed at tourists, extricating the “real thing” or the “next new thing” requires not just a certain connoisseurship but also a willingness to dig deep in the mud of dive bars and warehouse performance spaces.

In the aesthetics of urban spaces, authenticity is a visible image of the jagged edges of uneven development—bearing witness to a naked city of dense crowds, dark streets, and underground pursuits. This is the *terroir* of paranoia as well as creativity, of three-card monte and other illegal confidence games played in the open, on the sidewalk, as well as of Jane Jacobs’s hymn to the neighborly interdependence of local shopkeepers, school children, and housewives that she called

“the ballet of the street.” Authenticity is not the ego of massive urban plans, it’s the libido of creative uses that drives the city’s soul.⁵

Guggenheim Bilbao

In most cities, it’s the ego of planning a revitalized urban center that drives the building of new cultural districts in old industrial quarters, on derelict docks, and in vacant warehouses and factories. A counterpart to the festival marketplace, these new cultural districts are developed around a high-class “wienie,” usually a modern art museum, but also an opera house (Sydney), theaters (Singapore) or an island of ready-made cultural institutions (old, as in Berlin and Vienna, or new, as in Abu-Dhabi). In contrast to cultural centers in ancient cities, which occupied sacred ground and became icons because of their ritual practices, today’s cultural centers are conceived from the outset as secular icons to symbolize the city and mobilize investment in a new economy. They are a city’s competitive chips in the casino of globalization.

Beginning in the 1960s, when the Sydney Opera House and the Pompidou Center of Modern Art, in Paris, were planned, cultural centers have been asked to fulfill several roles: as magnet of urban redevelopment, prestige symbol of the nation, energizer of creativity and innovation. They are nearly always located on land that has lost its industrial uses and its economic value—often on the waterfront. In Paris, the Pompidou Center was planned, in part, to revitalize the area around the rue Beaubourg, a *terrain vague* of low-rent, dilapidated housing, small work-

⁵ Richard A. Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); David Grazian, *Blue Chicago: The Search for Authenticity in Urban Blues Clubs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961); on the “delibidinization” of New York, see remarks by Broadway theater producer Rocco Landesman in Sewell Chan, “Panel Discussion: Has New York Lost Its Soul?,” <http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/10/04/has-new-york-lost-its-soul/>, October 4, 2007, but I heard the author Samuel L. Delaney express the same idea in a panel discussion on Times Square at Columbia University in the early 1990s.

shops, and cheap shops between the not-yet-gentrified Marais and the not-yet-demolished wholesale food markets of les Halles. The patrons of these new cultural centers—political and business leaders—placed a priority on innovative design and organized a competition among architects from around the world that was won by architects from overseas. Today, the winners of these competitions are “starchitects” with many honors and commissions in their portfolios. At the Pompidou Center, the choice of a startling industrial design that exposed pipes and other parts of the building’s structure, painted in bright colors, was intended to represent a set of progressive programs and institutions that would force Paris (and, by extension, France) to become a dominant player on international modern art and music circuits. By the 1990s, when local leaders in Bilbao and Hong Kong planned larger cultural districts on the waterfront, their thoughts turned to how these cultural facilities could help their city to achieve, or retain, an important role in global financial markets. They seldom asked how these cultural districts could help local artists—either by showing their work or making them the focus of media attention.

New cultural districts do attract media attention. An increasing number of art magazines, travel guides, and Internet websites dedicated to cities and leisure promote new cultural scenes as places to go. Although the public may have no idea of what art, exactly, is showcased in the new facilities, they hear the “buzz” about them. Lower air fares, more free time, and a stronger emphasis on individual mobility encourage cultural tourism, especially among the wealthy, highly educated men and women who likely collect such experiences as signs of their distinction. Young people, even from overseas, are often attuned to the emergence of these cultural districts, and to individual cultural institutions, in a way that locals are not. (I think of the young Italian couple I saw who wanted to enter a bus on Fifth Avenue not long ago, and asked the driver if the bus was going to

“MOMA,” as the Museum of Modern Art calls itself, but the driver was bewildered by the museum’s brand name.) Like Times Square and other urban entertainment centers, these cultural districts are often wildly popular. But not all of them are popular among the local population. The big open space in front of the Pompidou Center has been filled with tourists and buskers, young people and break dancers, many of them French, from the time the museum opened. Meanwhile, the big open space in front of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao is generally empty except for tourists.

Unlike the Pompidou Center, which is owned and run by the French government, Guggenheim Bilbao is an outpost of the global chain of Guggenheim museums. Conceived as an attention-getting symbol of the city’s triple goal—breaking loose from declining industries, cleaning the detritus of steel mills and shipyards from the waterfront, and carrying out a bloodless counter-terrorist campaign against Basque separatists—the museum had many local uses. But, like the corporate leaders of the Disney Company who decided to set up shop in Times Square, the director of the Guggenheim Museum, based in Manhattan, was already primed for expansion. Since the mid 1980s, Thomas Krens had planned to open several branches in other cities of the world as well as sponsor a new Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MassMoCA) in North Adams, a declining industrial town in the Berkshire Mountains of New England. The Guggenheim Museum had more art works than it had exhibition space to show them; many recently acquired works and installations were so large they required galleries of their own.

Like the Times Square project, the revitalization of Bilbao’s industrial waterfront embodied a desired synergy between the strategies of Basque business leaders and urban planners and of Krens, a cultural entrepreneur. Like Times Square, the Pompidou Center, and other new cultural districts around the world,

Guggenheim Bilbao would be joined by new shops and upscale apartment houses: real estate development. But unlike most other cities, Bilbao had a broader, more ambitious strategy to modernize urban infrastructure by organizing competitions for the design of subways, bridges, and airport terminals. The main point, though, was the same: to join the best of global design and local fabrication to craft a set of new urban symbols. This represented an extraordinary break from the inwardness of local traditions toward an outward-looking tourist economy.⁶

But both inside the galleries and in its wider urban surroundings, Guggenheim Bilbao has a problem with authenticity. If authenticity means “original” in the sense of being true to *local culture*, the museum fails, for neither its architectural design nor its corporate sponsorship is rooted in Bilbao. The architect Frank Gehry intended the curved, silver-color titanium panels of the museum’s façade to represent the waves of the Nervion River and to suggest the toughness of the blast furnaces that used to be nearby. But the museum’s sinuous shape and flashy reflections of light could just as well suggest a cosmopolitan glamour—the glamour of the actress Marilyn Monroe, as Herbert Muschamp, the late architecture critic of the *New York Times*, wrote when he visited Bilbao at the museum’s opening in 1997. The building suggests an “American style of freedom,” Muschamp wrote. “That style is voluptuous, emotional, intuitive and exhibitionist.” Nothing could be farther from either traditional Biskaian culture or attitudes in Bilbao, a city that in the past had rejected both the minimalist steel sculptures of the American

artist Richard Serra and the work of modern Basque artist Jorge Oteiza.⁷

Since the shipyards and steel mills had not yet been demolished when Muschamp wrote this, it was easier for him than it would be for a visitor today to say that Gehry was inspired by Bilbao’s 19th-century industrial power. But Gehry remade this industrial heritage into an abstract form, and the museum itself replaced a factory that, by some accounts, was still in working order. These material transformations of urban culture represent the new museum’s dominant position in the city, where it both overlooks the city center and takes the major share of the regional government’s cultural funding. Neither is there a place for local art inside Guggenheim Bilbao. All the exhibitions feature work by overseas artists. This is perhaps a good thing for Bilbao, where the local Fine Arts Museum has an excellent collection of historical local work but lacks a strong modern art collection. Yet it casts doubt on the integration of the cultural district with local artists who live and work in the city today. Neither can it be said that the museum caters more to local visitors than to tourists. Ticket prices are high for people in Bilbao, where the unemployment rate is 60 percent among young people, and most visitors come from other areas of Spain and overseas. Moreover, hotels that have been built for cultural tourists are expensive, high-end places. Visitors tend to come once, stay one or two nights, and leave without seeing the rest of the city. (When I stayed at a hotel next to the museum and asked the clerk at the reception desk for a city map, he drew a big circle around the old city center and cautioned me not to go

⁶ The museum has sparked a never-ending debate about industrial vs. art-and-finance-led revitalization in Bilbao. See Lorenzo Vicario and P. Manuel Martínez Monje, “Another ‘Guggenheim Effect’? Central City Projects and Gentrification in Bilbao,” in *Gentrification in a Global Context*, ed. Rowland Atkinson and Gary Bridge (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 151–67; Joseba Zulaika, *Cronica de Una Seduccion: el Museo Guggenheim Bilbao* (Madrid: Nerea, 1997). On North Adams, see Zukin, *Cultures of Cities*.

⁷ Herbert Muschamp, “The Miracle in Bilbao,” *New York Times*, September 7, 1997; Joseba Zulaika, “Tough Beauty: Bilbao as Ruin, Architecture and Allegory,” in Joan Ramon Resina, ed., *Iberian Cities* (New York and London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 1–17.

there: a visible symbol of Bilbao's recent uneven development.)⁸

Many people would congratulate the leaders of Bilbao for taking destiny into their hands—for acknowledging the end of the industrial economy, welcoming change, and developing a cultural vision of the city's future. But this vision has shaped the thinking of leaders in quite a few cities in the post-industrial era. A quarter-century has passed for the "Beaubourg effect" to become the "Bilbao effect," and in this time, hopes for cultural-led redevelopment have led to an endless series of waterfront cultural centers, cultural festivals, and cultural competitions. If the annual selection of a European Capital of Culture is just the most widely promoted case of cities trying to remake themselves in a new civic image, these flagship projects pose serious questions about the future of urban culture. Has the repetition of these projects led to the imposition of a single mold of creativity—one that excludes residents who are neither producers nor consumers of new art? Does it diminish the uniqueness of museums that become, like the Guggenheim, a global franchise operation? In the nineteenth century, industrial Bilbao was certainly connected to economic powers outside the region—to European bankers and English factories that invested in its steel mills and shipyards. But today's modern art museums are, in many ways, incubators of a new globalization. They are not just sources of pleasure and learning, but technologies of discipline that force urban cultures to open up to the

outside, adapt to transnational markets, and become more cosmopolitan.⁹

50 Moganshan Lu

Cultural districts suggest that promoting a new economy is not just about hard drives and silicon chips: "technopoles" like Silicon Valley where innovative computer engineers meet venture capitalists do not attract the creative thinkers who are likely to devise new uses for high-tech products that glamorize and popularize the information economy. Less monumental in size than a cultural district but equally ambitious in its vision of the future, the "creative hub" is a different effort to remake the production side of urban culture. The hub is an intentional cluster of artists and designers in a neighborhood or a building complex. Sometimes it is subsidized by the state, like the creative hubs sponsored by the London Development Agency since 2004, but often it emerges as a spontaneous cluster of young artists, musicians, and performers, like the artists' districts of SoHo (Manhattan), Williamsburg (Brooklyn), and Hoxton (London), as well as the short-lived "Silicon Alley" of lower Manhattan. Many cities have the material requirements for these clusters to form: low-rent areas of formerly industrial, or even office, buildings that are near to both financial and media firms that will buy creative work, often on a free-lance basis, and to low-price shops, bars, and restaurants, whose ethnic and working class cultures provide a diversity of source material and a

⁸ There is an ongoing debate on the social and economic value of these tourist visits, some of which finds its way into global media. See Beatriz Plaza, "Evaluating the Influence of a Large Cultural Artifact in the Attraction of Tourism," *Urban Affairs Review* 36 (2000): 264-74 and "The Return on Investment of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30 (2006): 452-67; Denny Lee, "Bilbao Ten Years Later," Travel Section, *New York Times*, September 23, 2007. Guggenheim Bilbao takes 80 percent of the regional government's budget for museums: Zuleika, "Tough Beauty," p. 12.

⁹ On the use of new art museums to promote economic development, see Graeme Evans, "Hard Branding the Cultural City - From Prado to Prada," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27 (2003): 417-40; Chris Hamnett and Noam Shoval, "Museums as Flagships of Urban Development," in *Cities and Visitors*, ed. Lily M. Hoffman, Susan S. Fainstein, and Dennis R. Judd (Malden MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 219-36; George Yudice, *The Expediency of Culture* (Durham NC and London: Duke University Press, 2003). On the franchise effect and economic globalization in Bilbao, see Donald McNeill, "McGuggenization? National Identity and Globalisation in the Basque Country," *Political Geography* 19 (2000): 473-94.

feeling of authenticity. From the viewpoint of young cultural workers, sharing the streets with immigrants and workers helps to create a neo-Bohemia of creative energy. It also reproduces the edginess of the city's traditional unexpected encounters with strangers—and Strangeness: new cultural production thrives on the jagged edges of uneven development, in areas that have not yet been sanitized or Disneyfied.¹⁰

Whether they are subsidized or spontaneous, clusters of creative producers have an important economic function. They help to form networks that connect “creatives” in helpful synergies and collaborations, and also make them visible to and available for potential clients. Gradually some creative producers become cultural entrepreneurs, opening art galleries, cafés, and performance spaces where networking takes place. These spaces also show and promote the work of new, creative residents. They become a “scene” of cultural consumption, attracting the attention of media writers, art collectors, mainstream gallery owners, and museum curators, as well as of music industry talent-finders and other potential recruits to the artistic life. Gradually, these spaces begin to change local culture. They offer a more comfortable home to artists than the area's existing shops and bars, and they create a visible community that is more sophisticated in its way—more “hip”—than that of the long-time residents. Often new attractions for cultural consumers have the effect of raising rents in the area, which means that the artists' district or creative hub is a dynamic place in terms of both economy and culture. But rising rents have the potential not only to displace existing “authentic” communities—as they have done in New York City since the 1970s—but to make the

area too expensive for artists, themselves, to live. In London, recently, demand by graphic arts and advertising firms that rented inexpensive space in creative hubs in old factories on the urban fringe bid up rents, and gradually reduced the cheap space that had been available for individual artists.

The rationale behind state support of creative hubs, however, is that these clusters help the development of a new economy. They are an efficient way of creating the networks of information, suppliers, and clients that producers need. Studies show that cultural production, from mainstream media to alternative fashion, music, and art, provides more jobs every year; the financial value of buying and selling these goods and services grows in importance as traditional manufacturing continues to decline. Cultural producers, moreover, think up ways to increase the value of high tech machinery (by creating the software for video games) and of standard mass-produced items (by creating innovative advertising campaigns for autos or beer) as well as popularizing distinctive, new products for niche markets (by making stealth and word-of-mouth campaigns for indie bands, customized athletic shoes, and flavored vodkas).¹¹

These lessons have been taken by entrepreneurial business and political leaders in the rapidly growing economies of Asia, especially in cities like Shanghai where old industries are moving out and relocating to lower-cost regions of China, and city and district officials want to encourage new types of development. Although the Chinese government officially supports creative industries as a keystone of national economic development and prestige, local officials take both a politi-

¹⁰Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989); Richard Lloyd, *Neo-Bohemia: Art and Commerce in the Post-Industrial City* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Michael Indergaard, *Silicon Alley: The Rise and Fall of a New Media District* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

¹¹Allen J. Scott, *The Cultural Economy of Cities* (London: Sage, 2000); Andy C. Pratt, “The Cultural Industries in South East England: Towards a Sectoral Strategy,” in Dominic Power and Allen J. Scott, eds., *The Cultural Industries and the Production of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 19-36; Elizabeth Currid, *The Warhol Economy: How Fashion, Art, and Music Drive New York City* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

cal and a financial risk if they support emerging artists, whose work may be seen as critical of the party line and who had—at least until a few years ago—no foreseeable market value. In any case, a number of creative hubs formed in Beijing and Shanghai during the 1990s and early 2000s on the initiative of individual artists.

In Shanghai, the artist Xue Song moved into studio space in a vacant, 1930s-era factory complex at 50 Moganshan Lu, near the Suzhou River, owned by Shangtex, a large textile and apparel holding company that had moved to a new development zone on the Pudong side of the river, near the airport. Not only artists, but also business and political leaders saw the site's potential as a cultural hub, especially in light of the success of Factory 798, a complex of artists' studios and galleries that had opened in Beijing in 2001 and quickly spurred the development of a hip area of galleries, cafés, and boutiques. Artists in Shanghai, attracted by the cheap rents and location in the center of a rapidly growing, cosmopolitan city, rapidly moved into the Shangtex site; they were joined by individual cultural entrepreneurs from Europe and the United States who opened galleries of contemporary Chinese art, displaying work that until recently had not only been discouraged but even banned by government and party leaders. This work now appeared to be a positive attraction for foreign tourists and investors, who were as eager to "discover" new Chinese artists in gritty industrial surroundings in Shanghai as to find the work of other artists in similar surroundings in SoHo or the East End. Shangtex became an eager patron—or landlord—of new artists, for the company prides itself on its innovative union of technology and fashion to produce new synthetic fibers for the clothing industry. Moreover, 50 Moganshan Lu enjoyed

the support of local party and government officials. In 2002, the Municipal Economic Committee named the 21-building complex an official industrial park; two years later, this title was changed to "art industrial park."¹²

Building a creative hub at 50 Moganshan Lu suits Shanghai's ambition to become a global city that surpasses its close competitors—Hong Kong and Beijing—as both a financial and a cultural center, a capital of the symbolic economy. Spaces are occupied by a variety of creative concerns: art galleries, graphic arts, architects', and design studios, and TV and film production facilities. Not surprisingly, the hub's self-claimed branding strategy capitalizes on aesthetic and spatial representations that originated in the United States and have migrated to Europe and Asia: its slogan is "Suzhou creek/Soho/loft." As the hub's website states, these connections "embody that M50 [50 Moganshan Lu] is an integration of history, culture, art, vogue [sic], and originality." A meeting ground between the old loft buildings of Manhattan's SoHo and the new titanium marvel of Guggenheim Bilbao, Moganshan Lu is intended to upgrade the polluted waterfront, show a good way to re-use old buildings rather than tear them down, and bring technology together with art. To justify the effort, the management evokes not just the appearance, but the *experience* of authenticity: "The shabby factory buildings contain certain value, because the naked steel structure as well as the old brick walls and the mottled concrete make people feel the trueness and perfection of being existent." Urban culture can't get more ambitious than this.¹³

Moganshan Lu has proved to be popular with artists and tourists from overseas as well as from different regions of China. Visits are recommended by foreign guidebooks and

¹²Wang Jie, "Shanghai SoHo—50 Moganshan Road," <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/citylife>, August 29, 2006; <http://www.shangtex.biz/en/>.

¹³www.m50.com.cn. On cultural ambition and interurban competition: Lily Kong, "Cultural Icons and Urban Development in Asia: Economic Imperative, National Identity, and Global City Status," *Political Geography* 26 (2007): 383-404.

websites dedicated to Shanghai, to the art world, and to tourism. The afternoon that I visited, a few foreign tourists were eating lunch in the small café and looking around the open galleries, although when there are special exhibitions, several hundred visitors may come by in a single day. Some of the artists who show their work there come from Hong Kong and Taiwan; they find the cost of living lower on the mainland, and they have access in Shanghai to an international market. While a portion of the art is traditional in style, much more is almost shockingly modern and ironic, making parodies of Maoist-era artifacts and poses or suggesting that some of the more blatant results of the booming consumer society in China are as grotesque as the bourgeois capitalists caricatured by the German Expressionists of the early 1900s.

The danger is that 50 Moganshan Lu is not successful enough either to complement or to counter Shanghai's aggressive demolition of old buildings and districts. Although the city government aims to clean the Suzhou River and develop a pedestrian-friendly, green zone along its banks, construction crews continue to work day and night—tearing down factories like 50 Moganshan Lu and destroying the old city that grew up around them during the 20th century. Neither do creative hubs like Moganshan Lu benefit all artists. Some individual artists have become very successful; their work commands high prices and sells mainly to foreign tourists and at auctions overseas. But other artists find it hard to pay even the low rents at 50 Moganshan Lu. Since land prices are very high in the

center of the city, most artists cannot afford to live there. Some cannot even afford to work there, and have decided to rent less expensive studios on the edge of the city, using Moganshan Lu as gallery space where they try to sell their work. Higher property values in the center, then, have the same effect as in New York and London, where the production of art takes second place to high-class cultural consumption. Not just the rising prices paid for contemporary Chinese art, but the commercial success of Shanghai itself puts the city at risk of losing its soul.¹⁴

Conclusion

Authenticity is, most often, a recently cultivated taste in urban culture. It refers to a specific experience of buildings and areas of the city that are felt to be local, historical, and individually distinctive—and it finds its place at a specific moment, on the jagged edges between a city's dereliction and reconstruction. Local character, historical significance, and distinction are credited and confirmed, if not by an authoritative expert, at least by high-status cultural consumers, who may follow artists and other cultural producers into the city's derelict and lower class spaces, but soon displace them. Each dimension of authenticity can be subverted by aggressive entrepreneurs, ambitious business elites, and competitive political officials. "Local" becomes a brand to promote investment, tourism, and the city's future growth. "Historical" becomes a development strategy of adaptive re-use for the heritage industry. "Original" or "individually distinctive" becomes the siren

¹⁴ In Beijing, high rents and real estate development have had a similar effect on Factory 798 (Henri Benaim, *Rendering Modernity: 798, an avant-garde art district in Beijing*, senior thesis, Department of East Asian Studies, Yale College, 2006). On Shanghaiese artists and the international art market, see Charlotte Higgins, "Is Chinese Art Kicking Butt...Or Kissing It?," *The Guardian*, November 9, 2004. Aside from 50 Moganshan Lu, other creative hubs in Shanghai may have more commercial space for architects' and graphic artists' offices (like Bridge 8) or more space for artists' studios (like Tianzifang), while still others (like Yifei Originality Street, in Pudong) may be a Disney-like entertainment zone that combines creative production and various sorts of cultural consumption: "Theme pubs, restaurants, art shops and nightclubs have also been set up along the street, which features landscape lighting on trees and walls, with a central plaza" (Yang Li Fei, "Chen's Creative Cluster Opens," *Shanghai Daily*, October 10, 2007).

call of the hip neighborhoods and artists' districts that attract visitors to their boutiques, cafés, and bars.

The result, then, is a reproduction and standardization of authentic urban cultures around the world reflecting both an old material culture abandoned by industry in its global expansion and a new material culture of transnational cultural consumption created in its wake. We have only to look at the old Carlsbad brewery in the Vesterbro neighborhood of Copenhagen, which has become the

central attraction of a newly hip area, and compare it with the old Domino sugar refinery on the waterfront in Williamsburg, an amazingly similar old industrial structure in a newly hip area of Brooklyn. Around each old factory we find a disappearing working class neighborhood and a growing complex of art galleries, restaurants, shops, and multicultural diversity on the street (although few immigrants still live in either neighborhood). Authenticity has become, even more than land, a city's renewable resource—and its lifeline to the future.

City and Community Through Women's Eyes

Olivia Guaraldo

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She has recently edited the Italian translations of Judith Butler's most recent books, *Precarious Life* (Rome 2004) and *Undoing Gender* (Rome 2006) and has also edited the Italian translation of Hannah Arendt's essay *Lying in Politics* (Milan 2006).

City and Community Through Women's Eyes

1

The meaning of 'politics' is not immediately transparent when analyzed from a purely linguistic point of view. Clearly, 'politics' is derived from the term *polis*: a Greek word for a particular type of community, which further developed over the course of history with concepts such as the Roman *urbs*, *civitas* and, finally, in a wide range of European languages, city. Notwithstanding the Europe of cities that, from the Middle Age to the present, has painted unforgettable scenes of culture and history, the greatest contribution of Europe to modern political lexis—that is, the invention of the word 'State' and the categorical aspect that is centered upon it—seems to be going in the opposite direction. The word politics, in its modern sense, ends up denying the original meaning of that polis which is, indeed, the founding part of its etymological history. In the words of Hannah Arendt, the political model based on State, in fact, erases the idea of shared—interactive, contextual, current and, above all, horizontal—space that characterised the polis as a community.¹

The present contribution is intended as a re-reading of the city, with Hannah Arendt's critique of the modernity of modern politics as a point of departure. A critique that is based on a re-reading—one could even say: an unbiased recovery—of the phenomenon of the Greek polis. If one wishes to rethink the educating function of the city, the ancient polis must not, in fact, be looked upon today as a sort of archeological find, but rather accord-

ing to Arendt, as well as beyond its known patriarchal and ethnocentric implications, as a *relational and interactive paradigm* of politics.

In this current time of epochal transition, recently marked by the collapse of the old order—going by a plethora of names, but which in essence all come under the umbrella of so-called "globalisation"—and by catastrophic events, a precious contribution could perhaps, above all, come from an innovative recovery of the polis model or, at the very least, from the rethinking of the original meaning of the term politics. Thus, the city belongs by right to that origin that must be removed from the state imagery and so transformed into the privileged place to rethink politics, and with that, in synchrony with the closeness the polis and *paideia* had in Greece, the education of politics.

Far from denying the concrete and historical instance of polis—which, as is known, was deeply marked by a male, patriarchal pattern—the present contribution aims to bring to light, to focus on, the central role of the city as a place of political experiences, as yet unknown and apparently undecipherable, putting it in a feminine perspective. Taking away politics from the state model in order to reposition it within the city space is not an act of good will, but it is that which the current turn of events imposes in a certain way, marked as it is by the proliferation of violence and its excess regarding any regulating aim.

¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1958.

2

The decisive importance of the city, in other words, reveals itself when times become obscure, and when the old institutional orders seem to collapse. This was the situation at the end of the Roman Empire, in the Middle Ages, and at the dawn of political modernity. Finally arriving closer to our time, midway through last century, the fracture of continental Europe into two opposing blocks has its very place-symbol in a city, Berlin. Witness to the rending of that city, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, in a visit to Berlin in 1961, provocatively stated: "Ich bin ein Berliner", showing his solidarity with the German citizens that now lived in a city divided by the wall.

On September 11, 2001 the phrase which immediately circulated following the terrorist attack on the New York World Trade Center was 'we are all Americans.' However, from Berlin, perhaps in memory of the solidarity shown by Kennedy towards the German city, another even more meaningful phrase was echoed: "we are all New Yorkers." That phrase incisively expressed the solidarity with the victims and survivors of the terrorist attack, because, in a certain sense it was true that the heart—both symbolic and real—of the attack, at least in Western imaginary, was not—or at least not only—America, but the city of New York. It is also well known that the impact of the two planes into the twin towers and the victims that they caused were far and away greater than that of the other targets hit.

Way beyond the quantitative difference, however, was the quality of the event itself which was new. It is often said that September 11, 2001 was a day which changed the world. Every one of us, man and woman, witnessing that event in front of the television, felt part of a reality that, even if separated by many miles, seemed to be right there, present and disturbing, unforeseen and horrifying, like a kind of alien monster invading our living room and our humdrum daily lives. Something that day, above all, changed the way in

which we relate to catastrophes, to the tragedy of huge proportions transmitted by the TV. In this way, one can state without scandal, that the attack of 9/11 succeeded in every way, but especially symbolically and in its media representation. The impact on Western imagery was enormous, so much so as make us think that something in the nature of trauma itself had been transformed for ever.

In our closeness to pain and loss, we instinctively did not feel like American citizens (perhaps also in the knowledge that being an American citizen means many other things, the last of which coincides with that of being a victim) but we felt like New Yorkers, thrown together by the trauma, by the unforeseen event that put the fragility and vulnerability of an urban space and its inhabitants into evidence. It was not to the Pentagon—the main symbol of State power as holder of the monopoly on violence—that the memory of that attack was linked, but to the City of New York, and, to be more precise, to the space surrounding Manhattan Island.

The phrase 'we are all New Yorkers' is, therefore, full of meanings that go well beyond the solidarity for the victims of the unexpected and horrifying brutality. Above all, this is significant because it moves and dislocates the center of the trauma from nation to city and in so doing *localises* a new political reality in the urban space, something unheard of until that moment.

It does not have to do with an act of conscious foundation, but precisely an event which transforms—or for a brief moment transformed—the very form of political affiliation. From the debris of that delimited and urban space, read in its symbolic function constructing an imagery—which world city is more symbolic and a constructor of collective imagery than New York?—something new seemed to emerge from Ground Zero in Manhattan, an unsuspected reaction of silent solidarity, of a neighbourly and community form, in a virtuous circle of help and compassion.

This is my theory: from the imagery of hate, terror and vendetta, as the official rhetoric and President Bush pictured it, the scene that was faced in Manhattan on September 11, 2001 can be taken away to become the symbol of a different affiliation to the community that has its "ideal place" in the city to rethink citizenship and develop new ways of educating to exercise politics and participation. That event, in other words, and its backdrop, the city, can be the opportunity (perhaps not yet lost) to get rid of traditional political models, now put into crisis by the emerging processes of globalisation.

3

The political model of modernity, as is known, is founded on individualistic anthropology, according to which the individual is the *measure* of the human, considered as an autonomous and rational being that, as such, thinks and acts. This has its institutional correlation in the sovereign state, an autonomous entity, and holder of the right to govern a given territory and not have to justify its actions to any authority above itself. Getting rid of that model means gaining consciousness of its now evanescent efficacy, in force by the complex processes of globalisation; getting rid of that model, however, also means rejecting the reactive and vindictive logic (an apparently 'rational' action, based on instrumental logic) that opposes war on war, violence on violence, terror on terror. If we consider the verb 'to educate' in its etymological sense of 'to lead out,' it is clear how the current situation reflects the impelling need for a renovated political education, that is able to *lead us out* of the now obsolete categories of modernity (State, individual, sovereignty, war among states) and to orient us towards the unknown terrain of post-state configuration. "The collapse of the configuration of the modern Politics made up of identitarian obsession, defined space, theological poli-

tics, friend/enemy, Nation-state and the like" indeed, needs to be re-examined in light of the events that happen before our own eyes, that are women's eyes; that is, eyes that are used to observing male rhetoric and history with a certain detachment, or with a certain irony. To cite a brilliant female Italian thinker, "when this configuration is over, what is it that begins? It is here that the vertigo of the void is felt."²

Following some women's readings of that event, it is possible to point out how the gendered perspective is able to grasp the present changes, to have the courage to name them, and to propose new category frameworks that manage to light the way—still unknown and obscure—of the post-state configuration. In other words, I intend to analyse how the women-city-education link, if looked at starting from the trauma-event of September 11, reveals itself as unsurpassedly fruitful in bringing into focus the crisis of the present and the need to develop new interpretative instruments. 'Women's eyes' or, not metaphorically speaking, the gendered perspective, indeed makes the void visible and the vertigo which it produces palpable, above all, when compared with male readings that, following 9/11, seemed unable to cope with the 'new' that was happening and, therefore, insisted on subsuming it under known categories.

But far from pointing to a catastrophic and apocalyptic view, female eyes glean from the traumatic event the possibility to rethink the community, starting with loss, trauma, grief, and, above all, vulnerability.

4

We are all Americans, we are all New Yorkers. With what image of the city has 9/11 left us? We were faced, first of all, with witness-

² Ida Dominijanni, *Nella piega del presente*, in Diotima, *Approfittare dell'assenza*, Napoli, Liguori 2002, pp. 187-212, pp. 206-207.

ing, from that odd position of privileged spectators and “deferred victims,” the fragmentation and destruction of a compact, familiar and solid image that was incarnated by the two towers. The architectural colossus of the World Trade Center was often compared to a phallic symbol, the warning epitome of American financial power that, like a second Leviathan, drew on the geometric perfection of its lines to reassert its unquestioned superiority and unparalleled strength. The Twin Towers, however, far from simply incarnating the financial superpower of the USA and the West, are also part of another imagery, perhaps more innocent: film imagery. It is by virtue of that strange transterritorial familiarity given to us by film that we watch, with nostalgia, the images of Manhattan still showing the towers in the background. Due to a strange vortex that short circuits space and time, it is also as if that film imagery had, after 9/11, lost its innocence. Every time we see a film or TV series that shows us a New York with the towers still standing, the image of their destruction is immediately brought to mind. An image that, despite having all the characteristics of a spectacular fictional event, was cruelly real. In virtue of that cinematographic imagery, New York, after the trauma, took on the semblance of an ‘ideal city,’ even more so than it was before. The trauma has changed it just like it has changed our way of seeing and imagining it: now New York is an icon that lives on from its wounds, that continues to attract us because in it we have the mix of the familiarity of the television and film imagery and the equally familiar sensation of destruction, fear and vulnerability.

5

Familiar and yet unknown is what that vulnerability amounts to, for those New Yorkers who experienced 9/11. That day they lost their ‘first-world invulnerability,’ they themselves living sudden and unforeseen violence in the first person. That, which is on the one hand familiar, and on the other unknown, is what Freud defined as ‘uncanny,’ *unheimlich*.

In the uncanny hides the monstrous face of what is otherwise familiar. For many Americans, and above all for the US government, 9/11 represents an uncanny spectre, a kind of ‘dark side’ of violence that has been inflicted on others for many a year. This was perhaps the reason for the almost immediate reaction to the attack of a calling to overcome the trauma, to react and go forward. The exhortation to react in one’s own personal way, continuing with one’s everyday life, was shortly followed by the organisation of the ‘ordinary’ state reaction, that is the use of violence and war: the ‘everyday life’ of the state.

Distant from state rhetoric and justifications for war, what happened in the vicinity of the urban space of Manhattan was a curious and spontaneous community reaction: people went around the city with photos of their lost loved-ones, beneath which was often written ‘missing.’ Who was lost or missing, who literally ‘was missed’ in the affections and presence of their own family members or friends had a name and a face; to put it in the words of Hannah Arendt, was a ‘who,’ a person in flesh and blood with his/her own irreplaceable quality of unique being. The insistence of the New Yorkers in crying and remembering, as ‘missers,’ their loved-ones, remained ingrained in our minds precisely because it reinforced the familiar, routine and intimate side of that tragedy. The media impact on Western public opinion of the search for those lost, or ‘missing,’ was extraordinary.

But to read into that grief is a difficult task, above all, because immediately after the event, the rhetoric of state and war took over, portraying the American victims as a sort of inviolable shrine that had to be avenged with maximum force. The felt and lamented vulnerability experienced by New Yorkers, in fact, was immediately followed by the proud assertion of a programmed invulnerability, ready to declare ‘never ending war’ on those who caused the victims.

It is not by chance that taking on the task of reading into that difficult situation were

women thinkers, first among others Adriana Cavarero, who, in an article published in autumn 2001 wrote: "The walls of New York have first of all reminded us that the thousands of deaths of September 11 died one by one, and are missed one by one by their families and by those who, looking at their faces, share that loss. Apparently, it was an emotive response, and however, from another point of view, did not only deal with a political response far more effective than the call to the national flag, but was perhaps more political than any other response given so far."³

Immediately echoing her views was Ida Dominijanni, in an essay in 2002 in which she analysed, with exquisitely female eyes, two major events in 2001 that had two cities as protagonists which are now asserted as symbols of an era—Genoa and New York. The 'turn of the present,' lived and interpreted through feminine eyes, revealed how the New York catastrophe, far from hitting the heart of global capitalism—like the attackers perhaps intended and like many, also in the West, hoped—had absolutely new characteristics compared to those of the past. What happened, before the definitive collapse of the two towers, and what we continue to see on TV in a sort of *reality show* of massacre, was a never before seen 'multi-ethnic holocaust': "bodies ripped from their clothes and skin fall from high stories, thousands of men and women from sixty-three different ethnicities imprisoned among the flames in a sort of multi-ethnic holocaust, that sentences to death not the globalisation of capitals managed from above by the powers that be, but the cosmopolitan lives lived in common from below."⁴

It is exactly this perspective from below of life in common that women's eyes observing that event pay their attention to, and it is that event that they draw on to reassert

the importance and centrality of feminine reflection on politics. It is, in truth, a reflection that for some time has criticised the false neutrality of the models and ontology of modern politics, tied to the State, to the nation, to the liberal form of individualism. However, the emergency of the present, its unforeseen turn—and the void which it has placed before us—seem to confirm that it is indispensable, now more than ever, to put the critical and imaginative feminine thought into action, as Virginia Woolf would have put it, reasserting its centrality and its importance in identifying the errors, omissions, the symbolic and material violence of a still too male and patriarchal civilisation.

6

Beyond the vertigo of the void, therefore, there is more. There is first of all, a thought, which is the thought of sexual difference that for years has moved outside that traditional (male) model and re-declared politics beginning with new terms: "difference, relation, singularity/community" terms which take the place of "identity, friend/enemy, individual/state." The challenge is to make the gendered political perspective valued, not only 'in theory' but also in practice, from the "trust that on this basis, something which could be called 'politics' can really be born, the identification of a new anthropological figure able to bring it into the world and make it walk,"⁵ that is, able to educate it, make a path for growth that emerges with determination from a horizon that now finds difficulty in making sense out of reality. However, it is not the need to invent, ex-novo, a sound formula to decipher the times that pass, but rather to be able to see "that this anthropology and these politics have already been born: in the practice of sexual difference, of singularity in relation, of a social pact that is no longer Oedipal and sacrificial."⁶

³ A. Cavarero, *Il locale assoluto*, in "Micromega. Almanacco di filosofia", 5/2001, pp.64-73, p. 71.

⁴ Dominijanni, op. cit., p. 203.

⁵ Ibid, p. 207.

⁶ Ibid.

The novelty consists in the development of new categories of reading and interpretation of reality, because reality is constantly exposed to the new and unforeseen, we are the ones who have difficulty in recognising it.

It is not by chance that the perception of such a novelty, that still proves difficult to be assumed, has, I reiterate, been made by women. In underlining the concrete, material, detailed (the typically feminine attention to detail) aspects of the tragedy of 9/11, the feminist perspective is on that which the large schema, on both sides, have difficulty seeing. Who is dead? Who has been mourned? While Adriana Cavarero underlined how the city had immediately remembered its dead, 'one by one,' and Dominijanni how the multiethnic holocaust had suffocated the 'globalisation from below of life in common,' the American theorist Judith Butler—whose line of thinking happens to coincide with her Italian counterparts—proposes to take the opportunity to rethink the human condition starting from the centrality of grief and loss due to the experience of vulnerability and offence to which New Yorkers were subjected.

In the text she writes on the morrow of 9/11, *Precarious Life*, Butler maintains that the fundamental error following the trauma was precisely that of reading the whole event as a first person narration, with the giant of the United States—wounded in its presumed invulnerability—as the sole protagonist. Invisibility and inexpressibility, however, became the characteristics of all that which did not find space in that self-centered and self-celebrating narrative of incommensurable, unjustifiable and unexplainable pain, and as such had to remain.⁷ Butler became the critical voice of the State rhetoric that wished to restore its own sovereignty and invulnerability, realising how, also from within the commemorative rhetoric of the victims, an identifying perspective was favoured, taking out of

public discourse someone else's victims, or those that had no place in state rhetoric (immigrant, clandestine, or homosexual, and, not far from these, the victims of the bombings in Afghanistan, the faces or the bodies of the fallen soldiers in Iraq, the Palestinian victims in the Israeli violence).

Butler proposes to dislocate the account of those happenings from the 'first person' perspective, taking away the event's suffering and offence from state logic. There is, Butler suggests, another possible account, that takes note of the loss and concentrates on a shared elaboration of mourning, making it become an integral part of its own individual, social and political identity. We are not, even here, dealing with an emotive or commemorative reaction of suffering: the collective trauma can find an answer which is different from that of vendetta. It consists in taking on the full understanding of the inescapable condition of vulnerability as a human measure, a condition that was traumatically unveiled in Americans precisely by 9/11.

That path has perhaps been taken by the people that had plastered New York with pictures of their dead, mourning them and celebrating them 'one by one,' with name and surname, single faces that 'were lost' to equally singular lives. In that moment—ephemeral if compared to the immediate violent reaction of the State—the 'political community of loss,' outlined and wished for by Butler, was perhaps for a short period configured.

New York, if read through women's eyes, is therefore configured as the 'ideal city,' not in the traditional, architectural and Renaissance sense of the word, but in that most current sense of a symbolic place in which it is possible to rethink community, not starting from the nation-state, but from that which Adriana Cavarero has called the 'absolute local': "The view of the absolute local is not the direct

⁷ J. Butler, *Precarious Life. The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, London and New York, Routledge 2003.

fruit of the global, but that which globalisation [...] indeed permits to open."⁸ A place—perceived before being thought of—as untied, loosened from its belonging to a state, which becomes the limited space able to welcome a new type of community, a community which 'comes about' by the force of a traumatic event, and which *sticks inside* the event, the trauma of the loss to the heart of the community itself.

The crucial event of 9/11 reshaped, in New York, the confines of the city that, if on the one hand were narrowed and focused around the debris of Ground Zero, on the other were widened and broke out of national borders. It is true that we all have a bit of New Yorker in us because we know, more or less, where Central Park and 5th Avenue are, and we immediately recognise the Empire State Building and the Twin Towers. However, the event of 9/11 has heightened this familiarity. We are also New Yorkers in the sense that the experience of the trauma, the loss, the mourning, touched us closely, not only because we participated directly in the attack, but also because, since then, an escalation of violence has begun that has still not ceased to make us perennially traumatised spectators of continuing massacres and horrors which are now part of daily life and yet incomprehensible. It is as if, in being secondary victims of that event, we are obliged to politically reflect not only upon its consequences but also on its possibilities: to rethink citizenship, the shared space, the relation among differences (ethnic, economic, cultural, of gender) in a new way is what the everyday trauma pushes us to.

It is precisely in the light of Judith Butler's reflections that it is possible to think that the code for this new way of conceiving citizenship is vulnerability: this presents itself, in the first place, as a new universe that does not allow the assimilation of the diversities into the (self-centered) model of the individual. We are all vulnerable in the sense that we

are all human. Vulnerability as a distinctively human trait—however, different from the category of 'mortality' celebrated by philosophers—is not founded on an escape from the body but is rooted within the body, in the constant exposure of the body to the care and violence of others.

There is a constituent ambiguity in humans in this view of vulnerability that must, however, be maintained. It deals with that ambiguity embedded in the duplicity of the possible response to vulnerability: reacting to vulnerability through the perception of a union that can become politically productive, through the refusal to inflict further violence in response to the offence suffered. One can otherwise react via a response that stubbornly tries to remove vulnerability by strengthening instruments of coercion and offence. Being aware of this duplicity represents a new way of reading the phenomena of the present.

The universality of the category of vulnerability, however, allows the regard for 'local,' in the singular that is indispensable in order to come outside traditional models (still Eurocentric) of humanity and citizenship. Through this, in fact, it is possible to distinguish the different degrees of vulnerability felt, while keeping the human familiarity of vulnerability in place. We are all New Yorkers, meaning that, at irregular and unforeseen intervals, we can in turn become victims ourselves. The community of vulnerability, however, does not imply a glorification of the home country and a de-humanisation of the enemy—as happened in America after 9/11—but is, on the contrary, a rethinking of the human condition starting out from a togetherness that must be transformed into a political resource. Pain as a political resource is what the photos and faces of those lost at Ground Zero represent, it is the understanding of what was hit that day—and since that day ad infinitum until today. It is the possibility of an interaction of singular existences taken in their radical uniqueness: not as in friends or enemies, nor

⁸ Cavarero, *A più voci*, Feltrinelli, Milano 2003, p. 223.

as in Arabs or homosexuals, but as in unique beings, with name and surname. The immediate reactions to the multiethnic holocaust that occurred on 9/11 in New York are an embryonic example of a political experience that finds, in pain and vulnerability, a (founding) moment of community. Only women's words, however, were able to mention this event in a new way, giving it its proper and innovative quality.

After all, it is not by chance that the feminine perspective is more able than the masculine view to *seize* and to *receive* the vulnerability. Women have always been privileged subjects of a vulnerability that takes on many forms: from domestic violence to workplace exploitation, from reducing their bodies to saleable goods to the law determining their decision to procreate. Women, however, are more familiar with vulnerability from the other side as well, that of care: they have, at heart, been and continue to be the main custodians of vulnerability by definition, the child. Thus, women's eyes are able to grasp vulnerability from their positioned perspective: both as vulnerable victims and custodians of vulnerability. The political centrality of vulnerability is thus better and more clearly seen from the gendered feminine perspective. The universality of the vulnerable cannot be such without the original sexual difference that is given to vulnerability.

7

Education of vulnerability, in light of the feminist reading of 9/11, therefore leads to a theoretical and imaginative effort that is placed within the city, instead of in the nation or State, the political space and community affiliation. It deals with, in other words, imagining another story, alternative to that—masculine and of state—belligerent, reactive and apocalyptic one of the 'war on terror.' A story that has, at the center of the narrative scene, the city as the space of a common and shared experience. This, however, in the emblematic case of 9/11, does not refer to

the lightness and harmony of the Greek *paideia*, but to the vertigo of the void caused by the trauma. Only in the experience of trauma read through women's eyes, alive to the singular, to the unique being and its vulnerability, is it possible to transform the vortex of the void and the senseless into an opportunity to reestablish the community starting out from loss. Woman by woman, man by man, in their irreplaceable uniqueness—and also in their multiethnic diversity—the dead of the World Trade Center remind us that there is no flag, there is no national identity that can and must celebrate them by transforming them into symbols and the justifications for further violence. However, the common experience of loss is there, which goes beyond state, ethnic and religious affiliations, which opens the curtain to the possibility of a local sharing of mourning that links vulnerability and dependency. Far beyond State logic, enemy and war, the horizon of vulnerability inserts into the scene that which Cavarero calls the politics of the "absolute local," that "after being finally liberated from the cartography of nations, does not in fact fall into the error of placing identity affiliations above the unrepeatable uniqueness of every human being. It dares, instead, to put into play uniqueness without affiliations and entrusts it with the sense of relation." What was it that came into being in the experience of the trauma and loss immediately following 9/11 if not an "absolute local," a delimited space, untethered and loosened from state and national rhetoric, where taking center stage, more than the flags, were the faces and the names of people in flesh and blood; and those who were there to mourn them were equally people in flesh and blood. But in virtue of the symbolic force of the city of New York, we like to imagine that the absolute local does not have traits of localism, of partiality, but rather it pushes beyond the confines of the city itself and can recreate itself wherever unique beings are able to recreate the conditions of community and liaison starting from the perception of a shared vulnerability. "The local, indeed, for the contagion that essentially pertains to the symbolic, has the power

to multiply. One, one hundred, one thousand 'absolute locals' could be, slightly ironically, but certainly not nostalgically, the slogan. Once also unchained from the logic of territory, that masked it behind the concept of the individual, the ontology of uniqueness can extend globally. The politics of the local can be found everywhere: unpredictable and

intermittent, uncontrollable and astonishing."⁹ Thus, we like to imagine—although even our women's eyes still struggle to see it—that also elsewhere, in other spaces torn apart by violence, mourning and loss, unique beings, out of pain and suffering, strive to reestablish their most vulnerable ideal city.

⁹ Cavarero, *Il locale assoluto*, op.cit., p. 72.

Forever Young: The New Reality of the Elderly

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Forever Young: The New Reality of the Elderly

1. A New Social Reality, an Old Language

It occurred to me just recently. Knowing that my father had suffered a mild heart attack, a friend of mine asked how old he was. He's young, I answered, he's eighty. I was surprised when I realized I had used the word young in reference to an 80-year-old person. I would never have called my grandparents young.

Also not long ago I heard a friend, a well-known businessman comment with certain irritation that he had just heard a news report on the radio in which the reporter referred to the protagonist of the story as "an old man of 64." My friend was annoyed, he is older than that and by no means does he see himself as an old man.

The new social reality to which elderly people currently belong doesn't fit the traditional mold that the word "old" implies. In recent years I have had the opportunity to give a series of conferences throughout Spain to audiences of retired people. That experience opened my eyes to a social reality that I had not been fully aware of: most people over the age of 60 enjoy excellent health and quality of life, and have a great desire and need to feel useful and busy.

This new social reality is at odds with the way ageing is conventionally looked upon and talked about, that is, as a situation of dependence and passivity. The facts speak for themselves. Ninety-five percent of people over 65 in Spain live autonomously, without any sort of dependency, and only a reduced

percentage of people between the ages of 65 and 80 show pronounced symptoms of senility.

This picture of autonomy of elderly people, already a far cry from the traditional view associating ageing with dependence, will be much improved in the coming years as baby boomers reach retirement age. This is a large generation, born in the late forties and the decade of the fifties, educated and culturally sophisticated, and in good health.

These new generations of retired people will radically change the social perceptions of age. In addition to that, the fact that we are talking about so many people means that we will see a profound change in their social visibility. We will see, as well, increasing political influence, given that they will represent a growing part of the voting population and have a greater tendency to vote. Some are already talking about "gray power" to refer to the mounting political influence of elderly people.

For these new generations of elderly people, retirement years are seen as a period of grand opportunities to travel, take courses, maintain skills acquired during the course of their working life and to acquire new skills.

We will have to invent a new language and a new culture allowing us to better describe that new ageless society which is approaching; a society in which the work force comprises three different generations: grandparents, children and grandchildren. Or, put in another way: young people, adults and the elderly.

A term still commonly used to refer to people over the age of 60 is “old man” or “old woman,” two words with pejorative connotations which don’t rightly describe the new reality. They reflect, instead, a social reality that is on the wane: that of older people, no longer actively working, from the agricultural and industrial societies dating from the 19th century and a good part of the last century; people less culturally sophisticated who in many cases reached retirement—if they reached it—in precarious health and living conditions.

We need an adequate language with which to refer to this new social reality which has begun to emerge at the start of this new century. The Japanese, of which there will be millions of centenarians by the middle of this century, refer to the “Silver Century.” The English refer to this age group as the “elderly society.” Until we coin new words to suit the circumstances we won’t be able to adequately describe this new reality. For lack of a better term, I will use “the elderly” in this article, to refer to the over-65 population, as it is more neutral than certain other ones such as “old folks” or “old people.”

2. The Rise in Life Expectancy as the Driving Force behind the New Social Reality for The Elderly

In March 2004 the well-known and influential weekly magazine, *The Economist*, published a special report on the new ageing which began as follows: Something without precedent and irreversible is happening to humanity. This year or next, the proportion of people of 60 years or over will surpass the percentage of the population under 5 years of age. For the rest of time it is unlikely that minors will outnumber “gray heads.” People over the age of 60, who throughout known history have rarely represented more than 2-3% of the population of most countries, will constitute 15% of the population of the wealthy countries.

The increase in the proportion of elderly people in the world population will be the demographic tendency defining this century. This higher proportion of elderly people is the result of three simultaneous trends.

The first is a rise in the number of retired people. As I already mentioned, this phenomenon will become more evident in the coming years. It is estimated that between 2008 and 2015 large companies will retire half of their current staffs. This fact should lead us to think about the need to extend working life, even if just on a part-time basis.

The second element in play in pushing up the proportion of elderly is the widespread drop in birth rates. In the United States the number of births barely equals the number of deaths. In the case of some European countries, the birth rates are below the rate of replacing the population.

The third and most important, is the rise in life expectation. This trend is possibly the most important demographic phenomenon of the last centuries, and the one with the greatest potential impact on the organization of the economy, society and politics.

A century ago, life expectancy at birth was approximately 35 years, and most people worked right up until they died. Today, average life expectancy at birth exceeds 80 years and at the age of 65 only 16% of men are still working in the United States and only 4% in Europe. Elderly people now have a long life after their working years are finished, which was not formerly the case.

If we go from looking at the population as a whole to the population in the cities the situation intensifies. In general the life expectancy of the urban population is higher than that of the population as a whole. Thus, in the case of the city of Barcelona, the report on “Barcelona’s Health in 2005” indicates that life expectancy continues to rise in the city. At that time it was 77.5 years for men and 84.3 years for women. In the last ten

years, life expectancy for city-dwelling men has improved by 4 years and by 2.5 years for women. These levels place Barcelona among the cities in the world with the highest rates of survival. But this is a general trend in the majority of cities. This new social reality presents educating cities with a real challenge.

3. The Curse of Methuselah, or Is it a Blessing?

Most of the analyses of the economic, social and political consequences of this increase in the proportion of elderly people in the population are alarmist.

One frequently finds studies which warn us of the imminent approach of the “curse of Methuselah.” According to this vision, a society increasingly populated by elderly people will wreak havoc on the economy and on the public budgets as a result of the cost of attending to the social and health needs of the elderly. This is, for example, the picture painted by economists Laurence Kotlikoff and Scott Burns in *The Coming Generational Storm* in which they conclude that towards 2030 the United States will be plagued with “political instability, unemployment, strikes and high and rising crime rates.”

Is that an accurate picture? Prestigious economist Paul Krugman has tempered this sort of analysis. He separates the consequences of the demographic tendency towards longer life expectancy from the issue of public spending on health matters. In his opinion, the latter would still be a problem even if there were no increase in the number of elderly people.

It is true, as I pointed out earlier, that we are facing a demographic change that is without precedent and irreversible. The increase in life expectancy—predicted to be 100 years in the mid-term—is changing the society we were born in. But the health question is not directly linked to the ageing of the popula-

tion, but rather to the great and rapid advances in medicine.

The increase in health spending would have occurred regardless of any change in life expectancy. That is why it is important to separate the two questions. In fact, the rate of increase in health spending may well slow down as a result of the fact that the health conditions of the generations who are approaching retirement are very different from the conditions and personal circumstances of those generations who retired during the second half of the 20th century.

And a similar argument can be made regarding the idea that the increase in the population of older people will introduce elements of strong political conservatism, social rigidity and resistance to change in our societies.

It is surprising that a fact as positive as the prolongation of life of the majority of the population would provoke such fear. Probably one reason for these alarmist analyses of the economic, social and political consequences of the increase in the number of elderly people in our societies is the fact that we continue looking at this new reality of ageing through the perspective, language and cultural standards applied to older people in the agricultural and industrial societies of the past two centuries.

Adjusting our perspective and language with regard to the new ageless society demands creating a new culture based on the new postindustrial society, a society in which people will remain young throughout most of their lives. Here I am not referring to culture in the artistic sense, but rather anthropologically speaking. A culture that foments and develops different personal skills and ways of life, as well as alternative ways of organizing the economy, the world of work, politics and society at large, so as to be able to open up all of the positive possibilities that an increase in life expectancy of the population brings with it. In other words, we need to create an instruction manual for the use of

time in this new society of the elderly which is before us.

4. Instruction Manual for Elderly People's Use of Time

What do we do with those 20, 25 or 30 years which scientific and economic progress have granted to the new generations of retired people? How do we take best advantage of the rich creative potential of elderly people? What sorts of changes are necessary in business, social, political and family organization to tap that potential? Does it make sense for people to continue retiring at the early age of 60 or 65 now that life expectancy is getting so much longer? Is it right that there be such a radical, complete and abrupt break in work and professional lives? Wouldn't it be logical and rational for the transition from full-time employment to retirement to take place gradually through mixed arrangements of part-time work? Wouldn't it be better to take advantage of the fact that the baby boom generation is still active in the workplace, and together—governments, companies, employees—lay the groundwork for the new scenario?

How do older people use their time? Since retirement is still a recent phenomenon one cannot find exhaustive studies on the subject, whereas studies do exist on how working people use their time. Today we talk about what changes should take place in order to balance work and family life for working people. We should be considering the same for elderly people.

The lack of studies of this type is nothing more than a concrete manifestation of the information black out—lack of data and, more than that, interest in obtaining the data—regarding elderly people. A certain form of age discrimination.

The image we have today of our retired population in wealthy countries is of a group of senior citizens traveling here and there, es-

pecially during the off seasons, looking for some sort of entertainment to occupy their free time. That, however, is a simplistic vision of the situation. We need to know something more about the behavior and desires of the elderly.

One of the few studies I am aware of on the subject is that of British journalist, Victoria Cohen, who posed the question of whether English retirees today are driven by the same consumer spirit as others: What do 75- and 85-year-olds buy? Blenders and objects of personal use, as we assume, or do they buy computer games and state-of-the-art DVD players as younger people do? According to the results of her study, retired British people buy some of everything.

But that is not all. Two days after making the purchase they go back to the store to return the goods. And the game starts all over again with different types of products. They also like to do home shopping through catalogs. They place their order and as soon as it arrives they proceed to wrap the item back up and return it.

As the author of the study sees it, this behavior explains why one only sees octogenarians standing in line at the Marks & Spencer refund counters.

How do we interpret this behavior on the part of elderly people? The author's explanation is that they find buying and returning things entertaining and, even more revealing, it draws them into the circuit of commercial activity. They are not interested in the purchase itself, but rather in going through the motions of participating in a social activity from which they feel excluded. The spend-buy-return cycle doesn't affect elderly people's income, but it does occupy their time. And it is precisely this use of time that gives them the feeling that they are participating in economic and social life. Feeling useful.

What this and other studies tell us is that retired people want to take an active part, in

some way, in economic, work, social and political life, even if it is just to enjoy the social experiences that are now off-limits to them. They are hard-working older people who refuse to remain excluded and who until now have not been able to find more productive and satisfying channels for their energy. This is the challenge we face: to create a new culture which allows the elderly to go from being leisure-seeking retirees to being engaged retirees.

But the problem is they don't know how to do that. The current generation of retired people are the first who, as a group, will live between 20 and 30 years longer than did previous generations. This had never happened before, and they do not know what to do with their time. It is a generation which has reached retirement en masse but has no instruction manual to refer to regarding how to spend this new period of their lives.

It is necessary to create a new culture allowing for the development of good practices with regard to the use of time—this instruction manual—for new retirees. I believe that this is one of the most important challenges our societies are facing. Among other things, society and the work world must be reorganized so as to avoid a brusque, rapid exit from a working and professional life that results in a loss of cognitive skills and abilities acquired throughout one's life, to the detriment of the people who experience that and to the economy and society as a whole.

But as we get on with the business of creating this manual, the first thing that must change is the image we have of old age. Until now, political discourse and public policies have linked old age with dependency. That is, the general image of the elderly is that of people unable to live and carry out a full life in an autonomous fashion. Without denying the fact that, of course, there are elderly people in need of assistance, these perceptions and that official discourse do not reflect the new reality of the elderly.

5. The Need for a New Culture Regarding the Elderly

We urgently need a new culture that addresses the sense of exclusion that elderly people feel today and, at the same time, encourages their involvement in all aspects of social life. We must ask ourselves what types of values, practices and public policies need to be created and developed so that not only can the elderly remain active and useful, but that society can benefit from all of their knowledge and skills.

In the business world, the dominant cultural norm is a total break of relations with the working and professional world at the moment of retirement. It is an abrupt, awkward and frustrating break. One day you are a working doctor, the next day you are not; one day you have a professional job or a craft you practice and the next day you are without work. This leads to enormous decapitalization, not only for the individuals, but for companies and the economy as a whole. It is necessary to create new paths and develop new practices allowing for a more gradual transition from being actively working to retired.

According to the OECD, towards the years 2025-2030, twelve million people per year will leave the labor force. Business people and economists within the public administration cannot continue to ignore this demographic reality and the resulting loss and destruction of talent that this means. The low birth rate and the restraints on the flow of qualified emigrants will not adequately replace this loss of talent of elderly people who will leave the labor force in the coming years. The negative impact on productivity and businesses is so great that we urgently need to design a new labor and business culture allowing companies to continue employing a good number of these people, albeit through new job categories, part-time schedules or other means of collaboration.

We need, then, a new work culture with regard to the elderly. There exists a stereotyped and false idea that older workers are less competent, not very productive and miss more work days than younger workers. Statistics, however, indicate just the opposite. Average figures on productivity and attendance figures for employees aged 60 and above are higher than those for younger employees. Further, the loss of certain abilities requiring quick reflexes for some activities is compensated by greater experience and know-how gained over time.

For many years scientists believed that our mental faculties deteriorated with age. Nonetheless, more recent neuroscientific research shows that is not the case. Neurologists such as Elkhonon Goldberg (*The Wisdom Paradox: How Your Mind Can Grow Stronger as Your Brain Grows Older*) show us that brain structures change over the course of life, creating new neurons, acquiring and storing information and strengthening neuron paths. For all of this to happen, however, an individual's motivation and ties to an active life must be sustained.

In spite of that, it is surprising how few programs and educational and cultural projects exist for the elderly. This new social reality of the elderly in our societies is not recognized by cultural and educational institutions. Most of the large institutions working in these areas do not target their programs to the elderly segment of the population. And in those cases where some program for the elderly does exist, it tends to be assistance- or entertainment-oriented.

The same applies with current public policies: either they tend towards assistance related to dependency or towards recreational activity. The elderly are not seen as people capable of carrying out a socially useful activity.

The new culture with regard to the elderly must face two big challenges. The first has to do with time: how do we provide continuity

in the lives of retirees, keeping them active and usefully engaged? The second challenge has to do with maintaining skills: how do we develop new practices that keep up, and make best use of, the skills and knowledge of elderly people?

Retirement interrupts the life story of the elderly. It breaks the connection with the knowledge and experience they have accumulated over time and, in many cases, with the day-to-day events that took place in the course of their working life. Thus, it is necessary to create new institutions and practices that provide continuity to the narrative thread of elderly people's lives and allow them to continue to be able to make sense of what is happening around them and in the world at large, and to feel useful.

Feeling useful involves being able to offer something of interest to others. If we observe what retired people in our societies do, and what current cultural policies focused on the elderly offer, we can conclude that it is all about efforts to build informal relationships and entertain, as time slips by.

Most of the current programs and initiatives put forth by public and private institutions for the elderly—involving them in an activity which makes them feel useful—are volunteer jobs with some group or organization, either religious or secular.

Without, by any means, underrating the importance of this sort of work, the risk of volunteering is, as Richard Sennett notes, reducing usefulness to a hobby. Volunteer work is a valuable practice which must be encouraged. But it is important to give professional status to elderly people who do useful work. The differentiating element is public recognition for that work.

The public sector—state, regional and local—has great capacity to confer that status of professionalism or usefulness. That is what is achieved when a family member is paid a salary for taking care of another dependent

family member. The same should apply to elderly people who take care of their grandchildren and to those involved in other useful activities but for which they don't received this sort of recognition. If governments reward the elderly for these tasks, they will cease to be neglected.

6. The Elderly and Educating Cities

Cities play an essential role in this new culture regarding the elderly. The trend of moving out of the cities, so prevalent in the second half of the 20th century, has not disappeared; but other trends suggest that alongside that centrifugal movement another steadily growing centripetal force has been in play in recent decades: a lot of people like city life and, particularly, living in the middle of the city.

Among those who prefer living in the city are the elderly and, as I have pointed out, they are a growing proportion of the population. They are looking for better and easier access to public transportation, health care, cultural life and to relationships with family and friends. But, above all, they are looking for ways to keep themselves active and useful.

Cities are the personification of modernity. Providence created nature, but humans created the cities. Cities are human constructions in constant change.

Until now the greatest factor of change throughout history has possibly been migrations. But from now on, the elderly will also be an important factor of change in the life of cities.

Cities are a natural space for the "creative classes," and the generations that are approaching retirement comprise people who are cultured, professional and, therefore, creative.

Some recognized analysts and academics, such as Bruce Katz, of the Brookings Institu-

tion, point out that it is at the municipal level rather than the national level where there is much more capacity for innovation and creating new cultures to respond to new social challenges. Hence we are seeing how public policies are progressively centering on the cities.

This feature is what makes one think that for the new culture that requires an ageless society where the older people are and will continue be a major portion of the population, the city could possibly be the best laboratory in which to try creating new values, new practices and new policies with regard to the elderly. A new culture which would renounce the superficiality and mere entertainment-aspect of current cultural policies and programs and look towards actions which can add a sense of usefulness to the lives of the elderly.

Political managers—in education, culture, social work, housing, and employment—and in public as well as private institutions, must be aware of this new reality of a population of cultured, educated elderly people with great potential.

It is surprising that even today most cultural and educational programs of the major public and private institutions are almost totally unaware of this new reality. Educational institutions focus their efforts and offerings on schooling years and are also totally unaware of the new reality which is the elderly.

The universities and other centers of higher learning are not very active or innovative either, in this regard. Only recently have programs designed for the elderly begun to appear in institutions of higher learning.

Nevertheless, it is in this area that most remains to be done. University-level courses designed specifically for the elderly are needed, encouraging their integration and participation in society and fomenting intra- and inter-generational relationships. Programs and courses are needed that help older peo-

ple keep up skills acquired over time, thus providing continuity to their lives.

Therefore we need a new culture and new policies with regard to the elderly. We need new values and practices—social, labor, economic and cultural—which encourage their full personal autonomy and make them feel useful and integrated in society. A new cul-

ture that will provide us with a new way of understanding the new society of the elderly and of so-called ageing.

Perhaps this new culture in relation to the elderly will be a new page in human history, and educating cities have a major role to play in the writing of that page.

The New Challenges of Urban Life: Redefining the Concept of “Community” in the Internet Age

Genís Roca

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“The meaning of ‘knowing’ has shifted from being able to remember and repeat information to being able to find and use it.”

Herbert Simon (1916 – 2001)
Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics

What is Happening?

Something is definitely happening, and that something is related to demographic trends and developments in technology, information, the Internet, etc. And from this chaos we now see a new model emerging, possibly a social model, to which we will have to adapt. Two American researchers, Karl Fisch and Scott McLeod, produced a short informational video entitled *Did You Know?*¹ in which they provide facts to highlight that something is indeed happening and wonder aloud if politicians, schools, parents and citizens in general are preparing for the world that is now taking shape:

- In 2006, 1.3 million people graduated from college in the United States; in India there were 3.1 million graduates, and in China 3.3 million. One hundred percent of the Indian college graduates speak English. In 10 years, the country with the most people who know how to speak English will be China.
- According to the US Department of Labor, one in four workers has been with their current employer less than one year. One in two has been with their current employer less than five years. Children now at school will have had between 10 and 14 jobs by the time they reach the age of 38. According to former US Secretary of Education Richard Riley, the top 10 in-demand jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004.
- Today’s 21-year-olds have watched 20,000 hours of TV, played 10,000 hours of video games, talked for 10,000 hours on the phone, and sent/received 250,000 emails or instant messages. In 2002, Nintendo invested over \$120 million in R&D.
- More than 50% of US 21-year-olds have created content on the Web. And more than 70% of US 4-year-olds have used a computer.
- It took radio 38 years to reach an audience of 50 million people. In the case of TV it was 13 years. The Internet did the same thing in four years. There were one thousand devices connected to the Internet in 1984. In 1992, the figure reached one million, and in 2006, six hundred million.
- The Internet started to be used by the general public in 1995. One out of eight couples married in the United States in 2005 met online.
- eBay was founded in 1996, and in 2006 the company’s revenue was \$6 billion. Google was created in 1998; it now processes 2.7 billion searches each month. YouTube was created in 2005; by 2006, over 2.5 billion videos were being viewed via the website each month.

¹ *Did You Know?* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMcfrLYDm2U>

- The amount of technical information in the world is doubling every two years. By 2010, it is predicted that it will double every 72 hours.

Something is definitely happening, something that cannot be attributed only to technology and the explosion of the Internet. This something has social, cultural, demographic and economic roots. It is something structural that inevitably affects the way people relate to each other, and the way they work, learn and participate.

Cooperating to Survive

Archaeologists who work on human origins date fossil remains with a margin of error of a few thousand years. From this broad chronological perspective, the time we are now living in is utterly without precedent. This is the first generation in the history of humanity in which parents are learning from their children. At least two critical new factors are coming together. The first is the exponential acceleration of evolution in technology, which is producing radical changes over very short periods. The second is an increase in life expectancy: parents no longer die at an average age of 30 or 40 (as occurred in the early 20th century);² instead they live to the age of 80 or 90. Our grandparents have a hard time keeping up with the pace of change in mobile telephony; our parents find it difficult to understand video game consoles; and we will perhaps struggle to come to grips with virtual reality or whatever other surprises the near future may have in store for us. It is our children who introduce new technologies into our homes, and they are the only ones who really understand and master them. Therefore, it also falls to them to explain these new tools to us and educate us on their use, just as we may help our parents program their VCRs or configure the ringtones on their cell phones.

Turning again to the broad historical view, we can say that a technology is relevant to the extent that it changes the way people make a living in a literal sense. Lithic technology enabled our ancestors to improve techniques for hunting and other tasks, and those who mastered this technology were better equipped to survive. Neolithic technology involved the domestication of certain plant and animal species, and anyone who learned how to manage a crop or a herd of animals improved their chances of feeding themselves and surviving. The same thing happened with iron, steam, electricity, computers and now the Internet. All these technologies have changed the way human beings (or some of them) find a way to survive. Up till now our parents could teach us how to raise sheep, plant oats, forge iron or weave linen, but they are no longer so useful when it comes to participating in the information society, using various devices to interact with people in different countries and languages, or changing our occupation every five years (not to a new company, but a new profes-

Decade	Total
1900	34.76
1910	41.73
1920	41.15
1930	49.97
1940	50.10
1950	62.10
1960	69.85
1970	72.36
1975	73.34
1980	75.62
1985	76.52
1985	76.52
1990	76.94
1994	77.93
1996	78.31
1998	78.71

Life expectancy in Spain over the 20th century.

² Francisco José Goerich and Rafael Pinilla (2006): *Esperanza de vida en España a lo largo del siglo XX*. Fundación BBVA. <http://www.imsersomayores.csic.es/documentos/documentos/goerlich-esperanza-01.pdf>

sion). Neither are they of much help with the task of managing uncertainty as an asset rather than a problem, or on the question of how to live while connected 24 hours a day. Parents perform the vital task of transmitting values, but when it comes to technology the assistance parents and teachers are able to provide is ever more limited. In this context the main source of help is our peers. The peer-to-peer approach is a new way of learning and interacting with others that gives rise to a new social model: cooperate or die.

The labor market is placing increasing importance on a set of skills and resources that children often cannot acquire if they depend only on their parents. Parents can teach their children an occupation or provide them with contacts, but they are unlikely to teach them how to handle large volumes of data and diverse sources of information, or how to use the latest technological resources. Worse still, the other social systems tasked with educating our children do not seem to be very effective in achieving these goals either. It is far from clear that these resources (advanced technology, social information networks, and vast amounts of data) are being properly addressed by schools and universities. In this context, children perceive an implicit message: if they are to compete successfully, find work, and ultimately to survive, then they must master techniques and skills that are more easily learned among peers than from parents or teachers.

This principle is one of the cornerstones of the collaborative social movement known as Web 2.0. We are now witnessing the emergence of citizens who base their knowledge and learning on collaboration. Anyone who shares and distributes information becomes a valued node in the network. Such a person is useful. Anyone who blocks the flow of information is not useful and is rejected by the network. If the network rejects you, you are left out of the information and knowledge loop; you lose value; you become less competitive, less employable, less likely to survive.

This essential peer-to-peer exchange of information is carried out in digital format (photos, videos, websites, blogs, chats, SMS messages and email), and the Internet is the vast platform where digital relationships unfold. On the Internet, anyone can give and receive anything that is in digital format. As a result, it is online that we see the emergence of new communities, the new social and educational spaces where people can interact, develop and learn.

The Digital Natives Arrive

Digital natives are aged between 15 and 25 and have used all types of digital technology from an early age. Just as we were able to use a VCR without reading the instructions, they find it very easy to use a cell phone to record a video and then publish it on YouTube. The fact that they use digital resources so naturally challenges us to re-examine concepts such as property, privacy and authorship. As MIT professor Alan Kay put it, "technology is anything that wasn't around when you were born." It is the members of this new generation who are the owners of Web 2.0, the social Web based on collaboration where people share all kinds of resources and the key requirement is the capacity to engage in dialogue.

Young people who are now 18 and have the right to vote were born nearly a decade after the appearance of IBM's first PC and have had access to the Internet since they were young children. They are the digital natives, and using the Internet to explore opportunities and construct markers of identity comes naturally to them. They write in what for others is an impenetrable code; they are able to compose an SMS text message at a reasonable speed with just one hand; and they can carry on up to 10 instant messaging conversations at the same time, unlike digital immigrants, who need to finish one exchange before moving on to the next. They even use blogs differently: while digital immigrants use these online journals to share knowledge, for natives they

are a way of sharing emotions. In fact, their attitude towards information also differs: immigrants still want to keep information secret (“*information is power*”), whereas natives love to share and distribute the information they receive as widely as they can, and do so as quickly as possible (“*sharing knowledge is power*”).

John Palfrey,³ Executive Director of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School,⁴ sums up some of the main attributes of digital natives as follows:

- **Their online digital identity is as important to them as their real-life identity, if not more so.** What the Web says about you (when someone Googles your name) is at least as important as what your coworkers or the people who live on your street have to say about you. It is no longer credible to say that you are very good at something if there are no references on the Web to back up your claim.
- **Natives are able to multitask.** It is remarkable to see an eight-year-old child relaxing and having fun while juggling five, seven or ten simultaneous chat sessions.
- **Natives have mastered digital production tools.** The fact that they are not surprised by any of the possibilities offered by the digital medium is striking. They cut and paste videos to post online just as easily as people used to cut and paste text to create a document.
- **They see the world as “prosumers”⁵ (proactive consumers) in a clear contrast**

to the attitude of passive consumers. They are only interested in companies with which they can engage in a dialogue. If there is no possibility of a conversation, then there is no relationship. This message was articulated in 1999 by the visionaries behind the *Cluetrain Manifesto*.⁶

- **Digital natives see the whole world as their playground, a perspective that breaks down barriers of geography and time.** Everything is global and everything is connected all the time. It is not unusual or surprising for them to interact with people in different countries and situations at any time of the day or night.

Marc Prensky⁷ was the first to introduce the concept of digital natives and digital immigrants in an article published in 2001.⁸ In his subsequent work, he identifies a number of areas where natives are doing things differently from digital immigrants:⁹

- They are **communicating** differently. They do not like email because it is asynchronous. They prefer to use instant messaging and SMS. They recognize the people they are talking to by their online name or “handle” and do not care if the name is a real one. They invent a parallel language and use emoticons to express feelings.
- They are **creating** differently. One of the defining characteristics of digital natives is the enjoyment they derive from creative activity. They want to create and the digital medium enables them to explore this field in a variety of ways: by keeping a blog, building websites, making flash movies,

³ John Palfrey, <http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/palfrey/>

⁴ Berkman Center for Internet and Society, <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/>

⁵ Prosumer, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosumer>

⁶ *Cluetrain Manifesto*, <http://www.cluetrain.com/book/>

⁷ Marc Prensky, <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing>

⁸ Marc Prensky (2001): *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants*, <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>

⁹ Marc Prensky (2004): *The Emerging Online Life of the Digital Native: What they do differently because of technology, and how they do it*, http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky-The_Emerging_Online_Life_of_the_Digital_Native-03.pdf

manipulating photographs, editing images, programming mashups,¹⁰ creating their own avatars, and even shaping their online identity.

- They are **meeting** and **coordinating** differently. These days, arranging to meet someone does not necessarily imply a face-to-face encounter. Digital natives have a number of options for getting together even if they are not in the same area. They are also able to coordinate activities online to involve hundreds of people.
- They are **evaluating** differently. In an environment where the people interacting may never meet face-to-face, digital natives become skilled in evaluating reputations and determining how trustworthy and credible others are. This involves taking into account a number of variables, some of which are very subtle and difficult to precisely define.
- They are **searching** differently. When they do not know someone’s phone number, they use Google to find it. And when they search for information on a subject, they search for reliable documents and reliable people.
- They are **socializing** differently. Digital natives are also being socialized online, something that does not usually happen in the case of digital immigrants.
- They are **growing up** differently. Exploring and breaking rules is part of this process for digital natives.
- They are **learning** differently. Digital natives are more likely to turn to the Web to find out about a subject than to their parents.

The many differences make it clear that these two groups are not equal, yet neither is one better or worse than the other. Digital natives are not a model we should necessarily follow, and digital immigrants are not an endangered species. What is clear, however, is that neither group wants to be like the other, and that there are many spaces where the two groups must meet and work together. One is the school environment, and already an effort is being made to identify problems that could arise in the relationship between students who are “digital natives” and some teachers who are “digital immigrants.” Ian Jukes and Anita Dosaj worked on this issue in 2004 at Wright State University and produced the table below, which shows the differences between the two groups:¹¹

Students “digital natives”	Teachers “digital immigrants”
Prefer receiving info quickly from multiple multimedia sources	Prefer slow and controlled release of info from limited sources
Prefer parallel processing and multitasking	Prefer singular processing and single/limited-tasking
Prefer processing pictures, sounds and video before text	Prefer to provide text before pictures, sounds and video
Prefer random access to hyperlinked multimedia information	Prefer to provide information linearly, logically and sequentially
Prefer to interact/network simultaneously with many others	Prefer students to work independently
Prefer to learn “just-in-time”	Prefer to teach “just-in-case” (it’s on the exam)
Prefer instant gratification and instant rewards	Prefer deferred gratification and deferred rewards
Prefer learning that is relevant, instantly useful and fun	Prefer to teach to the curriculum guide and standardized tests

¹⁰Mashup, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mashup_%28web_application_hybrid%29

¹¹Ian Jukes and Anita Dosaj (2004): *Understanding Digital Kids*, <http://www.wright.edu/%7Emarguerite.veres/786sy/growingupdigit.pdf>

City and Internet: Social and Educating Spaces

The sociologist Manuel Castells concludes that language, nation, territory and religion now play a very secondary role in the sense of identity felt by most members of the population.¹² Our sense of belonging is most firmly grounded where we have the strongest web of relationships and interactions. Consequently, we feel more involved with the city where we live than with the region, county or country. This explains why digital natives have developed a strong sense of community and belonging online, where there is not necessarily any physical frame of reference.

The urban context has been, and remains, a space where people are educated and socialized. It is the space for school, friends, neighbors, play, leisure, work, and collaborative partnerships in pursuit of shared goals; for private, social, personal, cultural and professional interests. For digital natives, the Internet plays precisely the same role: it is a space where people interact, learn and develop; a space to converse and to exchange experiences. In this new century that has just begun, community values and feelings of belonging are being built in both physical and virtual spaces.

If a community is defined as a human group that succeeds in building identity, commitment, participation, shared interests, the determination to have an influence, a feeling of belonging, relationships, and external markers of identity, then we can safely say that ecosystems of this type are also developing online in spaces that are not in the least virtual. Indeed, they are real enough to have a decisive impact on the education and socialization of their members, just as cities do.

Mayors know it is quite normal for citizens to develop feelings of belonging to more than one city or town over the course of their lives. It is increasingly difficult for people to

answer the question “where are you from?” You may feel you belong to the city where you were born, but also to the city where you grew up, to the city where you studied, to the city where you fell in love, to the city where you lived, to the city where you work, to the city where you sleep, etc. And if the highest expression of citizenship is being able to vote to choose the leaders of your city, having this right in just one locality is becoming more and more inconvenient and making less and less sense. Cities are communities with many members who lack the legal right to fully participate simply as a result of the limitations of a system based on their physical place of residence.

This limitation has been overcome online, where one can build markers of identity and develop feelings of belonging that are not linked to any physical coordinates. There are now people who grow up online, study online, fall in love online, work online, and have fun online. The condition for belonging to a place is participation in it. Real new citizens with multiple identities are appearing. These individuals belong to multiple communities and operate in both the virtual world and the physical world without the slightest problem. They are citizens of the world and of the Web, and already there are some who feel more comfortable, more fulfilled, more useful, more recognized, and more developed online than on the streets of their own city.

Cities and the Web are now inextricably linked in terms of the role they play in the personal, social and professional development of many citizens. The spaces where people are educated and socialized can no longer be only physical, just as it will never be possible for them to be only digital. We need physical reference points just as much as we need to be connected without borders.

The mayor of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic cannot overlook the fact that

¹²Projecte Internet Catalunya (PIC), <http://www.uoc.edu/in3/pic/cat/>

hundreds of thousands of his citizens are living in New York. Physically they are on the east coast of the United States, but culturally, socially and electronically they are permanently connected to and involved with their city of origin in the Caribbean. Meanwhile, the mayor of New York cannot forget that his city is home to hundreds of thousands of citizens who belong to other communities. The Internet is playing a decisive role in creating, maintaining and developing social communities, and digital communication is making it possible for many people to belong to multiple communities, and therefore to multiple environments (virtual or non-virtual) for socialization and education.

The New Digital Divide

Much of what is happening is related to the digital phenomenon. Today everything is digital: photographs, videos, music, correspondence, phone calls, television, communications networks, etc. Not so long ago, there was a great deal of talk of the digital divide. It was argued that the difficulty of accessing technology would lead to a digital divide that would exclude disadvantaged groups, preventing them from finding their place in the new information and knowledge society. Not everyone would be able to afford a computer and an Internet connection, and for many it would be even more difficult to gain the basic knowledge needed to use these tools. A number of plans and campaigns were launched to address this issue, some more effective than others.

The Internet has evolved into something more participatory, collaborative and social. We have moved from the Web of companies and institutions to the Web of the people, from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0. The nodes in this network are people rather than computers. People are building their own networks of trust, networks for the circulation of information, and networks for collaboration: their

communities. Each individual chooses what to read and makes his or her own decisions about subject matter and sources of information. And each individual decides what he or she wants to talk about, with whom, and where to post. Information flows in such a way that in itself it no longer confers any power. Nowadays the focus is on being part of a community, a network, a set of nodes, and therefore of individuals. Relevant information circulating through such systems helps us form opinions and make decisions.

At the same time, ways of accessing the Web have become simpler and more diverse, and this trend continues. More disadvantaged individuals are quite comfortable using IP telephony and video conferences at phone centers and cybercafés to communicate with distant family members. The OLPC project (One Laptop per Child) and related projects offer laptop computers for slightly over 100 dollars.¹³ Cell phones can now be used to surf the Web. All executives are now outfitted with devices that enable them to fire off email messages while waiting for a flight at the airport. Some cities are planning to offer blanket wireless coverage for Internet access. And the list of new developments that break down technical barriers to accessing the Web goes on and on.

The digital divide that concerns us is no longer the one that affects disadvantaged groups who face obstacles when it comes to accessing technology. The digital divide that will hurt us is the one created by those who are not connected and do not belong to any online community; the digital divide of those who do not educate themselves in networks and who undervalue digital markers of identity. It is worrying to see the number of people holding important positions in business and government who are not connected to any of the new digital knowledge networks, and who are therefore unable to use the Web as an environment for education and socialization. The number of politicians who create

¹³OLPC, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OLPC>

a website or start a blog during an electoral campaign only to abandon it the day after the election takes place is worryingly high. Many go to the Internet only during the campaign to take advantage of a photo opportunity and impress people with their understanding of digital culture. However, they do not appreciate and have not grasped that the Web is a space where many of their citizens are being educated and socialized, a space for discussion, participation, involvement and action. Digital spaces are a new public space—one that requires people and bodies to ensure that both public and private interests are protected, and services and community representatives that are attuned to the needs of the citizens who occupy this new urban space. Anyone who opts to remain absent from this public space should be disqualified from holding a position in which they claim to be serving citizens. This applies to politicians, civil servants and teachers. The unconnected lack the skills to design the solutions of the future. The new digital divide that will define differences is the one that exists when the leaders (politicians, social and business leaders) who need to make decisions about our future are not connected to the online world.

The arrival on the scene of digital natives is bringing about a transition from the information and knowledge society to the network society. Information no longer has the value it once did: it is very easily accessed, in multiple formats, with multiple devices, whenever and from wherever one wishes. Information is now within everyone's reach. More important now are the networks, communities and circuits where this information is

generated, and the circuits through which it circulates and becomes enriched. Collective intelligence is built based on the contributions made by individuals, and it is networks that aggregate these contributions and generate value. A recent BBC news item points to the way things are heading. According to the report, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) in the United Kingdom called for employees to be allowed to access social networking sites during working hours,¹⁴ given that denying access poses a serious threat to their competitiveness.

At a stage when many segments of the population are still finding their place in the information and knowledge society, we see a new segment appearing that has already made the transition to the network society. While the first group values information (*"information is power"*), those in the second group value being part of a network (*"information is only useful if you can share it"*), which implies significant changes in scales of values. As a result of the age curves of the two groups, they have encountered each other for the first time in classrooms, but they will be coming together with increasing frequency in the spaces where people interact and work together (workplaces, the political arena, collaborative partnerships aimed at pursuing shared goals, and business). We are gradually seeing confirmation that concepts such as authority, intellectual property, belonging, reputation and identity—all of which have a bearing on the educational process—are being transformed. What we are talking about is not access to new technologies but understanding social changes.

¹⁴BBC News (08/30/2007), *Let Staff Use Network Sites – TUC*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6969791.stm>

The Voice of Local Governments in World Governance

Elisabeth Gateau

Elisabeth Gateau is the first Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Building on her past experience as a local elected official in France, she was previously Secretary General of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), the European section of United Cities and Local Governments. She then went on to take charge of local government issues within the Secretariat of the European Convention, which prepared the Constitution of the European Union.

Elisabeth Gateau's contribution to regional and local politics was recognised once more in July 2004 through the award of the Emperor Maximilian Prize. An international jury granted the award on the basis of outstanding efforts to implement the principle of subsidiarity and the Council of Europe's Charter for Local Self-Government and Charter for Regional Self-Government.

The Voice of Local Governments in World Governance

Local Governments' Entrance on the International Scene

"A silent but steady **democratic** revolution is currently spreading across the world. Local democracy is moving forward in all regions, reaching the people of the African savannah, the Latin American high plateau, the Philippine *barangayes* and Eurasia."¹

These are the opening words of the *First Global Report on Decentralization and Local Democracy*, which details the evolution of local governments in the world today. The *Report* demonstrates how over the course of the last twenty years most countries have local governments that are elected by popular vote and, to varying degrees, respond to citizen needs. The emergence of new political leadership at the local level has allowed for the creation of local government associations in more than 130 countries and, at the regional level, on every continent.

Although the idea of "local self-government," "*autonomía local*," "*Selbstverwaltung*," "*libre administration*" is not new, decentralization on a world scale is a relatively recent phenomenon linked to the political and socio-economic changes occurring in the final decades of the 20th century. In broad terms, it is about transferring decision-making power, authority and resources from the central government and its agencies to the intermediate- and local-level governments. Still, however, vast differences between regions remain. In

the European Union the local governments' share in public spending exceeds 10% of the GDP and in North America the figure is near 9%, whereas in Africa it does not reach 2.5% and in Latin America it is below 4%.

Meanwhile, international action by local governments also increased considerably, especially as of the 1980s. In a 1994-95 survey based on a sampling from 50 countries, over 16,000 cities were listed as being involved in international actions.² A more recent study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2003), showed that cooperative efforts by local governments mobilized more than \$1.2 billion annually.³ Currently, in a world in which over 50% of the population lives in urban areas, local governments are playing a growing role in addressing most of the major contemporary challenges: democratic challenges, since it is at the local level where the idea of citizenry acquires meaning and where identities are built, in the face of the steady advance of globalization; ecological challenges, given that it is at the local level where action is being taken against climate change and for the preservation of our planet—actions that require adjustments to production and consumption models, mainly urban; economic challenges, seeing how it is in the cities and their outskirts where much of the riches and opportunities are to be found...as well as the greatest inequalities; and, finally, social challenges and tests of solidarity, since policies focusing on social inclusion, cultural diver-

¹ United Cities and Local Governments, *First Global Report on Decentralization and Local Democracy*, Barcelona, UCLG, 2007, p.9.

² G. Jan Schep, F. Angenent, J. Wismans, M. Hillenius, *Local Challenges to Global Change: A Global Perspective on Municipal International Cooperation*, SGB0-VNG-SDU Publishers, The Hague, 1995.

³ OCDE, *Aid by local governments*, DAC files 2005, Vol 6, n°4.

sity and safety issues first take shape at the local level.

This development explains the growing interest on the part of international organizations in the institutional aspect of the local sphere. The “discovery” of this sphere by the United Nations came as a result of the organization’s concern with sustainable development and with the problems experienced by large cities. Between 1991 and 1995, the United Nations held various international conferences focused on management issues of large cities, the last of which was held in Quito, Ecuador, where a joint declaration of mayors and experts was adopted in support of a *new governance framework* for cities. During this same period, during the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, the United Nations recognized for the first time that local governments indeed play a major role in environmental protection and in carrying out Agenda 21 for sustainable development.

In Istanbul in 1996, during the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II), the participating countries finally affirmed that the local governments are their “closest partners, and essential in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and most essential associates for the implementation of the HABITAT program and for promoting sustainable development.” They committed to directing more responsibility and resources to the local level and invited local governments to take part in the program with a single, unified voice in order to facilitate dialogue with the international community. The new commitment marked the beginning of a more direct, ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and local governments that, after several years, would result in:

- a) the unification of the large worldwide local government organizations, through the creation of ***United Cities and Local Governments*** (UCLG); and
- b) increased institutional and political recognition of the role played by local governments.

Creation of United Cities and Local Governments

In 2004, local authorities embarked on a new era of international cooperation. The founding of ***United Cities and Local Governments*** (UCLG) is the result of an almost ten-year process which led to the unification of the three main existing international organizations of local governments: the International Union of Local Authorities (IULS), the World Federation of United Cities (FMCU) and the Metropolis Association.

The UCLG was founded thanks to the efforts of mayors and local leaders around the world to strengthen their position as interlocutors with the international community and, particularly, with the United Nations. Today, this world organization draws together local governments from 136 of the 192 United Nations member states. Its constituents include cities, regional governments and practically all of the national and international associations of local governments in the world; one of these is the IAEC, which focuses on the city as an educating agent. UCLG also has seven regional sections (Africa, Latin America, Asia Pacific, Euro-Asia, Europe, Middle East–West Asia and North America) and a metropolitan section, Metropolis, which brings together 80 of the largest cities in the world. The organization’s headquarters are located in Barcelona.

The main objectives of the new world organization are to:

- a) Increase the role and influence of local governments and its representative organizations in global governance.
- b) Become the main source of support for democratic, effective, innovative local government close to the people.
- c) Promote a democratic and efficient world organization of local governments.

From the very start, the UCLG dedicated its energies to strengthening the presence of lo-

cal authorities with regard to the main topics on the world agenda that have a direct influence at the local level:

- active solidarity among local governments and among their constituents in the face of world events, such as: with those affected by the natural disasters following the Tsunami in Southeast Asia (December 2004-January 2005) or with victims of the war in Lebanon (July-August 2006).
- local government action in support of the world development agenda, in particular the *Millennium Development Goals* promoted by the international community to fight against extreme poverty and for access by the neediest to education, health and basic services (Millennium Towns and Cities Campaign from June-September 2005).
- encouraging Peace and Dialogue between communities, through city diplomacy and support for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative.
- the battle against global climate change and in favor of sustainable development.
- participation of local governments in the world campaign against AIDS.

UCLG has also taken significant steps towards becoming the main world source of information and analysis vis-à-vis local governments. The organization has published the *First Global Report on Decentralization and Local Democracy* and the first series of basic indicators for local governments of 82 countries around the world.

The consolidation of this unified world organization is not a finished process, but rather one in constant progress. It requires a sustained effort to keep drawing in the many

regional or sectorial networks still being developed. It entails looking at the great disparities in both structure and levels of representation among the organization's different regional sections. Moreover, it calls for a complex democratic architecture in order to achieve balanced coordination of the many different facets of the local world.

The Path Towards the Recognition of Local Governments in International Law

During the process of establishing *United Cities and Local Governments*, and especially since 2004, local authorities have reinforced and consolidated ties with leading international institutions. Some of the main milestones reached include:

- The creation of the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UN-ACLA), in the year 2000, which represents one of the first experiences in institutionalizing dialogue between local authorities and the United Nations. For the moment, however, its mandate is limited to carrying out the HABITAT program agenda.⁴
- The launching of Cities Alliance in 1999 by the World Bank and UN-HABITAT. The Alliance currently brings together a coalition of more than 15 donor countries and five international organizations. Since its creation, the Alliance has mobilized more than \$88 million in investments to reduce urban poverty. The local authorities participate in the Alliance Advisory Committee through the UCLG and its metropolitan division, Metropolis.
- The inclusion of representatives of the local authorities as observers on the UN-HABITAT Governing Council (2003), a

⁴ UNACLA was created at the recommendation of the then-Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, under the responsibility of UN-HABITAT, to implement its program and support the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (resolution 17/18 of the UN-HABITAT Governing Council).

function performed by the UCLG since 2005.⁵ Since then, other agencies, such as the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), have incorporated UCLG representatives and/or local authorities into their governing bodies, albeit on a provisional basis.

- Also, the explicit recognition of the role of local authorities in various texts of the international institutions:
 - Plan of Action of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002);
 - Kofi Annan's report, "In Greater Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All" (New York, March 2005);
 - Declaration of the Heads of State and Government at the Millennium +5 Summit (New York, September 2005).
- Finally, the signing of cooperation agreements between UCLG and various international agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank Institute, UNESCO. Ongoing cooperation is also maintained with UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research), the (ILO) International Labour Organization, and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).
- Very recently, in January 2008, UCLG signed an agreement with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and became a member of the "Group of Friends of the Alliance." This agreement is pioneering the recognition by the UN of city diplomacy as a springboard for dialogue among

the people of the world, the promotion of peace and respect for diversity.

Those steps forward must be considered within the framework of the debate on the UN reform and the renewal of the UN global governance system. This process was initiated by former Secretary General Kofi Annan aiming to increase the efficiency of the multilateral system by democratizing and developing its legitimacy. The debate has generated different reports and proposals, some of which make explicit reference to the role of local governments.

Especially worthy of mention is the 2004 report on United Nations–civil society relations, presented by a Highlevel Panel chaired by the former president of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. This report recommended to the then-Secretary General, Kofi Annan that the democratic deficit in global governance be corrected through greater involvement of elected representatives (parliamentary and local authorities), thus reinforcing the ties between the local level and the global level. The panel also proposed that the United Nations General Assembly recognize local autonomy as a "universal principle" and consider *United Cities and Local Governments* as the advisory body for governance issues.⁶ Unfortunately, few of these proposals were carried out.

One decisive step taken by the United Nations in that direction was the April 2007 adoption of the *International Guidelines on Decentralization and Strengthening Local Authorities*, a benchmark document that recognizes the role of local governments in carrying out democratic governance and development. In effect, the adoption of the *Guidelines* embodied a major aspiration of local authorities.⁷ It is hoped that in the near

⁵ Resolution 19/1, on the rules of procedure of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, articles 64, 65 and 66. [May 2003]. It has been in force since 2005.

⁶ A/58/817, Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations, June 11, 2004.

⁷ 21st UN-HABITAT Governing Council, Resolution 21/3, April 16-20, 2007, (http://www.unchsh.org/downloads/docs/5181_19348_Resolution%2021-3.pdf)

future this text will be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly to consolidate this precedent in international law.

At the same time, progress was being made in other international forums. In 2005, the European Union recognized local authorities as “full actors” in development cooperation (*Revised Cotonou Agreement* and the declaration on the *European Consensus for Development*).⁸ Meanwhile, in March 2007, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on *the role of local Governments in development cooperation* in which it recognizes the important place local governments hold within the European Union’s international cooperation policy.⁹

In any case, there is a long road ahead before these steps can take effect and enable local authorities to achieve a new institutional status within the context of international institutions. Currently, local authorities are considered members of civil society, at the same level as an NGO, a union or a professional or business association. Their status as local leaders and democratically elected representatives of their communities remains unrecognized.

Achieving this recognition will primarily depend on the ability of the local authorities to contribute to solving major pending items on the world agenda. These aspirations are reflected in the recent final declaration of the 2nd UCLG Congress, held October 28-31, 2007, in Jeju, South Korea. Its most salient points are:

- Placing the challenge posed by global warming and the need for environmental protection as priority issues for local authority agendas.
- Acting to promote all human rights and respect diversity in our cities and territories

as a foundation for peace and development.

- Upholding efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and democracy at the local level, using it as leverage to strengthen the hands of local governments in global governance.

Moreover, during the UN Climate talks in Bali (December 2007), UCLG, together with the main local government networks on climate change (ICLEI, World Mayors Council on Climate Change, the C40 Large Cities Climate Leadership Group, and signatories of the *US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement*), launched a call to: reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their territories (60-80% by 2050), encourage the use of clean technologies and renewable sources of energy, and promote planning and development measures to aid the cities most vulnerable to climate change through prevention and adaptation measures. They also requested that local governments be represented within the national delegations in future negotiations for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Many cities have drawn up local plans—or are in the process of doing so—to tackle climate change through the promotion of high density urbanization, the use of better adapted transport and construction systems, and to encourage reforestation and more environmentally-sound natural resource management.

Also, cities are spaces where the major contemporary challenges are being addressed daily. In an ever-more complex and urbanized world, local governments are the first in regularly defending citizens’ rights in multi-cultural cities, channeling tensions, resolving conflicts and promoting dialogue among cultures and religions. Within this context, edu-

⁸ *Official Journal* of the European Union L 209 of August 11, 2005, and C 46 of February 24, 2006.

⁹ European Parliament Resolution of March 15, 2007 on local authorities and development cooperation (2006/2235(INI), P6_TA(2007)0083.

cation is a fundamental element in achieving these objectives; committing to a comprehensive education for all individuals means fighting exclusion, reducing inequalities and working for fairness and peaceful coexistence among citizens. It is in the cities where new forms of democratic democracy are tried out (participatory budgets, neighborhood councils, etc.) and where innovative policies of social inclusion are developed to promote universal access to basic public services, as another step towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Nevertheless, local governments often take on new responsibilities without being given adequate resources to carry them out. Bound by the limited means available in many developing countries, the ability of the local governments to fulfill their responsibilities and respond to citizen demands is seriously undermined. This limitation is a determining factor when trying to promote policies to minimize or prevent conflicts. And when conflicts arise, the cities and their people are the first to suffer the effects of war or terrorist violence.

Conclusion

Growing urbanization and greater decentralization will inevitably result in local governments sharing their responsibilities with national governments in coping with some of the great challenges that the world faces today. Likewise, in order to broaden their scope

of action, national governments also need to take advantage of the local governments' commitment and growing role. However, in order to do so, the latter should take a more active part in the definition and implementation of international policy in the areas that affect local communities.

The political coordination of local authorities and their integration into the United Nations system is still recent. Without question, the United Nations has played an important role in the emergence of ***United Cities and Local Governments*** as a new actor on the international stage. With the adoption of the *Guidelines on Decentralization*, decisive steps have also been taken towards creating a universal framework of regulations supporting the demand for recognition of local autonomy. At the same time, important progress has been made so that the voice of local governments can be heard in the international community.

Although national governments continue to set limitations on the recognition of the role of local governments in international governance, the increased interaction between the local and global issues is cause for optimism. In the words of Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, as part of his message to local authorities at the UCLG Congress in Jeju: "The future of humanity will depend on the manner in which cities react to the major challenges posed by globalization."

2

Education: The Present Is the Future

Communications, Knowledge and the City: An Intercultural Debate

Néstor García Canclini

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Communications, Knowledge and the City: An Intercultural Debate

The Communicating City

Cities, and large cities in particular, are spatial systems and communication networks. A city is inhabited and transited, and these two forms of occupying it are complementary: moving around the city to work and consume is, of course, one way to use it. Thus, the city shapes its inhabitants through the manners in which it organizes the occupation of space and through the opportunities it offers for finding information, learning and communicating.

This dual analytical perspective has ended up redefining our concept of city and of urban life. It also leads us to reconsider what it is that disintegrates and reintegrates in large cities. Much has been written on fragmentation, the loss of order and sense of cohesion experienced by cities expanding as a result of industrialization and the mass influx of migrants in the second half of the 20th century (Davis, 1998; Koolhaas, 2002). Urban disorder and the criticism regarding the unifying perspective of the social element led to the discrediting of megaurban planning, especially under the influence of postmodern thought. Cities were left without a cohesive vision or comprehensive projects, and the tendency was to consider them as a sum of fragmented parts; instead of searching for a comprehensive organizational plan, attention was focused on things deemed potentially more dynamic. The theorization of the city as a space in flux, and one traversed by general fluctuations in the economy, communications and tourism, played a role in distancing some urban planners from any aspiration to exercise control over the urban space as a whole (Castells, 1995).

But the continued protests of social and ecological movements suggest that this fracturing of the urban space has not been well received. The media picks up on the discontent felt by the inhabitants of cities refusing to live among vague and intangible networks. Thus the radio, television and Internet—which are partially delocalized networks—construct localized stories. While the territorial expansion of megacities weakens the connection between its constituent parts, communication networks deliver the information and entertainment to every household. The haphazard bursting toward the outskirts, whereby inhabitants lose a sense of the limits of “their” territory, is counterbalanced by media reports about what is going on in places far removed from the big city. In the past, literary and journalistic pieces served this function of creating stories that drew people together, thus acting somehow as an antidote to the urban sprawl. Studies done on the relation between uses of space and communication processes in Mexico City show us that the helicopter flying over the city each morning, broadcasting reports over the TV and radio, gives an illusion of a megalopolis seen as a whole, apparently bound together by those on duty. As this author has discussed elsewhere, the imbalances and uncertainties engendered by urbanization that deurbanizes—through its irrational, speculative expansion—appear to be offset by the technological efficiency of communication networks. Therefore, defining an urban space in strictly sociodemographic terms fails to explain its new meanings if it does not also include the reconstruction resulting from the imaginary action of the media (García Canclini, 1998).

Radio and television, engaged in this task of being narrators and giving coherence to

the city, redesign their communication tactics so as to take root in delimited spaces. The adaptations of CNN's international discourse, broadcast from Atlanta to complement local information in many countries, exemplify this versatility. Although the media outlets are transnational, they know that their audiences want to hear about what it means to be together in a particular place. Thus, they present themselves in this dual role: as *macrosocial informants*, who announce the events happening in far-off places, and as *microsocial confidants*, who report on the traffic jams and emotional disturbances occurring in the city where we are watching the newscast. The rituals of international diplomacy and the personal dramas of our neighbors are all part of the program.

Let us now take a closer look at how the meaning of the city is reshaped through the "urbanizing" role of video culture. I will discuss two dimensions of *video culture*: first, it includes all of the networks and electronic messages (radio, television, videos, Internet); and second, all of the visual messages that make up the image of the city, namely: its architecture, the urban order and disorder, the commercial and political advertising, the signage, graffiti and other messages visible in the big city.

The current reorganization of urban spaces and communication networks is being carried out with three factors in mind: a) the tremendous technological and economic power of the media to reach the majority of the population, and interweave the local day-to-day with national and global information and entertainment networks; b) the resistance of government organizations, and the limited ability of societal groups, to participate in such large-scale communication functions, or even comprehend the sociocultural dynamics and value of these communication networks; c) the commercial pressures stemming from the major investments required for industrial-level production and mass communication via radio, television, motion pictures and digital services.

These three factors were not always arranged, as they are now, to benefit business owners and promote the commercialized video culture. In the early days of radio and television broadcasting, some nations owned broadcasting companies that were publicly oriented. According to John Keane, the conception of modern public space was linked to the model of "public service broadcasting." Keane has shown how important this model was in Great Britain, the Netherlands and Canada, in terms of easing financial pressures, placing limits on both the amount and type of advertising, and giving citizens access to participate in their society's debates. We see a similar analysis of the social and political functions of the media in studies done on radio and TV broadcasting in Latin America (Martín Barbero, Ortiz, Winocur, etc.).

Due to the growing influence of radio, television and the Internet, it is often said that these resources are the new forums, sources of mass information (Ferry, Wolton). Indeed, the media is where we get most of our news and hear commentary and debate about the public sphere, and sometimes we are participants in that conversation. While political parties were losing credibility and their ability to represent public interests, the media went about occupying both old and new positions in social intermediation and deliberation. Video politics has taken the place of political party meetings and partisan affiliation. Newspapers and radio broadcasters, to say nothing of the television, spread the news better than in the past, and to more people, about acts of corruption and human rights violations, and provide explanations on ecological or political crises. The ever-increasing access to the Internet helps immediately connect multiple sectors to information that was formerly restricted and is now frequently discussed in blogs.

Just as in the '90s when studies on the sociology of politics and communication discovered the importance of video politics, we should now be paying closer attention to other means of acquiring information, com-

communicating and participating socially that are available through the new digital platforms. Cultural policies, therefore, can no longer be simply Gutenbergian, that is, set apart from the places and media where most people seek out their information and entertainment. It is not feasible to focus the debate about social democratization solely on written communication. Nor on manipulation by television. Just taking a look at the new forms of reading and communicating shows us that plenty of reading is still being done—no less than in the past. Newspaper sales are down, but hundreds of thousands of people check them out daily on the Internet. There are fewer bookstores, but Internet cafés are now more prevalent, as are portable media devices for sending text and audiovisual messages.

It would be naïve to think that cybersociety will be able to sufficiently channel its need for information, representation and participation in cities. Counter information sent via mobile phones between hundreds of thousands of people in Spain managed to undermine the manipulation of information by the government and the PP (Partido Popular, the incumbent party at that time), which attributed the bombing of Madrid's Atocha train station to the terrorist organization ETA (and coerced the press, radio and television into broadcasting that information). Incarcerated mafia groups also use mobile phones to organize kidnappings and urban attacks, such as those orchestrated in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Tijuana and dozens of other Latin American cities.

Information Society or Knowledge Society?

In recent years, questions regarding information and urban management have been addressed within the framework of redefining contemporary societies as knowledge societies. Cities occupy a central position in this line of thought and action. The term *knowledge cities* is used to refer to those cities

designed to foster economic development based on scientific knowledge, advanced information technologies and a seamless global interconnectivity, or to parts of large cities that are restructured in order to fulfill these objectives. Some practices of these cities include: using creation and innovation as key resources for adding value to production and accelerating development, with greater competitiveness internationally; promoting coordination between universities, companies and creators; facilitating widespread access to new communications technologies; gearing formal and informal education toward raising the educational level across the population, particularly the acquisition of knowledge and access to networks that are favorable to obtaining this kind of social capital. Boston and Seattle in the United States, and Cambridge and Manchester in Great Britain, are a few examples of this restructuring of information, knowledge, connectivity, urban infrastructure, education and citizen participation in development.

The Universal Forum of Cultures held in 2004 in Barcelona already promoted the coordination between urban growth and the expansion of knowledge. The second edition of the Forum, which began in Monterrey, Mexico, in September 2007, further delineated the link between sustainable cultural development and scientific/technological advancements. "Monterrey, City of Knowledge" was the motto used to promote this international event in the host city—Mexico's second largest in terms of population—to which Latin America's largest steel company (among many other factories) brought prestige as an industrial capital. Nevertheless, when industrialization fell behind technological advances as a driving force for development, the blast furnaces were shut down, and the buildings housing them, which had been transformed into a foundry park (Parque Fundidora), were converted into an art gallery and film screening facility. Now, with the boost of the Forum, this former factory space is growing with the addition of new museums and promenades around a 2.5 km

canal that connects the old industrial area to the historic city center.

Two forms of knowledge: from the know-how that fueled industrial development, embodied by the factories and furnaces that were “as resistant as the material that they produced: steel” (according to a piece published about the Forum in 2007), we move on to the symbolic reclamation of the empty buildings converted into the Steel Museum (“Museo del Acero”), planetarium and art exhibition centers. The Forum’s conferences and round tables were focuses for debates and discussion on the contribution made by new knowledge toward cultural diversity and “sustainable” development based more on information than on material production. Is this true conversion or a euphemization?

To respond to that question, it may be helpful to link these urban transformations with the doubts as to which qualifier—information or knowledge—we should apply in reference to present-day society. In Monterrey and other forums, there has been an insistence on linking cultural diversity to the movements supposedly making the greatest strides in Western-based technological knowledge. But is it valid to generalize the concept of the knowledge society worldwide?

Looking at this debate from an anthropological perspective reveals the difficulties involved with extending this formula to include the thousands of ethnic groups and dozens of nations in which the prevailing knowledges follow neither the cognitive strategies of the Western world nor those of modern sciences. Consistent with anthropological research, and its diversified conceptualization of the ways of producing and transmitting knowledge, all societies, in all eras, have been knowledge societies, meaning that all human groups have had a set of knowledges appropriate to their context and their historical challenges. The consequent questioning arising from pretensions of European or Western superiority led to cultural relativism. It was an attempt to resolve inequalities by

reducing them to differences—always legitimate—between cultures. As long as nations, and many ethnic groups, were able to manage most of their own economic, social and cultural processes within their territories, the solution of valuing each independent culture, with its own knowledges, remained quite sound. The globalization, however, of economic exchange, migration, information and entertainment media, ecological conditions and sociocultural development has created the need for a conception that acknowledges the differences along with the inequalities. The distances between societies founded upon different forms of knowledge are not solely a consequence of different paths of cultural development, but also of asymmetric, disparate relationships.

The evolutionist substitution of traditional knowledge for the sciences is no longer satisfactory, nor is the separate recognition of the basic legitimacy of all forms of knowledge. The challenge is to find out how multicultural knowledge building is carried out in the present era and to identify the intercultural dilemmas in that context. The formidable increase of knowledge can indeed communicate (which is not synonymous with “inform”) if used to build new forms of “cultural coexistence” (Wolton, 2003: 12).

From this standpoint, the overall situation of urban development represents a more complex issue than that conceived by history’s “progressive” teleologies or by cultural relativism. The burgeoning modernization of rapidly developing Asian countries, such as China, India and Japan, has moved the design of some cities toward Western urbanism, though without shedding their historical heritage. As such, in Latin American societies with large indigenous populations, traditional medicine, artisan practices and native forms of organizing knowledge coexist with the sciences. Despite the tremendous inequality between scientific and traditional knowledge, and the evolutionist tendencies that often discredit indigenous cultures, autochthonous knowledges continue to be

broadly used as resources for healthcare, bilingual education, and rural and urban practices (notably, in Bolivia, Guatemala and Mexico).

Added to these changes is the vast spreading of traditional, non-Western knowledges in Europe and the United States, as well as in both urban and rural areas of Asia and Latin America, developed with a modern slant. It no longer seems contradictory that modern communication resources such as television or the Internet are contributing to the expansion of traditional medicines, or that indigenous groups use computer programs to record and give continuity to their myths and views of the world. There is an interaction, at times cooperative and other times conflictive, between different forms of knowledge: old and modern, traditional and scientific.

In light of this complex coexistence of knowledges, ways of life and communication, we can reconsider whether it is more appropriate to talk about the information society or the knowledge society. *Information society* refers to a set of technological and social information processes that organize the systematic use and digital processing of information in order to restructure production processes, and thereby reduce the cost of production and exponentially increase the capacity for amassing wealth. Thus, achieving a more balanced social and cultural development throughout the world would depend upon countries joining the digital and information revolution, every sector of every society gaining access to “smart jobs” by having the new skills and being connected with the networks that provide strategic information. It is assumed that increasingly technological productivity, the growth of the markets and their transnational integration will yield greater economic benefits. As direct, simultaneous access to cutting-edge information becomes a reality, education will at the same time become democratized and general welfare improved. In the political realm, there will be more opportunities for partici-

pation, while decision-making will become decentralized.

Considering all of that, how, then, can we explain the erosion of social and political life in cities, even in those considered to be highly developed technologically? The conception of a *knowledge society*, in contrast, enables one to perceive and explain differences, inequalities and contradictions that make other social dynamics surface. In that respect, the sociology of education has been able to show that there is no “systemic simultaneity” between all dimensions of development, because the pupils are not all the same: they do not have the same exact learning opportunities, nor are they interested in the same subjects. A homogeneous education based on universal, standardized information creates neither more parity nor participative democratization. If we pay attention to the various forms of social belonging and cohesion, we hear a multiplicity of demands. This calls for “group-specific program adaptations” (for instance, bilingual offerings in multicultural areas), “curricular relevance in accordance with the school’s demographics, and the allocation of special funds for areas with greater social vulnerability and economic instability” (Hopenhayn, 2002: 315-316).

Reducing knowledge to information leads us, at this new stage, back to the same problems criticized in the enlightenment paradigm: in other words, seeing education as the imposition of a type of rationality that would ensure a priori the production and transmission of universal and true knowledge. The inequality within each country and each city in terms of accessing both the knowledge and job markets—even for those possessing new knowledge and skills—makes it clear that there are other variables in play that were not taken into account in the enlightenment or technocratic models. The variety of identity commitments, of symbolizations of social meaning, show that the knowledge necessary for occupying a significant place in the world must be obtained both from globalized technology networks and by the transmission and

reshaping of the historical heritage of each society.

The Intercultural City

Can a city help educate in a way that encourages cultural development that is at once technologically advanced and socially integrative? Unlike before, the question now goes beyond just the city's ability to renew its infrastructures by incorporating scientific and technological innovations and attracting the capital that drives the most advanced forms of production. It also entails combining historical and territorial knowledge with recent communications technology, and perhaps with what remains from past periods of urban and industrial development.

When we talk about multiculturalism, we are no longer referring solely to the coexistence of ethnic groups, languages and forms of knowing and imagining things—as was, and continues to be, the case in different geographic regions of a nation—but also to the question of proximity and interculturalism within a given city: Christians, Muslims and nonbelievers living side by side in New York, London, Berlin, Paris and many other cities in Europe, the US, Latin America and Asia. In megalopolises, as well as in hundreds of medium-sized and small cities, we see the temples of different religious denominations being built, the fusion of music from diverse cultures and eras, architectures and ways of using the city rooted in differing urban conceptions. We are getting away from the homogenizing models, and also from the fantasy—spatially reproduced in American cities—that segregating people into different neighborhoods would ensure conflict-free multiculturalism between African Americans, Latin Americans, Anglo-Saxons and Asians.

Along with trying to manage the historical forms of diversity (ethnic, national) coexisting within a city, additional difficulties are brought on by developments in technology

and communications. Audiovisual and electronic resources, once seen as threatening homogenizers, are giving rise to forms of both multiculturalism and interculturalism by forcing interaction—in disparate conditions—between print, audiovisual and digital cultures. Side by side in cities, we see bookstores, theaters, cinemas, record and video stores, videogame shops and—particularly in countries with lower economic levels—Internet cafés, where access to digital networks is democratized. Even in monolingual societies, different methods for accessing information via books or video screens, or getting to know different kinds of music through concerts, bootleg videos and records, free downloads or electronic exchanges, are gradually creating differences and distances between groups and generations. The notion of urban public space—which continues to cause rifts among neighborhoods of greater or lesser stature, among areas with better or worse infrastructures—becomes further complicated by the virtual prolongations of other forms of communication, cohabitation or segregation.

A few years ago, with the new century just barely underway, I watched with amazement as a GPS device accurately guided the car taking me from San Gimignano to Siena, both along the highway and through the winding streets of the medieval city. The electronic, digital and information innovations brought to us by the so-called knowledge society are opening up significant new pathways to knowledge and encouraging reflection on society's uses, history and potential. They combine the traditional, the modern and the hypermodern. But that is not enough when it comes to developing adequate approaches to managing the many forms of knowing and representing the social aspect. Building a city, educating in and with the city, in this day and age requires an organization of spaces and circuits that is not limited to the school and other institutions traditionally in charge of this task. We are just starting to get a glimpse of what it means to build a knowledge city.

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Drift¹

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¹ Sennett, Richard: "Drift" in *The Corrosion of Character. The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*. (New York, W.W. Norton, 1998), pp. 15-31.

Recently I met someone in an airport whom I hadn't seen for fifteen years. I had interviewed the father of Rico (as I shall call him) a quarter century ago when I wrote a book about blue-collar workers in America, *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. Enrico, his father, then worked as a janitor, and had high hopes for this boy, who was just entering adolescence, a bright kid good at sports. When I lost touch with his father a decade later, Rico had just finished college. In the airline lounge, Rico looked as if he had fulfilled his father's dreams. He carried a computer in a smart leather case, dressed in a suit I couldn't afford, and sported a signet ring with a crest.

Enrico had spent twenty years by the time we first met cleaning toilets and mopping floors in a downtown office building. He did so without complaining, but also without any hype about living out the American Dream. His work had one single and durable purpose, the service of his family. It had taken him fifteen years to save the money for a house, which he purchased in a suburb near Boston, cutting ties with his old Italian neighborhood because a house in the suburbs was better for the kids. Then his wife, Flavia, had gone to work, as a presser in a dry-cleaning plant; by the time I met Enrico in 1970, both parents were saving for the college education of their two sons.

What had most struck me about Enrico and his generation was how linear time was in their lives: year after year of working in jobs which seldom varied from day to day. And along that line of time, achievement was cumulative: Enrico and Flavia checked the increase in their savings every week, measured their domesticity by the various improvements and additions they had made to their

ranch house. Finally, the time they lived was predictable. The upheavals of the Great Depression and World War II had faded, unions protected their jobs; though he was only forty when I first met him, Enrico knew precisely when he would retire and how much money he would have.

Time is the only resource freely available to those at the bottom of society. To make time accumulate, Enrico needed what the sociologist Max Weber called an "iron cage," a bureaucratic structure which rationalized the use of time; in Enrico's case, the seniority rules of his union about pay and the regulations organizing his government pension provided this scaffolding. When he added to these resources his own self-discipline, the result was more than economic.

He carved out a clear story for himself in which his experience accumulated materially and psychically; his life thus made sense to him as a linear narrative. Though a snob might dismiss Enrico as boring, he experienced the years as a dramatic story moving forward repair by repair, interest payment by interest payment. The janitor felt he became the author of his life, and though he was a man low on the social scale, this narrative provided him a sense of self-respect.

Though clear, Enrico's life story was not simple. I was particularly struck by how Enrico straddled the worlds of his old immigrant community and his new suburban-neutral life. Among his suburban neighbors he lived as a quiet, self-effacing citizen; when he returned to the old neighborhood, however, he received much more attention as a man who had made good on the outside, a worthy elder who returned each Sunday for Mass

followed by lunch followed by gossipy coffees. He got recognition as a distinctive human being from those who knew him long enough to understand his story; he got a more anonymous kind of respect from his new neighbors by doing what everyone else did, keeping his home and garden neat, living without incident. The thick texture of Enrico's particular experience lay in the fact that he was acknowledged in both ways, depending in which community he moved: two identities from the same disciplined use of his time.

If the world were a happy and just place, those who enjoy respect would give back in equal measure the regard which has been accorded them. This was Fichte's idea in "The Foundations of National Law"; he spoke of the "reciprocal effect" of recognition. But real life does not proceed so generously.

Enrico disliked blacks, although he had labored peaceably for many years with other janitors who were black; he disliked non-Italian foreigners like the Irish, although his own father could barely speak English. He could not acknowledge kindred stragglers; he had no class allies. Most of all, however, Enrico disliked middle-class people. We treated him as though he were invisible, "as a zero," he said; the janitor's resentment was complicated by his fear that because of his lack of education and his menial status, we had a sneaking right to do so. To his powers of endurance in time he contrasted the whining self-pity of blacks, the unfair intrusion of foreigners, and the unearned privileges of the bourgeoisie.

Though Enrico felt he had achieved a measure of social honor, he hardly wanted his son Rico to repeat his own life. The American dream of upward mobility for the children powerfully drove my friend. "I don't understand a word he says," Enrico boasted to me several times when Rico had come home from school and was at work on math. I heard many other parents of sons and daughters like Rico say something like "I don't un-

derstand him" in harder tones, as though the kids had abandoned them. We all violate in some way the place assigned us in the family myth, but upward mobility gives that passage a peculiar twist. Rico and other youngsters headed up the social ladder sometimes betrayed shame about their parents' working-class accents and rough manners, but more often felt suffocated by the endless strategizing over pennies and the reckoning of time in tiny steps. These favored children wanted to embark on a less constrained journey.

Now, many years later, thanks to the encounter at the airport, I had the chance to see how it had turned out for Enrico's son. In the airport lounge, I must confess, I didn't much like what I saw. Rico's expensive suit could have been just business plumage, but the crested signet ring—a mark of elite family background—seemed both a lie and a betrayal of the father. However, circumstances threw Rico and me together on a long flight. He and I did not have one of those American journeys in which a stranger spills out his or her emotional guts to you, gathers more tangible baggage when the plane lands, and disappears forever. I took the seat next to Rico without being asked, and for the first hour of a long flight from New York to Vienna had to pry information out of him.

RICO, I LEARNED, has fulfilled his father's desire for upward mobility, but has indeed rejected the way of his father. Rico scorns "time-servers" and others wrapped in the armor of bureaucracy; instead he believes in being open to change and in taking risks. And he has prospered; whereas Enrico had an income in the bottom quarter of the wage scale, Rico's has shot up to the top 5 percent. Yet this is not an entirely happy story for Rico.

After graduating from a local university in electrical engineering, Rico went to a business school in New York. There he married a fellow student, a young Protestant woman from a better family. School prepared the young couple to move and change jobs fre-

quently, and they've done so. Since graduation, in fourteen years at work Rico has moved four times.

Rico began as a technology adviser to a venture capital firm on the West Coast, in the early, heady days of the developing computer industry in Silicon Valley; he then moved to Chicago, where he also did well. But the next move was for the sake of his wife's career. If Rico were an ambition-driven character out of the pages of Balzac, he would never have done it, for he gained no larger salary, and he left hotbeds of high-tech activity for a more retired, if leafy, office park in Missouri. Enrico felt somewhat ashamed when Flavia went to work; Rico sees Jeannette, his wife, as an equal working partner, and has adapted to her. It was at this point, when Jeannette's career took off, that their children began arriving.

In the Missouri office park, the uncertainties of the new economy caught up with the young man. While Jeannette was promoted, Rico was downsized—his firm was absorbed by another, larger firm that had its own analysts. So the couple made a fourth move, back East to a suburb outside New York. Jeannette now manages a big team of accountants, and he has started a small consulting firm.

Prosperous as they are, the very acme of an adaptable, mutually supportive couple, both husband and wife often fear they are on the edge of losing control over their lives. This fear is built into their work histories.

In Rico's case, the fear of lacking control is straightforward: it concerns managing time. When Rico told his peers he was going to start his own consulting firm, most approved; consulting seems the road to independence. But in getting started he found himself plunged into many menial tasks, like doing his own photocopying, which before he'd taken for granted. He found himself plunged into the sheer flux of networking; every call had to be answered, the slightest acquaintance pursued. To find work, he has fallen

subservient to the schedules of people who are in no way obliged to respond to him. Like other consultants, he wants to work in accordance with contracts setting out just what the consultant will do. But these contracts, he says, are largely fictions. A consultant usually has to tack one way and another in response to the changing whims or thoughts of those who pay; Rico has no fixed role that allows him to say to others, "This is what I do, this is what I am responsible for."

Jeannette's lack of control is more subtle. The small group of accountants she now manages is divided among people who work at home, people usually in the office, and a phalanx of low-level back-office clerks a thousand miles away connected to her by computer cable. In her present corporation, strict rules and surveillance of phones and e-mail disciplines the conduct of the accountants who work from home; to organize the work of the back-office clerks a thousand miles away, she can't make hands-on, face-to-face judgments, but instead must work by formal written guidelines. She hasn't experienced less bureaucracy in this seemingly flexible work arrangement; indeed, her own decisions count for less than in the days when she supervised workers who were grouped together, all the time, in the same office.

As I say, at first I was not prepared to shed many tears for this American Dream couple. Yet as dinner was served to Rico and me on our flight, and he began to talk more personally, my sympathies increased. His fear of losing control, it developed, went much deeper than worry about losing power in his job. He feared that the actions he needs to take and the way he has to live in order to survive in the modern economy have set his emotional, inner life adrift.

Rico told me that he and Jeannette have made friends mostly with the people they see at work, and have lost many of these friendships during the moves of the last twelve years, "though we stay `netted.'" Rico looks to electronic communications for the sense

of community which Enrico most enjoyed when he attended meetings of the janitors' union, but the son finds communications on-line short and hurried. "It's like with your kids—when you're not there, all you get is news later."

In each of his four moves, Rico's new neighbors have treated his advent as an arrival which closes past chapters of his life; they ask him about Silicon Valley or the Missouri office park, but, Rico says, "they don't see other places"; their imaginations are not engaged. This is a very American fear. The classic American suburb was a bedroom community; in the last generation a different kind of suburb has arisen, more economically independent of the urban core, but not really town or village either; a place springs into life with the wave of a developer's wand, flourishes, and begins to decay all within a generation. Such communities are not empty of sociability or neighborliness, but no one in them becomes a long-term witness to another person's life.

The fugitive quality of friendship and local community form the background to the most important of Rico's inner worries, his family. Like Enrico, Rico views work as his service to the family; unlike Enrico, Rico finds that the demands of the job interfere with achieving the end. At first I thought he was talking about the all too familiar conflict between work time and time for family. "We get home at seven, do dinner, try to find an hour for the kids' homework, and then deal with our own paperwork." When things get tough for months at a time in his consulting firm, "it's like I don't know who my kids are." He worries about the frequent anarchy into which his family plunges, and about neglecting his children, whose needs can't be programmed to fit into the demands of his job.

Hearing this, I tried to reassure him; my wife, stepson, and I had endured and survived well a similarly high-pressure life. "You aren't being fair to yourself," I said. "The fact you care so much means you are doing the best for

your family you can." Though he warmed to this, I had misunderstood.

As a boy, I already knew, Rico had chafed under Enrico's authority; he had told me then he felt smothered by the small-minded rules which governed the janitor's life. Now that he is a father himself, the fear of a lack of ethical discipline haunts him, particularly the fear that his children will become "mall rats," hanging out aimlessly in the parking lots of shopping centers in the afternoons while the parents remain out of touch at their offices.

He therefore wants to set for his son and daughters an example of resolution and purpose, "but you can't just tell kids to be like that"; he has to set an example. The objective example he could set, his upward mobility, is something they take for granted, a history that belongs to a past not their own, a story which is over. But his deepest worry is that he cannot offer the substance of his work life as an example to his children of how they should conduct themselves ethically. The qualities of good work are not the qualities of good character.

AS I CAME LATER TO UNDERSTAND, the gravity of this fear comes from a gap separating Enrico and Rico's generations. Business leaders and journalists emphasize the global marketplace and the use of new technologies as the hallmarks of the capitalism of our time. This is true enough, but misses another dimension of change: new ways of organizing time, particularly working time.

The most tangible sign of that change might be the motto "No long term." In work, the traditional career progressing step by step through the corridors of one or two institutions is withering; so is the deployment of a single set of skills through the course of a working life. Today, a young American with at least two years of college can expect to change jobs at least eleven times in the course of working, and change his or her skill base at least three times during those forty years of labor.

An executive for ATT points out that the motto “No long term” is altering the very meaning of work:

In ATT we have to promote the whole concept of the work force being contingent, though most of the contingent workers are inside our walls. “Jobs” are being replaced by “projects” and “fields of work.”²

Corporations have also farmed out many of the tasks they once did permanently in-house to small firms and to individuals employed on short-term contracts. The fastest-growing sector of the American labor force, for instance, is people who work for temporary job agencies.³

“People are hungry for [change],” the management guru James Champy argues, because “the market may be ‘consumer-driven’ as never before in history.”⁴ The market, in this view, is too dynamic to permit doing things the same way year after year, or doing the same thing. The economist Bennett Harrison believes the source of this hunger for change is “impatient capital,” the desire for rapid return; for instance, the average length of time stocks have been held on British and American exchanges has dropped 60 percent in the last fifteen years. The market believes rapid market return is best generated by rapid institutional change.

The “long-term” order at which the new regime takes aim, it should be said, was itself short-lived—the decades spanning the mid-twentieth century. Nineteenth-century capitalism lurched from disaster to disaster in the stock markets and in irrational corporate investment; the wild swings of the business

cycle provided people little security. In Enrico’s generation after World War II, this disorder was brought somewhat under control in most advanced economies; strong unions, guarantees of the welfare state, and large-scale corporations combined to produce an era of relative stability. This span of thirty or so years defines the “stable past” now challenged by a new regime.

A change in modern institutional structure has accompanied short-term, contract, or episodic labor. Corporations have sought to remove layers of bureaucracy, to become flatter and more flexible organizations. In place of organizations as pyramids, management wants now to think of organizations as networks. “Networklike arrangements are lighter on their feet” than pyramidal hierarchies, the sociologist Walter Powell declares; “they are more readily decomposable or redefinable than the fixed assets of hierarchies.”⁵ This means that promotions and dismissals tend not to be based on clear, fixed rules, nor are work tasks crisply defined; the network is constantly redefining its structure.

An IBM executive once told Powell that the flexible corporation “must become an archipelago of related activities.”⁶ The archipelago is an apt image for communications in a network, communication occurring like travel between islands—but at the speed of light, thanks to modern technologies. The computer has been the key to replacing the slow and clogged communications which occur in traditional chains of command. The fastest-growing sector of the labor force deals in computer and data-processing services, the area in which Jeanette and Rico work; the computer is now used in virtually all jobs,

² Quoted in *New York Times*, Feb, 13, 1996, p. D1, D6.

³ Corporations like Manpower firm grew 240 percent from 1985 to 1995. As I write, The Manpower firm, with 600,000 people on its payroll compared with the 400,00 at General Motors and 350,000 at IBM is now the country’s largest employer.

⁴ James Champy, *Re-engineering Management*, (New York, Harper-Business), 1995, p. 119, pp. 39-40.

⁵ Walter Powell and Laurel Smith-Doerr, “Networks and Economic Life,” in Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg, eds., *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 381.

⁶ *Ibid.*

in many ways, by people of all ranks. (Please see Tables 1 and 7 in the Appendix for a statistical portrait.)

For all these reasons, Enrico's experience of long-term, narrative time in fixed channels has become dysfunctional. What Rico sought to explain to me—and perhaps to himself—is that the material changes embodied in the motto “No long term” have become dysfunctional for him too, but as guides to personal character, particularly in relation to his family life.

Take the matter of commitment and loyalty. “No long term” is a principle which corrodes trust, loyalty, and mutual commitment. Trust can, of course, be a purely formal matter, as when people agree to a business deal or rely on another to observe the rules in a game. But usually deeper experiences of trust are more informal, as when people learn on whom they can rely when given a difficult or impossible task. Such social bonds take time to develop, slowly rooting into the cracks and crevices of institutions.

The short time frame of modern institutions limits the ripening of informal trust. A particularly egregious violation of mutual commitment often occurs when new enterprises are first sold. In firms starting up, long hours and intense effort are demanded of everyone; when the firms go public—that is, initially offer publicly traded shares—the founders are apt to sell out and cash in, leaving lower-level employees behind. If an organization whether new or old operates as a flexible, loose network structure rather than by rigid command from the top, the network can also weaken social bonds. The sociologist Mark Granovetter says that modern institutional networks are marked by “the strength of weak ties,” by which he partly means that fleeting forms of association are more useful to people than long-term connections,

and partly that strong social ties like loyalty have ceased to be compelling.⁷ These weak ties are embodied in teamwork, in which the team moves from task to task and the personnel of the team changes in the process.

Strong ties depend, by contrast, on long association. And more personally they depend on a willingness to make commitments to others. Given the typically short, weak ties in institutions today, John Kotter, a Harvard Business School professor, counsels the young to work “on the outside rather than on the inside” of organizations. He advocates consulting rather than becoming “entangled” in long-term employment; institutional loyalty is a trap in an economy where “business concepts, product designs, competitor intelligence, capital equipment, and all kinds of knowledge have shorter credible life spans.”⁸ A consultant who managed a recent IBM job shrinkage declares that once employees “understand [they can't depend on the corporation] they're marketable.”⁹ Detachment and superficial cooperativeness are better armor for dealing with current realities than behavior based on values of loyalty and service.

It is the time dimension of the new capitalism, rather than high-tech data transmission, global stock markets, or free trade, which most directly affects people's emotional lives outside the workplace. Transposed to the family realm, “No long term” means keep moving, don't commit yourself, and don't sacrifice. Rico suddenly erupted on the plane, “You can't imagine how stupid I feel when I talk to my kids about commitment. It's an abstract virtue to them; they don't see it anywhere.” Over dinner I simply didn't understand the outburst, which seemed apropos of nothing. But his meaning is now clearer to me as a reflection upon himself. He means the children don't see commitment practiced in the lives of their parents or their parents' generation.

⁷ Mark Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties,” *American Journal of Sociology* 78, (1973), pp. 1360-1380.

⁸ John Kotter, *The New Rules*, (New York: Dutton, 1995), pp. 81, 159.

⁹ Anthony Sampson, *Company Man*, (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 226-227.

Similarly, Rico hates the emphasis on teamwork and open discussion which marks an enlightened, flexible workplace once those values are transposed to the intimate realm. Practiced at home, teamwork is destructive, marking an absence of authority and of firm guidance in raising children. He and Jeannette, he says, have seen too many parents who have talked every family issue to death for fear of saying “No!,” parents who listen too well, who understand beautifully rather than lay down the law; they have seen as a result too many disoriented kids.

“Things have to hold together,” Rico declared to me. Again, I didn’t at first quite get this, and he explained what he meant in terms of watching television. Perhaps unusually, Rico and Jeannette make it a practice to discuss with their two sons the relation between movies or sitcoms the boys watch on the tube and events in the newspapers. “Otherwise it’s just a jumble of images.” But mostly the connections concern the violence and sexuality the children see on television. Enrico constantly spoke in little parables to drive home questions of character; these parables he derived from his work as a janitor—such as “You can ignore dirt but it won’t go away.” When I first knew Rico as an adolescent, he reacted with a certain shame to these homely snippets of wisdom. So now I asked Rico if he too made parables or even just drew ethical rules from his experience at work. He first ducked answering directly—“There’s not much on TV about that sort of thing”—then replied, “And well, no, I don’t talk that way.”

Behavior which earns success or even just survival at work thus gives Rico little to offer in the way of a parental role model. In fact, for this modern couple, the problem is just the reverse: how can they protect family relations from succumbing to the short-term behavior, the meeting mind-set, and above all the weakness of loyalty and commitment which mark the modern workplace? In place of the chameleon values of the new economy, the family—as Rico sees it—should em-

phasize instead formal obligation, trustworthiness, commitment, and purpose. These are all long-term virtues.

This conflict between family and work poses some questions about adult experience itself. How can long-term purposes be pursued in a short-term society? How can durable social relations be sustained? How can a human being develop a narrative of identity and life history in a society composed of episodes and fragments? The conditions of the new economy feed instead on experience which drifts in time, from place to place, from job to job. If I could state Rico’s dilemma more largely, short-term capitalism threatens to corrode his character, particularly those qualities of character which bind human beings to one another and furnishes each with a sense of sustainable self.

BY THE END OF DINNER, both of us were wrapped in our own thoughts. I had imagined a quarter century ago that late capitalism had achieved something like a final consummation; whether there was more market freedom, less government control, still the “system” entered into people’s everyday experience as it always had, through success and failure, domination and submission, alienation and consumption. Questions of culture and character fell for me into these familiar categories. But no young person’s experience today could be captured by these old habits of thought.

Rico’s talk about his family had also set him, evidently, to thinking about his ethical values. When we retired to the back of the cabin to smoke, he remarked to me that he used to be a liberal, in the generous American sense of caring about the poor and behaving well to minorities like blacks and homosexuals. Enrico’s intolerance of blacks and foreigners shamed his son. Since going to work, though, Rico says he has become a “cultural conservative.” Like most of his peers, he loathes social parasites, embodied for him in the figure of the welfare mother who spends her gov-

ernment checks on booze and drugs. He has also become a believer in fixed, Draconian standards of communal behavior, as opposed to those values of “liberal parenting” which parallel the open-ended meeting at work. As an example of this communal ideal Rico told me that he approves the proposal current in some conservative circles to take away the children of bad parents and put them in orphanages.

My hackles rose and we debated furiously, smoke rising above us in a cloud. We were talking past each other. (And as I look over my notes, I see Rico also a bit enjoyed provoking me.) He knows his cultural conservatism is just that—an idealized symbolic community. He has no real expectation of shutting children up in orphanages. He has certainly had little adult experience of the conservatism which preserves the past; for instance, other Americans have treated him each time he has moved as though life is just beginning, the past consigned to oblivion. The cultural conservatism to which he subscribes forms a testament to the coherence he feels missing in his life.

And as concerns the family, his values are no simple matter of nostalgia. Rico in fact disliked the actual experience of rigid parental rule such as he suffered at Enrico’s hands. He would not return to the linear time which ordered Enrico and Flavia’s existence even if he could; he looked at me with a certain disgust when I told him that as a college professor, I have job tenure for life. He treats uncertainty and risk-taking as challenges at work; as a consultant he has learned to be an adept team player.

But these forms of flexible behavior have not served Rico in his roles as a father or as a member of a community; he wants to sustain social relations and to offer durable guidance. It is against the severed ties at work, willful amnesia of his neighbors, and the specter of his children as mall rats that he asserts the *idea* of lasting values. And so Rico has become caught in a trap.

All the specific values he cited are fixed rules: a parent says no; a community demands work; dependence is an evil. The vagaries of circumstance are excluded from these ethical rules—random vagaries are what, after all, Rico wants to defend against. But it’s difficult to put such timeless rules into practice.

That difficulty appears in the language Rico uses to describe his moves the last fourteen years around the country. Though many of these moves have not been of his own desiring, he seldom used the passive voice in recounting the events. For instance, he dislikes the locution “I was downsized”; instead, when this event broke up his life in the Missouri office park, he declared, “I faced a crisis and I had a decision to make.” About this crisis he said, “I make my own choices; I take full responsibility for moving around so much.” This sounded like his father. “Taking responsibility for yourself” was the most important phrase in Enrico’s lexicon. But Rico didn’t see how to act on it.

I asked Rico, “When you were downsized in Missouri, why didn’t you protest, why didn’t you fight back?”

“Sure, I felt angry, but that doesn’t do any good. There was nothing unfair about the corporation’s making its operation tighter. Whatever happened, I had to deal with the consequences. Would I ask Jeannette to move, one more time, for me? It was bad for the kids as well as her. Should I ask her? Who should I write a letter to about that?”

There was no action he could take. Even so, he feels responsible for this event beyond his control; he literally takes it into himself, as his own burden. But what does “taking responsibility” mean? His children accept mobility as just the way of the world; his wife is in fact grateful that he has been willing to move for her sake. Yet the statement “I take responsibility for moving around so much” issues from Rico as a defiant challenge. By this point in our journey, I understood that the last thing I should reply to this challenge

was “How could you hold yourself accountable?” It would have been a reasonable question and an insult—you don’t really matter.

Enrico had a somewhat fatalistic, old-world sense of people being born into a particular class or condition of life and making the very best of what is possible within those constraints. Events beyond his control, like layoffs, happened to him; then he coped. As this bit of sparring I’ve just quoted may make clear, Rico’s sense of responsibility is more absolute. What he draws attention to is his unbending willingness to be held accountable, to that quality of character, rather than to a particular course of action. Flexibility has pushed him to assert the sheer strength of will as the essence of his own ethical character.

Assuming responsibility for events beyond one’s control may seem a familiar friend—guilt—but this would wrongly characterize Rico, at least as he appeared to me. He is not self-indulgently self-accusing. Nor has he lost his nerve, faced with a society which seems to him all in fragments. The rules he flares for what a person of good character should do may seem simplistic or childish, but again this would be to judge him wrongly. He is in a way a realist; it would indeed have been meaningless for him to write a letter to his employers about the havoc they had introduced into his family. So Rico focuses on his own sheer determination to resist: he will not drift. He wants to resist particularly the acid erosion of those qualities of character, like loyalty, commitment, purpose, and resolution, which are long-term in nature. He affirms timeless values which characterize who he is—for good, permanently, essentially. His will has become static; he is trapped in the sheer assertion of values.

What is missing between the polar opposites of drifting experience and static assertion is a narrative which could organize his conduct. Narratives are more than simple chronicles of events; they give shape to the forward movement of time, suggesting reasons why

things happen, showing their consequences. Enrico had a narrative for his life, linear and cumulative, a narrative which made sense in a highly bureaucratic world. Rico lives in a world marked instead by short-term flexibility and flux; this world does not offer much, either economically or socially, in the way of narrative. Corporations break up or join together, jobs appear and disappear, as events lacking connections. Creative destruction, Schumpeter said, thinking about entrepreneurs, requires people at ease about not reckoning the consequences of change, or not knowing what comes next. Most people, though, are not at ease with change in this nonchalant, negligent way.

Certainly Rico doesn’t want to live as a Schumpeterian man, though in the brute struggle for survival he has done well. “Change” means just drift; Rico worries that his children will drift ethically and emotionally—but as with his employers, there is nothing like a letter he can write to his children which will guide them through time. The lessons he wants to teach them are as timeless as is his own sense of determination—which means his ethical precepts apply to any and all cases. Change’s confusions and anxieties have bred in him this swing to the opposite extreme; perhaps this is why he cannot hold up his own life as an illustrative tale to his children, perhaps why, in listening to him, one has no sense of his character unfolding, or his ideals evolving.

I’VE DESCRIBED THIS ENCOUNTER BECAUSE Rico’s experiences with time, place, and work are not unique; neither is his emotional response. The conditions of time in the new capitalism have created a conflict between character and experience, the experience of disjointed time threatening the ability of people to form their characters into sustained narratives.

At the end of the fifteenth century, the poet Thomas Hoccleve declared in *The Regiment of Princes*, “Alias, wher ys this worldes stabylnesse?”—a lament that appears equal-

ly in Homer or in Jeremiah in the Old Testament¹⁰. Through most of human history, people have accepted the fact that their lives will shift suddenly due to wars, famines, or other disasters, and that they will have to improvise in order to survive. Our parents and grandparents were filled with anxiety in 1940, having endured the wreckage of the Great Depression and facing the looming prospect of a world war.

What's peculiar about uncertainty today is that it exists without any looming historical disaster; instead it is woven into the everyday practices of a vigorous capitalism. Insta-

bility is meant to be normal, Schumpeter's entrepreneur served up as an ideal Everyman. Perhaps the corroding of character is an inevitable consequence. "No long term" disorients action over the long term, loosens bonds of trust and commitment, and divorces will from behavior.

I think Rico knows he is both a successful and a confused man. The flexible behavior which has brought him success is weakening his own character in ways for which there exists no practical remedy. If he is an Everyman for our times, his universality may lie in that dilemma.

¹⁰ Quoted in Ray Pahl, *After Success: Fin de Siecle Anxiety and Identity*, (Cambridge, U. K.: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 163-164.

Appendix

Statistical tables

Table 1. Employment by selected industry with projections, 1979 to 2005

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT (1,000)			ANNUAL GROWTH RATE	
	1979	1992	2005 (Proj.)*	1979-92	1992-2005 (Proj.)*
Manufacturing	21 040	18 040	17 523	-1,2	-0,2
Finance, insurance, and real state	4 975	6 571	7 969	2,2	1,5
Personal supply services	508	1 649	2 581	9,5	3,5
Computer and data processing services	271	831	1 626	9,0	5,3
Federal government	2 773	2 969	2 815	0,5	-0,4
State and local government	13 174	15 683	19 206	1,4	1,6

* Based on assumptions of moderate growth

Data extracted from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1995* (Washington, D.C., 1995), p 417.

Table 2¹¹. Workers using computers in white-collar work, 1993

Category	TYPE OF APPLICATION*							
	No using computers (1,000)	Book keeping / Inventory	Word Processing	Communications	Analysis / Spread-sheets	Databases	Desktop Publishing electrónica	Sales and Telemarketing telemarketing
Sex								
Male	24,414	41,1	45,2	39,4	35,2	25,3	18,1	40,7
Female	26,692	31,6	44,8	38,1	33,8	19,6	14,5	47,8
Race / Ethnicity								
White	43,020	37,2	45,8	39,3	35,2	23,0	16,7	45,9
Black	4,016	27,5	38,3	37,3	31,2	16,8	12,9	35,5
Hispanic	2,492	29,1	45,6	32,1	27,6	18,7	16,0	33,6
Other	1,578	39,7	39,4	37,2	33,5	22,6	10,2	44,5
Educational Attainment								
Not a H/S graduate	1,190	19,1	54,4	20,4	22,2	9,9	20,6	16,0
H/S graduate	13,307	23,7	52,5	29,4	25,8	13,3	17,6	30,8
Some College	11,548	33,5	49,5	38,5	33,9	20,6	18,0	40,9
Associate Degree	5,274	37,5	47,0	39,7	34,7	21,7	14,9	41,6
Bachelor Degree	13,162	46,9	40,0	45,1	41,5	28,8	17,0	54,8
Master Degree	4,628	47,9	29,3	48,5	41,9	35,3	10,4	63,8
Ph.D or prof. Degree	1,999	42,8	27,9	45,9	39,2	28,3	5,2	66,5

*A person may be counted in more than one application

Data extracted from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1995* (Washington, D.C., 1995), p 430.

¹¹ Table 7 in the original publication

The Library as City-State

Alberto Manguel

Alberto Manguel (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1948) is a writer of Canadian and Argentine nationality now living in France. He is known for his essays and reviews on the literary and cultural world and for his columns published in various newspapers around the world (*Le Monde*, *El País*, *The Guardian*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, etc.). Recipient of an honorary doctorate degree from the Université de Liège in 2007, Manguel has also won an array of awards, including the *Premio Grinzane Cavour*, the *Prix Roger Caillois* and Canada's McKitterick Prize. Over the course of his career, he has written many books of essays and fiction, including: *Dictionary of Imaginary Places* (Harcourt, 2000), *A History of Reading* (Penguin, 1997), *Stevenson Under the Palm Trees* (Canongate Books, 2005), *A Reading Diary* (Canongate Books, 2006) and *The Library at Night* (Yale University Press, 2008).

The Library as City-State

My starting point is a question.

Outside theology and fantastic literature, few can doubt that the main features of our universe are its dearth of meaning and lack of discernible purpose. And yet, with bewildering optimism, we continue to assemble whatever scraps of information we can gather in scrolls and books and computer chips, on shelf after library shelf, whether material, virtual or otherwise, pathetically intent on lending the world a semblance of sense and order, while knowing perfectly well that, however much we'd like to believe the contrary, our pursuits are sadly doomed to failure.

Why then do we do it?

Libraries, whether private or shared with a greater reading public, have always, in spite of their appearance of order, seemed to me pleasantly mad places, and for as long as I can remember I've been seduced by their labyrinthine logic, which suggests that reason (if not art) rules over a cacophonous arrangement of books. I know that libraries have always housed other objects as well, but it is the presence of words that affects me above all. I feel an adventurous pleasure in losing myself among the crowded stacks, superstitiously confident that any established hierarchy of letters or numbers will lead me one day to a promised destination. In the first century A.D., in his book on the Roman civil war that had taken place a hundred years earlier, Lucan described Julius Caesar wandering through the ruins of Troy and remarked how every cave and every barren wood reminded his hero of the ancient Homeric stories. "A legend clings to every stone," Lucan explained, describing Caesar's narrative-filled journey. Libraries partake of

this ghostly quality. The books in a library hold between their covers every story ever known; they fill the space around us with ancient and new voices. Lucan's Caesar is told to walk carefully in the Trojan landscape lest he tread on ghosts. In the library, the ghosts can speak. "A big library," mused Northrop Frye in one of his many notebooks, "really has the gift of tongues & vast potencies of telepathic communication."

But the love of libraries, like most loves, must be learned. No one stepping for the first time into a space made of words can know instinctively how to behave, what is expected, what is promised, what is allowed. This is true both of virtual libraries and libraries of stone and mortar. One may be overcome by horror—at the clutter or the vastness, the stillness, the mocking reminder of everything one doesn't know, the surveillance—and some of that overwhelming feeling may cling on, even after the rituals and conventions are learned, the geography mapped, the natives found friendly, the laws of serendipity understood.

A library is not only a place of both order and chaos; it is also the realm of chance. Every library has a certain haphazard, flea-market quality. Books in a library come together because of the whims of a collector, the avatars of a community, the passing of war and time, because of neglect, care, the imponderability of survival, the random culling of the rag-and-bone trade, and it may take centuries before their congregation acquires the identifiable shape of a library. Because books, even after they have been given a shelf and a number, retain a mobility of their own. Left to their own devices, they assemble in unexpected formations; they follow secret rules of simi-

larity, unchronicled genealogies, common interests and themes. Stored in unattended corners or on piles by our bedside, in cartons or on shelves, waiting to be sorted and catalogued on some future day many times postponed, scattered throughout the near infinity of the Web, the texts preserved in our libraries cluster around what Henry James called a “general intention” that often escapes readers: “the string the pearls were strung on, the buried treasure, the figure in the carpet.” Every library, as Dewey discovered, must have an order, and yet not every order is willed or logically structured. There are libraries that owe their creation to affectations of taste, to casual offerings and encounters, to dreams and wishful thinking. And yet, all libraries, however haphazard or strict, have in common the explicit will to lend concord to our knowledge and imagination, to group and to parcel information, to assemble in one place our vicarious experience of the world, and to exclude many other readers’ experiences through parsimony, ignorance, incapability or fear.

And here I would like to pause and consider these apparently contradictory qualities of a library. So constant and far-reaching are these attempts at inclusion and exclusion that they have their distinct literary emblems, two monuments that, it could be said, stand for everything we are. The first, erected to reach the unreachable heavens, rose from our desire to conquer space, a desire punished by the plurality of tongues that even today lays daily obstacles against our attempts at making ourselves known to one another. The second, built to assemble, from all over the world, what those tongues had tried to record, sprang from our hope to vanquish time, and ended in a legendary fire that consumed even the present. The Tower of Babel in space and the Library of Alexandria in time are the twin symbols of these ambitions. In their shadow, my small library is a reminder of both impossible yearnings—the desire to contain all the tongues of Babel and the longing to possess all the volumes of Alexandria.

The story of Babel is told in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. After the Flood, the people of the earth journeyed east to the land of Shi’nar, and there decided to build a city and a tower that would reach into the heavens. “And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men build. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.” God, the legend tells us, invented the multiplicity of languages in order to prevent us from working together, so we would not overreach our powers. According to the Sanhedrin, the place where the tower once rose never lost its peculiar quality and, even today, whoever passes it forgets all he knows. Years ago, I was shown a small hill of rubble outside the walls of Babylon and told that this was all that remained of what had once been Babel.

The Library of Alexandria was a learning centre set up by the Ptolemaic kings at the end of the third century B.C. better to follow the teachings of Aristotle. According to the Greek geographer Strabo, writing in the first century B.C., the library may have contained the philosopher’s own books, left to one of his disciples, Theophrastus, who in turn bequeathed them to another, Neleus of Scepsis, who eventually became involved in the establishment of the library. Up until the founding of the Library of Alexandria, the libraries of the ancient world were either private collections of one man’s readings, or government storehouses where legal and literary documents were kept for official reference. The impulse for setting up these earlier libraries was one less of curiosity than of safekeeping, and stemmed from the need for specific consultation rather than from the desire to be fantastically all-embracing. The Library of Alexandria revealed a new imagination that outdid all existing libraries in ambition and scope.

A curious document from the second century B.C., the perhaps apocryphal *Letter of Aristeas*, records a story about the origins of the Library of Alexandria that is emblematic of its colossal dream. In order to assemble a universal library (says the letter), King Ptolemy I wrote “to all the sovereigns and governors on earth” begging them to send to him every kind of book by every kind of author, “poets and prose-writers, rhetoricians and sophists, doctors and soothsayers, historians, and all others too.” The king’s scholars had calculated that five hundred thousand scrolls would be required if they were to collect in Alexandria “all the books of all the peoples of the world.” (Time magnifies our ambitions; in 2005, the Library of Congress alone was receiving twice that number of items a year, from which it sparingly kept about four hundred thousand.)

The Tower of Babel stood (while it stood) as proof of our belief in the unity of the universe. According to the story, in the growing shadow of Babel humankind inhabited a world with no linguistic borders, believing heaven to be as much within its rights as solid earth. The Library of Alexandria (on ground firmer perhaps than that of Babel) rose to prove the contrary, that the universe was of a bewildering variety and that this variety possessed a secret order. The first reflected our intuition of a single, continuous, monolingual divinity whose words were spoken by all from earth to heaven; the second, the belief that each of the books made up of these words was its own complex cosmos, each presuming in its singularity to address the whole of creation. The Tower of Babel collapsed in the prehistory of storytelling; the Library of Alexandria rose when stories took on the shape of books, and strove to find a syntax that would lend each word, each tablet, each scroll its illuminating and necessary place. Indistinct, majestic, ever-present, the tacit architecture of that infinite Library continues to haunt our dreams of universal order. Nothing like it has ever again been achieved, though other libraries (the Web included) have tried to copy its astonishing ambition. It stands unique in

the history of the world as the only place which, having set itself up to record everything, past and future, might also have foreseen and stored the chronicle of its own destruction and resurrection.

Divided into thematic areas by categories devised by its librarians, the Library of Alexandria became a multitude of libraries, each insistent on one aspect of the world’s variety. Here (the Alexandrians boasted) was a place where memory was kept alive, where every written thought had its niche, where each reader could find his own itinerary traced line after line in books perhaps yet unopened, where the universe itself found its worded reflection. As a further measure to accomplish his ambition, King Ptolemy decreed that any book arriving in the port of Alexandria was to be seized and copied, with the solemn promise that the original would be returned (like so many solemn kingly promises, this one was not always kept, and often it was the copy that was handed back). Because of this despotic measure, the books assembled in the Library became known as “the ships’ collection.”

It is infuriating not to be able to tell what the Library of Alexandria looked like. With understandable hubris, every one of its chroniclers (all those whose testimony has reached us) seems to have thought its description superfluous. The Greek geographer Strabo, a contemporary of Diodorus, described the city of Alexandria in detail but, mysteriously, failed to mention the Library. “Why need I even speak of it, since it is imperishably held in the memory of all men?” wrote Athenaeus of Naucratis, barely a century and a half after its destruction. The Library that wanted to be the storehouse for the memory of the world was not able to secure for us the memory of itself. All we know of it, all that remains of its vastness, its marbles and its scrolls, are its various *raison d’être*.

One forceful reason was the Egyptian pursuit of immortality. If an image of the cosmos can be assembled and preserved under a single

roof (as King Ptolemy might have thought), then every detail of that image—a grain of sand, a drop of water, the king himself—will have a place there, recorded in words by a poet, a storyteller, a historian, forever, or at least as long as there are readers who may one day open the appointed page. There is a line of poetry, a sentence in a fable, a word in an essay, by which my existence is justified; find that line, and immortality is assured. The heroes of Virgil, of Herman Melville, of Joseph Conrad, of most epic literature, embrace this Alexandrian belief. For them, the world (like the Library) is made up of myriad stories that, through tangled mazes, lead to a revelatory moment set up for them alone—even if in that last moment the revelation itself is denied, as Kafka's pilgrim realizes, standing outside the Gates of Law (so oddly reminiscent of library gates) and finding in the instant of dying that "they are to be closed forever, because they were meant for you alone." Readers, like epic heroes, are not guaranteed an epiphany.

In our time, bereft of epic dreams—which we've replaced with dreams of pillage—the illusion of immortality is created by technology. The Web, and its promise of a voice and a site for all, is our equivalent of the *mare incognitum*, the unknown sea that lured ancient travellers with the temptation of discovery. Immaterial as water, too vast for any mortal apprehension, the Web's outstanding qualities allow us to confuse the ungraspable with the eternal. Like the sea, the Web is volatile: 70 percent of its communications last less than four months. Its virtue (its virtuality) entails a constant present—which for medieval scholars was one of the definitions of hell. Alexandria and its scholars, by contrast, never mistook the true nature of the past; they knew it to be the source of an ever-shifting present in which new readers engaged with old books which became new in the reading process. Every reader exists to ensure for a certain book a modest immortality. Reading is, in this sense, a ritual of rebirth.

But the Library of Alexandria was set up to do more than merely immortalize. It was to

record everything that had been and could be recorded, and these records were to be digested into further records, an endless trail of readings and glosses that would engender in turn new glosses and new readings. It was to be a readers' workshop, not just a place where books were endlessly preserved. To ensure its use, the Ptolemies invited the most celebrated scholars from many countries—such as Euclid and Archimedes—to take up residence in Alexandria, paying them a handsome retainer and not demanding anything in exchange except that they make use of the Library's treasures. In this way, these specialized readers could each become acquainted with a large number of texts, reading and summing up what they had read, producing critical digests for future generations who would then reduce these readings to further digests. A satire from the third century B.C. by Timon of Phlius describes these scholars as *charakitai*, "scribblers," and says that "in the populous land of Egypt, many well-fed *charakitai* scribble on papyrus while squabbling incessantly in the Muses' cage."

In the second century, and as a result of the Alexandrian summaries and collations, an epistemological rule for reading was firmly established, decreeing that "the most recent text replaces all previous ones, since it is supposed to contain them." Following this exegesis and closer to our time, Stéphane Mallarmé suggested that "the world was made to conclude in a handsome book," that is to say, in a single book, any book, a distillation or summing-up of the world that must encompass all other books. This method proceeds by foreshadowing certain books, as the *Odyssey* foresees the adventures of Jack Kerouac, and the story of Dido foretells that of Madame Bovary, or by echoing them, as the sagas of Faulkner hold the destinies of the House of Atreus, and the peregrinations of Bouvier pay homage to the voyages of Ibn Khaldun.

But more than anything else, the Library of Alexandria was a place of memory, of necessarily imperfect memory. "What memory has in common with art," wrote Joseph Brod-

sky in 1985, is the knack for selection, the taste for detail. Complimentary though this observation may seem to art (that of prose in particular), to memory it should appear insulting. The insult, however, is well deserved. Memory contains precisely details, not the whole picture; highlights, if you will, not the entire show. The conviction that we are somehow remembering the whole thing in a blanket fashion, the very conviction that allows the species to go on with its life, is groundless. More than anything, memory resembles a library in alphabetical disorder, and with no collected works by anyone.

Honouring Alexandria's remote purpose, all subsequent libraries, however ambitious, have acknowledged this piecemeal mnemonic function. The existence of any library allows readers a sense of what their craft is truly about, a craft that struggles against the stringencies of time by bringing fragments of the past into their present. It grants them a glimpse, however secret or distant, into the minds of other human beings, and allows them a certain knowledge of their own condition through the stories stored here for their perusal. Above all, it tells readers that their craft consists of the power to remember, actively, through the prompt of the page, selected moments of the human experience. This was the great practice established by the Library of Alexandria. Accordingly, centuries later, when a monument was suggested to honour the victims of the Holocaust in Germany, the most intelligent proposal (unfortunately not chosen) was to build a library.

And yet, as a public space the Library of Alexandria was a paradox, a building set aside for an essentially private craft (reading) which now was to take place communally. Under the Library's roof, scholars shared an illusion of freedom, convinced that the entire reading realm was theirs for the asking. In fact, their choice was censored in a number of ways: by the stack (open or closed) on which the book sat, by the section of the library in which it had been catalogued, by privileged notions of reserved rooms or special collections, by

generations of librarians whose ethics and tastes had shaped the collection, by official guidelines based on what Ptolemaic society considered "proper" or "valuable," by bureaucratic rulings whose reasons were lost in the dungeons of time, by considerations of budget and size and availability.

The Ptolemies and their librarians were certainly aware that memory was power. Hecateus of Abdera, in his semi-fictional book of travels, the *Egyptiaca*, had claimed that Greek culture owed its existence to Egypt, whose culture was more ancient and morally far superior. Mere assertion was not enough, and the librarians of Alexandria dutifully set up a vast collection of Greek works to confirm the debt of these to Egyptian authority. Not just Greek; through the collection of books of various pasts, the librarians hoped to grant their readers knowledge of the interwoven roots and branches of human culture, which (as Simone Weil was much later to declare) can be defined as "the formation of attention." For this purpose, they trained themselves to become attentive to the world beyond their borders, gathering and interpreting information, ordering and cataloguing all manner of books, seeking to associate different texts and to transform thought by association.

By housing as many books as possible under one single roof, the librarians of Alexandria also tried to protect them from the risk of destruction that might result if left in what were deemed to be less caring hands (an argument adopted by many Western museums and libraries today, as the recent argument surrounding the so-called Gospel of Judas recently proved). Therefore, as well as being an emblem of man's power to act through thought, the Library became a monument intended to defeat death, which, as poets tell us, puts an end to memory.

And yet, in spite of all the concern of its rulers and librarians, the Library of Alexandria vanished. Just as we know almost nothing of the shape it had when it was erected, we

know nothing certain about its disappearance, sudden or gradual. The various stories about its end are well known. According to Plutarch, during Julius Caesar's stay in Alexandria in 47 B.C. a fire spread from the Arsenal and "put an end to the great Library," but his account is faulty. Other historians (Dio Cassius and Orosius, for instance) suggested that Caesar's fire destroyed not the Library itself but some forty thousand volumes stored near the Arsenal, where they were possibly awaiting shipment to Rome. Almost seven centuries later, another possible ending was offered. A Christian chronicle, drawn from the *Chronicle of Wise Men* by Ibn al-Kifti and now discredited, blamed the destruction on the Muslim general Amr ibn al-As, who, upon entering Alexandria in A.D. 642, was supposed to have ordered Caliph Omar I to set fire to the contents of the Library. The books, always according to the Christian narrator, were used to feed the stoves of the public baths; only the works of Aristotle were spared.

Historically, in the light of day, the end of the Library remains as nebulous as its true aspect; historically, the Tower, if it ever existed, was nothing but an unsuccessful if ambitious real estate enterprise. As myths, however, in the imagination at night, the solidity of both buildings is unimpeachable. We can admire the mythical Tower rising visibly to prove that the impossible is worth attempting, no matter how devastating the result; we can see it working its way upwards, the fruit of a unanimous, all-invading, antlike society; we can witness its end in the dispersion of its individuals, each in the isolation of his own linguistic circle. We can roam the bloated stacks of the Library of Alexandria, where all imagination and knowledge are assembled; we can recognize in its destruction the warning that all we gather will be lost, but also that much of it can be collected again; we can learn from its splendid ambition that what was one man's experience can become, through the alchemy of words, the experience of all, and how that experience, distilled once again into words, can serve each singular reader for some secret, singular purpose.

The solid myth of Alexandria also teaches us that a library must impose its own limits or decree its own death. An endlessly-growing library requires an ever-expanding home that can take on nightmare dimensions. Legend has it that Sarah Winchester, widow of the famous gun-maker whose rifle "won the West," was told by a medium that as long as construction on her California house continued, the ghosts of the Indians killed by her husband's rifle would be kept at bay. The house grew and grew, like a thing in a dream, until its hundred and sixty rooms covered six acres of ground; this monster is still visible in the heart of Silicon Valley. Every library suffers from this urge to increase in order to pacify our literary ghosts, to branch out and bloat until, on some inconceivable last day, it will include every volume ever written on every subject imaginable.

This monstrous aspect of the Alexandria myth has given birth to many cautionary tales. One warm afternoon in the late nineteenth century, two middle-aged office clerks met on a bench on the Boulevard Bourdon in Paris and immediately became the best of friends. Bouvard and Pécuchet discovered through their friendship a common purpose: the pursuit of universal knowledge. To achieve this ambitious goal, next to which the Ptolemies' achievement appears delightfully modest, they attempted to read everything they could find on every branch of human endeavour, and cull from their readings the most outstanding facts and ideas, an enterprise that was, of course, endless. Appropriately, *Bouvard and Pécuchet* was published unfinished one year after Flaubert's death in 1880, but not before the two brave explorers had read their way through many learned libraries of agriculture, literature, animal husbandry, medicine, archaeology and politics, always with disappointing results. What Flaubert's two clowns discovered is what we have always known but seldom believed: that the accumulation of knowledge isn't knowledge.

Thanks to the Web, of course, Bouvard and Pécuchet's ambition is now almost a reality,

when all the knowledge in the world seems to be there, flickering behind the siren screen. Borges, who once imagined the infinite library of all possible books, also invented a Bouvard-and-Pécuchet-like character who attempts to compile a universal encyclopedia, so complete that nothing in the world would be excluded from it. In the end, like his French forerunners, he fails in his attempt, but not entirely. On the evening on which he gives up his great project, he hires a horse and buggy and takes a tour of the city. He sees brick walls, ordinary people, houses, a river, a marketplace, and feels that somehow all these things are his own work. He realizes that his project was not impossible but merely redundant. The world encyclopedia, the universal library, exists, and is the world itself.

As the myth of Alexandria tells us, this ambition is not new. We have always wanted to remember more, and we will continue, I believe, to weave webs to catch words in the hope that somehow, in the sheer quantity of accumulated utterances, in a book or on a screen, there will be a sound, a phrase, a spelled-out thought that will carry the weight of an answer. Every new technology has advantages over the previous one, but necessarily lacks some of its predecessor's attributes. Familiarity, which no doubt breeds contempt, breeds also comfort; that which is unfamiliar breeds distrust. My grandmother, born in the Russian countryside at the end of the nineteenth century, was afraid of using that new invention called the telephone when it was first introduced to her neighbourhood in Buenos Aires, because, she said, it didn't allow her to see the face of the person she was speaking to. "It makes me think of ghosts," she explained.

Electronic text that requires no page can amicably accompany the page that requires no electricity; they need not exclude each other in an effort to serve us best. Human imagination is not monogamous nor does it need to be, and new instruments will soon sit next to the PowerBooks that now sit next to our

books in the multimedia library. There is, however, a difference. If the Library of Alexandria was the emblem of our ambition of omniscience, the Web is the emblem of our ambition of omnipresence; the library that contained everything has become the library that contains anything. Alexandria modestly saw itself as the centre of a circle bound by the knowable world; the Web, like the definition of God first imagined in the twelfth century, sees itself as a circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere. Our society today accepts the book as a given, but the act of reading—once considered useful and important, as well as potentially dangerous and subversive—is now condescendingly regarded as a pastime, a slow pastime that lacks efficiency and does not contribute to the common good. Today, reading is nothing but an ancillary act, and the great repository of our memory and experience, the library, is considered less a living entity than an inconvenient storage room.

And yet, though the book no longer stands at the symbolic core of our society, the new sense of infinity created by the Web has not diminished the old sense of infinity inspired by the ancient libraries; it has merely lent it a sort of tangible intangibility. There may come a new technique of collecting information next to which the Web will seem to us habitual and homely in its vastness, like the aged buildings that once lodged the national libraries in Paris and Buenos Aires, Beyrouth and Salamanca, London and Seoul.

And yet, the solid libraries of wood and paper, as well as the libraries of ghostly flickering screens, stand as proof of our resilient belief in a timeless, far-reaching order that we dimly intuit or perceive. During the Czech insurrection against the Nazis in May 1945, when Russian troops were entering Prague, the librarian Elena Sikorskaja, Vladimir Nabokov's sister, realized that the German officers now attempting to retreat had not returned several of the books they had borrowed from the library she worked in. She and a colleague decided to reclaim the truant volumes, and set

out on a rescue mission through the streets down which the Russian trucks were victoriously bundling. “We reached the house of a German pilot who returned the books quite calmly,” she wrote to her brother a few months later. “But by now they would let no one cross the main road, and everywhere there were Germans with machine guns,” she complained. In the midst of the confusion and chaos, it seemed important to her that the library’s pathetic attempt at order should, as far as possible, be preserved.

But this is an order that we must, in spite of all its appeal, view with caution. However attractive we may find the dream of a knowable universe made of paper and a meaningful cosmos made of words, a library, even one colossal in its proportions or ambitious and infinite in its scope, can never offer us a “real” world, in the sense in which the daily world of suffering and happiness is real. It offers us instead a negotiable image of that real world which (in the words of Jean Roudaut) “kindly allows us to conceive it,” as well as the *possibility* of experience, knowledge and memory of something intuited through a tale or guessed at through a poetic or philosophical reflection.

Saint John, in a moment of confusion, tells us not to love the world or the things that are in the world because “all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” This injunction is at best a paradox. Our humble and astonishing inheritance is the world and only the world, whose existence we constantly test (and prove) by telling ourselves stories about it. The suspicion that we and the world are made in the image of something wonderfully and chaotically coherent far beyond our grasp, of which we are also part; the hope that our exploded cosmos and we, its stardust, have an ineffable meaning and method; the delight in retelling the old metaphor of the world as a book we read and in which we too are read; the conceit that what we can know of reality is an imagination made

of language—all this finds its material manifestation in that self-portrait we call a library. And our love for it, and our lust to see more of it, and our pride in its accomplishments as we wander through shelves full of books that promise more and more delights, are among our happiest, most moving proofs of possessing, in spite of all the miseries and sorrows of this life, a more intimate, consolatory, perhaps redeeming faith in a method behind the madness than any jealous deity could wish upon us.

Does all this answer my question, “Why then do we do it?” In part. Only in part.

The Library of Alexandria, implicit in travellers’ memoirs and historians’ chronicles, re-invented in works of fiction and of fable, has come to stand for the riddle of human identity, posing shelf after shelf the question “Who am I?” In Elias Canetti’s 1935 novel *Die Blendung (Auto da Fé)*, Peter Kien, the scholar who in the last pages sets fire to himself and to his books when he feels that the outside world has become too unbearably intrusive, incarnates every inheritor of the Library, as a reader whose very self is enmeshed in the books he possesses and who, like one of the ancient Alexandrian scholars, must himself become dust in the night when the library is no more. In part, we set up libraries to know who we are.

But that is surely not all. There is a second question.

In her novel *The Blue Flower*, Penelope Fitzgerald says, “If a story begins with finding, it must end with searching.” The story of any library certainly began with finding: finding the books in whatever shape or form, scroll, codex or disk, finding the place in which to lodge them, finding a way to work with them within the allotted space. But if the story must end with searching, the second question has to be: searching for what?

Northrop Frye once observed that, had he been present at the birth of Christ, he did not

think he would have heard the angels singing. "The reason why I think so is that I do not hear them now, and there is no reason to suppose that they have stopped." Therefore, in setting up a library we are not searching for revelation of any kind, since anything revealed to us is necessarily limited by what we're capable of hearing and understanding. Not for knowledge beyond what, in some

secret way, we already know. Not for illumination, to which we can't reasonably aspire. Not for experience, since ultimately we can only become aware of what is already in us. For what, then, do we search, in our persistent libraries?

Consolation, perhaps. Perhaps consolation.

City as Archive: Contemporary Urban Transformations and the Possibility of Politics

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City as Archive: Contemporary Urban Transformations and the Possibility of Politics

“Now let us... suppose that Rome is not a human habitation but a psychical entity with a similarly long and copious past—an entity, that is to say, in which nothing that has once come into existence will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one... If we want to represent historical sequence in spatial terms, we can only do it by juxtaposition in space: the same space cannot have two different contents... It shows us how far we are from mastering the characteristics of mental life by representing them in pictorial terms.” Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*

Cities and Archives

Understanding the relation between the city and the archive poses numerous interesting paradoxes, already signaled by Freud’s ruminations on Rome. The question raised most directly is that of the juxtaposition of various temporalities and the possibilities of representing these temporalities and the historical experiences they signal in *spatial* terms. At the most fundamental level, archives have deep and historical connections to memory and in particular, to authoritative forms of memory. The formal characteristics of archives signify languages through which memory is constituted for different groups of people. In this context, positioning the city as a form of archive raises numerous ethical and philosophical challenges that have a bearing both upon how we understand the nature of archives as well as upon how we understand the contemporary city.

The modern city is fundamentally a collection of strangers that exceed the boundaries

of any singular form of identity and belonging. Thus the question of what sort of archive corresponds to the city as demographic space is fundamentally connected to the problem of belonging within the city and to the establishment of rights to the city. But because the city draws together disparate groups of people it is also necessary to consider that the city—as multiple forms of media—might serve as an archive actively *producing* connections amongst its residents rather than merely reflecting them. In this paper, I will consider both these aspects through which the idea of city-as-archive can be elaborated. They are in fact intimately connected and have a bearing, as I suggest above, on both our understandings of contemporary cities as well as our understandings of archives.

Metropolis as Media

It is undeniable that contemporary urban experience is a deeply mediated one, conditioned, in particular, through the dissemination of cinematic and other kinds of imagery and sensory stimuli. Georg Simmel’s seminal article, “Metropolis and Mental Life,” written at the beginning of the 20th century, already explores the sensory impact of the city on the urban resident’s perception of space, time and sense of self. “The psychological foundation, upon which the metropolitan individuality is erected,” writes Simmel, “is the intensification of emotional life due to the swift and continuous shift of external and internal stimuli.” The metropolis is both the cause and the effect of the forms that social relations have taken in modern times, most notably the transformation of social relations into relations of calculation. Simmel writes, “the relationships and concerns of the typi-

cal metropolitan resident are so manifold and complex that, especially as a result of the agglomeration of so many persons with such differentiated interests, their relationships and activities intertwine with one another into a many-membered organism." For Simmel, this understanding of the metropolis as media is fundamental to his theory of the development of the metropolitan personality type.

The metropolitan form itself corresponds to the money economy and thereby becomes a very particular kind of medium within which social relations are transacted. "A person," writes Simmel, "does not end with the limits of his physical body or with the area to which his physical activity is immediately confined but embraces, rather, the totality of meaningful effects which emanates from him temporally and spatially. In the same way the city exists only in the totality of the effects which transcend their immediate sphere." These effects, connected to the advanced economic division of labor, can be thought of as a form of archive through which the modern metropolis and its residents are constituted. The "external and internal stimuli" that are thrown up by the metropolis have no preordained significance as such but instead work to *produce* connections between residents, however temporary and tenuous those connections might be. They also deeply affect the urban personality. Most fundamentally, they call into question the role of memory in the context of urban identity. What Simmel's understanding of the metropolis foregrounds is the idea that the city is a form of media, which saturates the life of its residents. This space of saturation is one of rapid change and transformation of stimuli and hence has a bearing upon forms of social interaction and the reproduction of socio-spatial forms within the city, better understood as "place."

In most commonsense understandings, archives are directly related to preservation of some parts of the past, collectively deemed of significance. In the case of the metropolis, founded upon the problem of constant new-

ness and temporary experiences, as well as upon the temporariness of the bond between urban residents, this very notion of the archive itself is problematic. Yet, there is always a struggle against this sense of temporariness and transition engendered by the 'metropolis as media.'

This struggle becomes most visible in contestations over space and the production of place or meaningful socio-spatial form, engaging a different notion of city-as-archive. Here, different actors deploy the creation of an archive through acts of deliberate preservation and memorialization in order to secure their place within the pulse of the city. Acts of deliberate destruction too are increasingly deployed as strategies for creating archives. Indeed, historic preservation can also be viewed as much as an act of destruction as of preservation, as I shall explain further on. In the understanding of 'metropolis as media,' which engenders social exchanges, the archive becomes an emergent notion, a principle of ordering stimuli upon which future transactions are imagined and made present rather than a given notion of the past that has been deemed significant and marked for preservation. This sense of city-as-archive is always in conflict, sometimes productive and sometimes corrosive, with the sense of city-as-archive that emerges in acts of preservation and strategies to inscribe space with particular social and political agendas. I now turn to the built form as another site at which the city emerges as archive.

Preservation and Destruction

Urban environments are always in transition, through incremental additions to the built fabrics, through new infrastructural initiatives and, increasingly, through redevelopment. In the contemporary moment, such transition signifies vitality and the lack of change, sometimes even radical changes, signifies stagnation. Thus, the most 'vital' cities of today such as Dubai, Shanghai and Beijing appear to be in perpetual motion,

covered with both construction sites and, in the case of Beijing and Shanghai, with plenty of demolition sites as well. In other cities, such as Beirut, repeatedly destroyed by wars, the process of reconstruction sparks off debates around questions of heritage and preservation. However, even if a city is not being subjected to dramatic transformations due to war or financial investment, the preservation of the historic fabric invariably alters the built environment of the city by altering its very atmosphere and significance. Preservation is undertaken as a means of creating collective memory by marking out certain places as being of significance.

Yet the significance of historic preservation in the contemporary world is open to debate. As the cultural theorist Ackbar Abbas has argued in several articles about Shanghai, historic preservation functions not to forge collective memory so much as to accommodate and naturalize change. The “image-city” created by these acts of preservation is then retailed to citizens and tourists by politicians, planners and developers as a source of revenue from mass tourism, festivals, rentals and so on. In places like Mumbai, where major transformations are currently underway in an attempt to turn it into a “world-class” city, the nascent heritage preservation movement continues to be dominated by elite citizens. Due to a highly particular rent-control legislation enacted almost six decades ago, a large part of the city’s earliest neighborhoods have fallen into disrepair. The same legislation however, prevents the eviction of long-term tenants paying rents at rates determined in the 1940s and therefore has effectively stopped the redevelopment of these neighborhoods.

While developers and politicians have recently found ways to subvert all these regulations and to knock down a number of 19th and early 20th century buildings, the condition of these neighborhoods have also given rise to a vigorous debate over the question of preservation. As early examples of populist and vernacular, native architectural attempts

in a colonial city, these neighborhoods have been home to generations of Mumbaikars with deep historical connections and roots in the city. Yet these citizens today are caught a paradoxical situation of occupying some of the world’s most expensive properties, closest to the city’s central business district, while also finding themselves rapidly disenfranchised in the ambitious process of redeveloping the erstwhile port and trading city into a global hub for services.

In this context, conservation practices amount to what one Mumbai-based architect, Mustansir Dalvi has referred to evocatively as “architectural eugenics,” or freezing the building envelope to conform to some image deemed ‘objectively authentic.’ Yet this form of eugenics amounts largely to imposing a particular vision and aesthetics based on claims of authenticity that are highly contestable and do not take into account the actual history of these neighborhoods. Treating the building envelope as a guide, conservationists associate these neighborhoods with certain communities even when empirical evidence shows the co-habitation of these areas by multiple communities. Thus conservation strategies sometimes become projects of ethnic cleansing and end up erasing the contribution of certain groups to the production of the city. In this way, authoritative narratives are circulated, based on the so-called historical expertise of particular specialists. This process represents one of ways in which the past is enshrined in the process of erasure through recourse to authoritative narrative. The built environment becomes an archive in which the silencing of multiple pasts and diversity is effectively achieved.

Cities with heterogeneous populations such as Mumbai and Beirut are perhaps in a different relationship when it comes to the production of the built environment as an archive than others such as Dubai, Shanghai or Beijing where the rapid and massive transformations of the built environment sends out other kinds of signals. In these latter cities, architecture often becomes a monumental

tool in an attempt to produce feedback from a new world, forged by the forces of contemporary globalization. What kinds of signals do these monumental new cityscapes broadcast? In the context of speedy physiognomic alterations that are increasingly making different cities alike in appearance, cultural specificity as signaled by the built environment has been called into question.

If archives are associated with the production and dissemination of particular forms as signifiers of an absent past, the lack of cultural specificity physiognomically signaled, complicates the project of imagining the city as archive, at least at the level of built form. New kinds of signals about emergence, declaration and resistance to global cultural integration are being broadcast by these new cityscapes. In fact, it might be possible even to argue that monumental construction projects, such as those underway in Beijing in preparation for the Olympics signal an intention to harvest a new kind of cultural hermeticism, using an international language of design and style. How does the city emerge as an archive—one broadcasting particular cultural signals—in such diverse contexts as the Asian cities like Mumbai, Beirut, Shanghai, Beijing and Dubai, described in this section? To answer this question, we would need to turn briefly to a theoretical elaboration of the notion of the archive itself.

Navigating Voids

Archives are neither universal forms nor are they uniform institutions that collect particular kinds of information in the service of particular, universal projects of history. Rather, we might think of archives as *languages*, whose formal characteristics constitute memory in different ways for different groups of people. This position assumes that the past itself, as an absence, is inherently unstable and is constantly reconstituted as memory through active forms of recollection and through institutional forms such as archives. The problem of the archive, as numerous

theorists have pointed out, is the assumption of the *a priori* significance of the information gathered within the formal archive, usually considered to reflect something else, something that is less tangible such as cultural genius or a higher truth. The authority of the archive in fact rests upon this assumption.

In the preceding sections, I outlined the fundamentally ephemeral nature of the flows that constitute urban space on the one hand and the problems of locating any archive around what appears to be the least ephemeral aspect of urban space viz. the built environment on the other hand. In the latter instance too, we are forced to confront the fact that urban environments are constituted by a continuous and cumulative process of subtraction and destruction, which forms a crucial layer of the history of almost all contemporary cities. Even historic preservation, I suggested, ends up being a form of destruction.

In considering the relationship between cities and archives, we could do well to explore the built environment itself as an archive of the city. But given the complexity of both cities and archives as historical forms, I suggest the alternative concept of city-as-archive as a tool with which to explore both the complexities of contemporary cities as well as of the processes by which archives are constituted. To take this a bit further, the concept of city-as-archive suggests an analogical relationship between cities and archives in terms of form and raises the question of the limits of each form. In so formulating the relation between cities and archives, I suggest that we are able to interrogate both the limits of the principles by which archives are constituted as well as the problem of belonging by which the city is constituted as a demographic space.

In particular, if we conceive of archives not just as institutional forms but also as *processes*, this analogical relation between cities and archives begins to acquire a shape that corresponds to the particular conditions of contemporary cities. The idea of the me-

tropolis as media connected to perpetual and ephemeral flows of information and stimuli, explored above, is a powerful reminder that we would need a processual understanding of the archive in order to grasp the nature of these flows. As a principle of order, the archive provides a base upon which history, memory and recollection takes place. Such memory structures relations between strangers thereby producing a sense of urban locality and place. Hence the relationship between cities and archives and the concept of city-as-archive has a significant resonance, especially in the context of globalization, the profound and epochal socio-economic transformation confronting the world today. In sum, I suggest that contemporary urban form can provide a theoretical apparatus to explore the constitution of archives and vice versa.

City Beyond Maps

Maps and mapping have historically provided important functional tools in navigating the relationship between 'reality' and its abstractions. I specifically stress the *functional* aspects of maps because the concept of 'reality' is itself highly contested and philosophical debates on the nature of 'reality' are legendary. In one sense, maps provide anchors for the production of archives as they mirror the transformations of the urban realm. As numerous recent analyses have suggested, the epochal transformation of society into an urban one is taking place at a planetary scale today. Yet the role of architectural plans in shaping contemporary urbanism is receding rather than increasing. As the architect Kazys Varnelis suggests, the workings of the contemporary, information-based economy, obviate "the need for the architectural plan" (Varnelis 2005). In this way, he suggests that a "city beyond maps" has already come into existence, one that cannot be mapped in terms of its visible architecture and infrastructure. This insight, about what we might call "invisible urbanism" is also a phenomenon that has been studied by anthropolo-

gists, who claim that it is necessary to study the city not only in its physical aspects but also by positioning its people and their network producing activities as the infrastructure that allows the city to function (see Simone 2004).

The physical transformation of cities in the context of globalization is sometimes accompanied by the massive displacement of people—either physically as in the case of Mumbai and Beirut or intangibly as in the case of the Parisian *banlieues*, whose inhabitants find themselves increasingly disenfranchised and imprisoned in place, displaced by being rendered immobile. The "city beyond maps" thus now includes not only the movement of global economic forces but also the informational layers carried by people as they are being displaced from familiar habitats or dangerous, temporary ones, as they are being rendered mobile. The city itself acquires a new relationship to density, the characteristic relationship between people and milieu, which defines the production of urban locality. Place-based density is transformed into a physically absurd value but is recoded into the stories that people carry with them across urban domains as they struggle to reconstitute their place within the city. For urban research, it becomes necessary to find ways of mapping these invisible and emergent structures of urban information in order to understand the processes by which residents are being re-embedded across diverse geographical spaces and scales into new networks of exchange and interdependency. These kinds of transformations provide a way of exploring the idea of city-as-archive in some depth.

As an example, I will turn here to some of the transformations currently underway in Mumbai as a way of examining the usefulness of the city-as-archive. As is well known, approximately half of Mumbai's population is estimated to be living in informal settlements, which are poorly serviced and largely disconnected from the infrastructural grid. Popularly referred to as slums, by residents as well as planners, politicians and develop-

ers, these settlements occupy a mere 8% of the total space of the city within its municipal limits. However, they are geographically spread all over the city and are often in very close proximity to affluent neighborhoods, forming the very antithesis of the isolated apartheid township, the contemporary Parisian *banlieue* or the ghetto. This to better developed neighborhoods has resulted in inflating the notional property values of the parcels of land on which slums are constructed, even if many of these land parcels only exist as a result of painstaking reclamation or are situated on top of infrastructural facilities and thus environmentally precarious or are lands whose ownership is locked in dispute. As the flow of real-estate capital has been liberalized and development itself has been privatized, these informal settlements have become highly prized targets since they stand as obstacles to the complete ‘make-over’ of the city along the lines of Shanghai or Dubai. In this context, a new form of struggle has taken shape, one that is different from the struggle to preserve historic neighborhoods in Mumbai, which I discussed earlier.

As the parcels of land on which these informal settlements sit are absorbed into the formal, built landscape of the new city, with its aspirations to becoming the next Shanghai, large numbers of residents have been displaced into new tower-block buildings, built on designated parcels of land, often at a great distance away from their original homes. The slum, in one sense, constitutes a material expression of density in space. But density itself can be reconceptualized, not merely as the spatial occupation of a location by a given population but also as a network of information and relationships, which can also be detached from space. Thus the displacement of these residents can also be seen as a detachment of the density of their informal infrastructure of relations and networks from place itself. While many of the current struggles in the city are articulated around the idea of asserting a right to the city, these struggles primarily function to produce political gridlock and to maintaining status quo.

Meanwhile, speculative capital continues to thrive and even profit from these struggles as bets are laid down on the future shape of the city and profits realized in the present moment, on the basis of anticipation.

In this context, the challenge for both planning and politics is the identification of new forms of general or common interest. Normative notions of urban planning take infrastructure as a point of departure and as terminus, understanding underlying urban conditions in relation to existing infrastructure. Infrastructure is seen as providing the organizational glue for an automatically constituted public sphere and an accurate indication of existing conditions, including demographic ones. But this form of understanding the basis for politics is clearly in danger as urbanism advances, marching to the tune of a “city beyond maps,” an invisible architecture of forces. Here, a new concept of urban politics can be usefully articulated by reference to the city-as-archive. Following my earlier analysis, archives can be treated as anchors in the reconstitution of social relations rather than as reflections of an already existing set of underlying conditions. Further, if we can treat density as a reflection of a network of information and relationships rather than as a demographic indicator of the *quality* and nature of the experience of place, then I suggest that these newly mobile forms of density can themselves be positioned as a form of archive. The new city, coming into being, can then be read as an archive, and urban political struggles might be repositioned in the zone of anticipation rather than in the zone of nostalgia.

The Pedagogy of the Urban

This city-as-archive, which includes the reconstitution of urban density as a key factor, can provide an important counterpoint to understanding how emergent relationships within the new city are to be understood. By providing a means of recording and *including* the fluidities of urban informality as vital

information, the city-as-archive provides a lens into the emergent as much as it indexes historical forms. I suggested earlier that rather than highlight the archive's capacity to accurately represent a past, that we use the notion of archive as a way of navigating the voids of the present, as a practice of intervening into and reading the urban fabrics created by these voids, not for reading the urban fabric as a quilt or a palimpsest of historical forms, preserved within the archive. These voids of the present are created not only by environmental destruction, catastrophes or targeted acts of terror but also by the quotidian transformations of urban space by politicians, developers and planners. In an age marked both by destruction and the stimulation of memory and identities as well as by the massive proliferation of data, information, its collection and its organization, we need to rethink the notion of archive to encompass a dynamic sense of ordering and interpretation, unmoored from the politics of preservation and evidence creation for historical understanding.

In contexts such as Mumbai but also in many other contemporary urban contexts, such an approach is invaluable for it points to the possibilities of a politics based on anticipation rather than one that is based on known forms of place and demographic arrangement. The notion of the city-as-archive enables the production of tools of urban design that take a very different view of demographic density and its relation to urban infrastructure. On this view, density would be seen as part of a mobile and transforming infrastructural landscape rather than as a static indicator to be rearranged through new infrastructural input. In other words, the city's demographic profile, seen through the lens of the city-as-archive foregrounds information that has a bearing on the future rather than information that merely has to be reorganized and purged or, in other words, as information belonging to an archive that merely plots historical transitions by containing information as evidence. Thus, beginning with the simple fact of the centrality of spatial transformations, we move

away from considering these spatial transformations as archival evidence in understanding contemporary urban fabric and politics. Instead, we argue for a new methodological move, to posit the transforming city itself as an archive in the making, a form that will have a profound bearing on our understanding of the past as a history of the present.

Such an approach has practical pedagogical implications, particularly for the design professions, engaged in harnessing creativity for the production of urban futures. At the broadest level, it enables us to rethink the kinds of tools necessary for projects of urban regeneration, itself a constant feature of contemporary cities. By providing a theoretical apparatus for mapping emergent relations rather than isolating and classifying certain forms as belonging to the past and others to the present, city-as-archive also serves as a methodological intervention into the re-creation of everyday relations. In this sense, city-as-archive is fundamentally a pedagogical tool, one that encourages conceptual creativity as the basis for political transformation. Without such conceptual creativity, the analytic basis for political action remains fundamentally conservative. If design as a professional activity is fundamentally connected to imagining and producing the future, then the particular concept of the archive advanced in this exposition of city-as-archive can provide the basis of that creativity. In other words, city-as-archive fundamentally works as a tool refashioning our relation to the future itself through its potential to intervene in the education of urban designers.

Conclusion

Both cities and archives play a central role in constituting our understanding of social life. The modern metropolis as media constantly mediates, produces and maintains relations amongst strangers. Similarly, once we free ourselves from the constraints of archives as particular, official institutional forms, we are in a better position to understand the archive

beyond its role as a repository of evidence about the past, always directed toward a putative future. Instead, by taking a more ecumenical view of what kinds of information or activities might be included in an archive, we begin to see an analogical relationship between cities and archives. In the context of the rapid transformation of contemporary cities, it is necessary that we move away from an inherently conservative and preservationist understanding of archives because such a view inevitably influences the way we perceive urban politics. Instead, we might benefit by taking the form of the modern metropolis as media as a prototype for the city-as-archive, a method for navigating the profound social transformations of the present without succumbing to a view of the past as a succession of historical forms, preserved within an archive that is itself detached from the present. Instead, I suggest that the city-as-archive is a way of embedding the past within the present as an absent but ongoing temporal phenomenon, one that does not treat the city as a palimpsest of historical forms and does not take the archive as merely a repository of those forms.

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Schooling and/or Educating in the Changing City

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Schooling and/or Educating in the Changing City

In the late 19th century, the institutions of schooling played a crucial role in the mostly homogeneous communities. Schooling meant, not only the transmission of fundamental literacy, but imposition of a set of values and beliefs. These were presumably derived from moral laws which were thought to be fixed and unchangeable; and, for many, they served as the foundation of the mutuality and coherence that defined each largely rural community. Continuity could only be assured if the codes and patterns of behavior (written or not) were made to seem unquestionable; and young people were impressed early in their lives with the necessity and the security of compliance. Little if any notice was taken of individual difference; and the interests of particular children were seldom taken into account. A norm was established in each school and classroom. Although they shared experience in accord with rhythms of nature, there was an assumption that the mind-set of each child was at odds with acceptable attitudes in the world around. Subject matters linked with stress on morals aimed at an equilibrium. If a pupil struck a teacher as being "unhealthily" devoted to drawing or music the youngster would be told to focus on mathematics or logic in order to balance his/her appetites. If a child were simply different, he might be stigmatized as stupid, freakish, unteachable. Curriculum content drew from incidents and tasks fundamental to the economy; sowing, harvesting, tool-making, weaving. It was not thought of as vocational training. The skills and literacies stressed were part of a taken-for-granted reality, defining the culture itself. Village festivals, fairs, church services added to the communal coherence of things.

When the smokestacks appeared on the horizon and new occupations suddenly opened down the cobblestone and newly-paved roads, those who found their very subsistence threatened had no choice but to load their belongings and their children in carts and wagons and move into the confusion of the changing city. It is as important to try to map that city mentally as it is to imagine the responses of the newcomers from the farmhouses, fields, and pastures that had to be left. There were wooden shacks to be found, shaky boarding houses and tenements while work was sought. Often, children had to be sent to work. Karl Marx, among many, reported on the suffering of the young at the looms or in the half-lit pottery factories. Herman Melville described the frail factory girls in the paper factories. There were helpless wards or spinsters housed with unknown townfolk teaching in the slowly growing schools. There were the regimented mill-girls, like those in Lenox, some shanghaied from farm families, promised a good life and schooling, required to toil and obey.

But people from strange places kept pouring into cities ill-equipped to house them, heal them, educate them. They experienced themselves as strangers, newcomers fated to live their lives with the Other. Some managed through the cultivation of indifference, through experiences of power rooted in convictions of a new freedom, to plunge ahead, to accommodate to the demands of capitalism. Indeed it was capitalism with its focus on profit-making and exploitation in the interests of the wealthy that stratified lives for rich and poor. But now that the old constraints and fixities had "melted away," human energy found multiple modes of expression. Trade and commerce, invention, social

and scientific experimentation, efforts to institute civic reforms; all expanded in different places at different times. As banks, corporations, and giant monopolies were developed in their diverse forms, communities in the traditional sense were less and less likely to appear. Certain groups clustered in ghettos and slums; there were neighborhood associations more or less loosely defined. Theatre groups and arts centers began taking shape. There was a minimum amount of homogeneity outside of the churches and synagogues. The day of shared value, outside the limits of orthodoxy, seemed to have disappeared.

Schooling, thought to be an enterprise committed to the process of molding of the young from without in accord with standards and practices emergent from the agreements and shared values defining a particular society, no longer appeared workable in the new cities. Given the extreme variety of traditions, interests, and orientations, the strange coherence and congeniality of the old community could only be conceived of as a future possibility under the circumstances of a democracy. Democracy has been described as a “community in the making,” a condition brought into being by human beings also “in the making,” finding their fulfillment in participation, conversation and dialogue.

Education in the confusions of the city demands deliberate and imaginative action on the part of persons opening to one another, affirming their sense of agency, refusing fixities and the taken-for-granted. Education must always be unfinished, on the verge of transforming possibility into practice, moving, pulsating with the changing city.

If there has been a moment in recent times where this need for education to be conceived as a permanent process of transforming possibility into practice, this has been the aftermath of the 11-S tragedy, and the events that followed.

First a muffled crash, not unfamiliar among the sounds of the city; but then a silence

seeped in like fog under the doors. Those too far from the World Trade Center to see told the children to keep unpacking their book bags and get ready for reading; those a little closer to the towers quietly asked classes to move away from the windows without exactly knowing why. Then, inexplicably, another crash; and some found themselves running in the streets, asking the children to hold hands, to stay in line. Others moved to basements; parents ran in; and there was no way of knowing who found their young ones and who did not. Nearer the Center, some children saw what they thought were pieces of debris turn into people wearing neckties, flashing past; others saw what they thought were birds on fire. In the black dust and crowds, teachers shepherded their classes across a bridge. High school students, nearest to the falling buildings, took boats and ferries across the river. A confusion of messages, of orders. Empty ambulances; broken glass. Spurts of panic: uncertainty about where family members worked.

Today, teachers remember being totally concentrated on protecting the children, saving them, reassuring them. Many took refuge in routine language as if bringing children downstairs or gathering them in corners away from the windows was perfectly normal. But there continued to be experiences of flight and long, trudging walks in the absence of public transportation. Most unsettling was the shattering of habitual supports and frameworks. The sense of invulnerability was suddenly eroded, in part because there was no explanation of what was happening. For a time there was the gradually expanding term, “terrorist.” Meanwhile, photographs of missing men and women appeared on walls, people carried photos of lost relatives. There was emptiness. Some of children’s greatest fears seemed realized. The gap widened between what made ordinary sense and the suspicion that nothing would be certain from then on. Little ones caught by television, thought the towers were falling over and over. Some of the children’s questions seemed unanswerable. There were many teachers who

barred all talk of 9/11 as too upsetting for the young.

Yes, there followed moments when strangers embraced each other on the streets, when people of all kinds tried to think of ways they could help. Children brought poems and food to firehouses. Flags appeared, for want of any better way of showing connectedness. Feelings of solidarity were expressed. In a desire for action, some tried to gather into a community to encourage members to become healers, to take some part in stemming confusion, to help people deal with grief, with abandonment. Self-confident suggestions came down from above telling listeners to return to their normal lives. Then, abruptly, an explanation: Saddam Hussein, dictator, murderer of millions, was blamed. Osama bin Laden taunting, boasting of his part, would be hunted down; and Al Qaeda would be crushed to the ground. Then, for all the lack of evidence that Iraq was threatening us, a “pre-emptive war” was launched.

Blanketed in silence, we watched the attack called “Shock and Awe,” the flames and smoke over the domes and towers black against the sky. Baghdad was presented to us as an empty city, a kind of movie set. We were shown no pictures of people killed or wounded, of fathers carrying their injured children, desperate for help. How much was our own denial? How easily had we bought the idea that we were battling the “axis of evil,” that events must be read in terms of “either-or?” And how—what—do we teach the children, the adolescents among us? The promises of “conflict resolution” faded when we saw the heart-rending pictures of kidnapped women and men pleading for their lives and heard about the beheadings that followed so often. Were we to understand it in terms of cultural difference only? Were the black-clad men posing behind their victims in any way representative of the Iraqi people, or were they a radical Islamic minority? But then there were the appalling pictures of American soldiers degrading and torturing Iraqi prisoners, pictures of “detainees” in Guantanamo. Was

there no idea of the worth of every individual person? Do we know enough to encourage critical questions? Does one display of brutality justify another?

Then there is the perplexity involved in dealing with what even the children heard as bombast: the claim of “mission accomplished”; the celebrations of the advance of freedom, of democracy. When can we afford to sow seeds of doubt with respect to the nation’s leaders? At the present moment, teachers are caught between their own skepticism and the familiar reminders that they should follow their lesson plans, remain within the curriculum frameworks, say nothing to disrupt the desired order in the classroom. Forgotten or ignored too frequently is what happens to the young when irrelevant, “required” material is imposed—so-called subject matter unrelated to students’ questions or interests. Today, when the young are exposed to so much, when unanswerable questions abound, conversation between teachers and students is often blocked by teachers’ fears of saying what they believe. In the shadows of “No Child Left Behind,” with demands of testing and accountability resting heavily on their minds, teachers can rarely pay heed to young people’s stories, memories, fears. They are driven, usually against their will, to a compliance with the notion that the young are to be treated as human resources, schooled in response to the nation’s technological, economic, and military needs. All this is complicated (for school people as well as others) by the changes brought about by globalization, by deep splits in the culture, by uncertainties regarding immigration and the role we choose to play in the world.

Given the growing opposition to the war and to the machinations that drove the country into it, there is more and more unrest expressed every time an exposure of chicanery or mismanagement comes to light. Yet questions as to whether the war was or is worth the cost and the loss of life, whether we must “stay the course” are somehow stifled. The widening gap between what people actually

know about the war and what they are willing to do about it is increasingly difficult to understand. What is occurring is generally felt to be unacceptable, and yet the blanket of silence remains. We need only recall the 2000 dead recently reported, the thousands gravely wounded, the coffins being loaded into trucks on the battlefield, the stunned expressions on the faces of nineteen-year-old reservists who had never been prepared for what lay ahead for them. And there are the young wives waiting at home, many with young children who have never met their fathers. Not incidentally (and too seldom noted) tens of thousand Iraqis—men, women, and children—have died, most of them innocent civilians or the families of civilians.

For all the unease aroused in young people by what they confront on television, in the press, and in what they hear, they still have to be enabled to learn the fundamental literacies. We have probably never known a time when the young were immersed in the same ocean of information (and misinformation) as their elders or when there was such a desperate need to make sense of what was being absorbed. Clearly there are many modes of sense-making; the common-sense mode, the empirical, the religious, the imaginative. There are not only the meanings implicit in the surrounding culture; there are the meanings that develop in children's and adolescents' cultures. It may be possible to help students transform information into knowledge if teaching were to take place in a context of open questions, questions finding differing kinds of expression depending on the questioner's age and life situation. There are connections certainly to be sought between the terrible revelations of the hurricanes and the

costs of the war. There is factual knowledge to be attained regarding sea levels and flood control, even as there is factual knowledge to be gathered regarding the voting in Iraq, the constitution, and the interests involved. But the facts alone are insufficient. Imagination must come into play if the young are to reach into a realm of possibility. What would New Orleans be like, what ought it to be like if levees were properly built, if every part of the population were given the chance to live on high ground? What difference would it make in Iraq if the young were familiar with the ways of democracy: critical thinking; participation in problem solving; the co-existence of divergent points of view? How, in any case, can we open spaces for orthodoxy and still keep open the possibility of a free society?

It is the idea of possibility that remains important. Along with it comes the recognition of incompleteness. There are always unanswerable questions and, because they are presently unanswerable, the need for new perspectives, freshly minted methods, the persisting overhang of doubt, the unlikelihood of any final proof. And the ongoing questioning, the vibrancy of dialogue. Adrienne Rich has written that poetry begins in terror and ends with possibility; and that may be true of many art forms. *Hamlet* begins in darkness and suspicion, in the consciousness of something "rotten." It ends with the dying Hamlet saying to Horatio: "Absent thee from felicity a while, and tell my story." To tell the story is to search for its meaning without ever being sure of the end. It is to imagine what might lie beyond the presently incomprehensible, to keep the tower from falling over and over, to begin building anew.

The City and its Educating Paths: School, Streets and Youth Mobility

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The City and its Educating Paths: School, Streets and Youth Mobility

Is it possible to understand the streets as “a great ignored school” or as a school for “those without a school?” Can the streets become part of the educating paths traveled by men and women, especially the new generations, in this day and age?

This text is the product of reflections on these questions, from the understanding that the city is potentially educating both because of the political, cultural and social relationships which take place in citizen’s daily lives and because of the density of its physical spaces—architectural, historical and natural.

Within the context of a country such as Brazil, that only as recently as the late 1990s “universalized” access to basic education¹ for children between the ages of 7 and 14, this debate brings to the fore two different considerations: on one hand, that of the school institution as an irrevocable social *locus* for the educating process of the new generations and on the other, that of the educational possibilities of the city paths, the streets of the city.

From the perspective of the streets we presuppose the need to “de-romanticize” what could be understood to be a place of continual learning and absolute freedom: the streets are not an educating space for those without a roof over their heads, without a family, without a school. On the contrary, to them—groups or individuals lost and isolated in the city flux—the streets, as a rule, represent insecurity, violence and the creation of ghettos. The streets can be perceived as educating if a path is forged of collective and

self-identifying actions by groups that inhabit the city and explore its multiple territories pedagogically, politically and culturally.

These reflections are not meant to go against the idea of formal schooling or minimize the effects and potential of work done by schools. Rather, this approach (re)situates the school institution within the educational networks that operate in the city and in the city as an educating space and, thus, our approach considers both street and school as complementary educational grounds. And as a backdrop to that, is the idea of rethinking the public-governmental sphere as an educational authority.

We intend to consider the educating paths that youngsters establish and seek in the urban context. Assumptions such as democracy, coexistence and diversity will be studied as possible structuralizing elements of useful learning about life in society; elements which hopefully instill educating actions both in the streets and in the schools.

City, Contemporaneity and Reinventing the School Space

Given the modern context of growing urban masses and the complexity of everyday city life it is harder and harder to reduce these to a linear and categorized analysis, to which we resorted until now.

The school institution as a privileged space for education of the new generations is los-

¹ Basic education in Brazil is organized in the categories of early childhood education (0 to 6 years old), primary school (7 to 14 years old) and secondary school (15 to 17 years old).

ing its privileged position as sole educator. More and more we realize that individuals educate themselves and are educated in diverse and distinct social spaces. Though we may not remember to take it into consideration, the school consists of a network of social spaces (institutional and non-institutional) that creates behaviors, value judgements, knowledge and ways of being and of being in the world. “The streets” as a non-institutional experience, is part of this network, an invisible network to those insisting on rigid readings of the situation.

As a growing *locus* of increasing population we can state that the **city** becomes the **setting** in which these networks develop. It is worth mentioning that, in the course of the 20th century, around 70% of the world population moved into the cities; currently in Latin America, 3 out of 4 inhabitants live in the city, and in Brazil, the urban population rose from 30% to 81% between the 1930’s and the 1990’s.

As a part of a powerful movement questioning the paradigm of today’s lifestyle, considering the city as an educating space and reviving the historical and symbolic importance of the school, becomes a clearer option. This is especially true as the cities are coming to be seen worldwide as **basic social and political actors** in resolving social problems and problems of coexistence, as well as in building and consolidating local identities in an ever-more globalized world where cities are steadily expanding.

Considering the city as a space of human coexistence, with its different forms, functions and concepts, we can point to the symbolic shapes it has taken and the historical roles it has played:

- in the **greek polis** – the space of budding democracy, of speech, of the *agora*,
- in the **medieval city** with its walls protecting it against the “barbarians” and, therefore, all who were “different,”
- in the **modern city**, forged under the aegis of the emerging capitalistic demands and of the industrial revolution that didn’t differentiate between individuals, turning them all (men and women, children, young people and the elderly) into potential workers.

As a space structurally characterized by diversity—ethnic, linguistic, racial, religious, economical, generational, and sexual—the city (in particular, the modern city) provided the conditions for the flourishing of differences thanks, among other reasons, to the anonymity of the masses. Nevertheless, at the same time it attempted to “civilize diversity” through institutional actions forged from the ideals of whiteness, Christendom, learnedness, adulthood and masculinity.

It is in this polarization (diversity vs. homogeneity) where we find what I call **the founding tension of the contemporary city**² which, stirred by the current civilizing crisis leads those who live in the city to build new identities and ways of relating to its spaces. Youngsters, as barbarians in these urban territories, emerge as those who do not speak the language of the ones already established there and so, as *outsiders*, they are the ones trying to open up other paths with codes, ways of dressing, tastes, and ways of being that we cannot manage to understand. They are the ones who don’t fit into the established social patterns.

From this perspective, the discussion of democracy and a new public sphere surfaces as a **possibility** for the reinvention of the city as a setting for the expression and acknowledgement of human differences rather than a space for sameness and homogeneity. Sev-

² MOLL, Jaqueline. *Histórias de Vida, Histórias de Escola: elementos para uma pedagogia da cidade*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000.

eral authors take this argument further when they point to democracy not only as a possibility for, but a **condition** for the survival of humanity. This is the case of Alberto Melucci³ when he states that “*the crucial factor that changes the meaning of democracy today is that without the recognition of differences and without an agreement on the limits that must be placed there will be no room for either differences or decisions, just for catastrophe.*” (2001, p. 56)

Communities, in the macro-city scenario, constitute small centers in which networks of social and personal relationships are woven into day-to-day life with all of their conflicts and tensions. The movements taking place in the large scenarios are reproduced in the communities. The community can therefore be, from the perspective of a **polycentric context**, a small stage for rehearsals for life in the city. From the street, from the neighborhood, we can become citizens of the world since, as Bernard Charlot⁴ would say, that local space can provide access to the adult world, not as an imposition but as a possibility of expanding this vital dialogue that makes us humans.

Along the lines of the hologram proposed by French philosopher Edgar Morin,⁵ we find the large spaces reappearing in the smaller spaces. So, the everyday tyrannies and intolerance reflect, as in a *set of mirrors* and, on a smaller scale, the tyrannies and intolerance of the kind of fundamentalist thinking that

generates genocides that terrify us. In this way, community reflects the city.

Analyzing the city from this perspective implies revising ways of looking at the world schemes, reviving utopias present in pedagogical history⁶ and projecting the city as space that is different than what common sense would tell us, different from the general perception that the city is an increasingly unsafe place of fear and dangers; a place in which the only alternative is to isolate oneself in the domestic environment as a response to the imaginary tyranny of a way of viewing and living in the world.⁷ There is room for plenty of cities within a city, with the features we are capable of attributing to it.

Youngsters and Educating Paths in the City

Two recent studies offer new elements to consider regarding the paths taken by urban youth who live in the outskirts of cities: one of the studies aimed to hear what young people from the city of Porto Alegre had to say about their insertion in the city⁸ and the other study brought out elements regarding the role of the local government vis à vis urban youth.⁹

Understanding groups of youths within an urban territory to be part of an *outsider universe*¹⁰ that is establishing new ways of being, of expressing themselves and of living—ways

³ MELUCCI, Alberto. *Vivencia y Convivencia. Teoría Social para una era de la información*. Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2001.

⁴ CHARLOT, Bernard. *Da relação com o saber. Elementos para uma teoria*. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2001.

⁵ MORIN, Edgar. *Introdução ao pensamento complexo*. Lisboa: Instituto Piaget, 1991.

⁶ Reference from TRILLA BERNET, Jaume. *Ciudades Educadoras: bases conceptuales Cidades Educadoras*. Curitiba: Ed. da UFPr, 1997.

⁷ It is worth reading Francesco Tonucci's, *La città dei bambini*, (Laterza, Roma-Bari, 1996).

⁸ BRUNEL, Carmem. *A casa, a escola e a rua: espaços de múltiplas práticas no cotidiano de meninos e meninas que freqüentam três escolas públicas da periferia da cidade de Porto Alegre*. Doctoral thesis. PPGEDU. UFRGS, 2005.

⁹ “Juventude, escolarização e poder local,” research carried out in the years 2004 and 2005, coordinated at a national level by Marília Spósito (USP) and Sergio Haddad (PUC-SP) and locally (Porto Alegre and metropolitan region) by Nilton Bueno Fischer and Jaqueline Moll (UFRGS).

¹⁰ ELIAS, Norbert; SCOTSON, John L. *Os estabelecidos e os outsiders: sociologia das relações de poder a partir de uma pequena comunidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2000.

that threaten and frighten the established norms—I propose considering them as subjects, possible interlocutors whose originality regarding *modus vivendi* and *operandi* may play a part in the institutional and social reinvention of the present. I suggest that we consider young people as possible agents of a new present.

Youths from the Outskirts and Their Paths

In the first study, carried out in the outskirts of the city of Porto Alegre,¹¹ a survey was conducted, through questionnaires, on 266 youngsters—149 girls and 115 boys,¹² 160 of whom were in middle school and 106 from high school and ranging in ages from 13 to 24. About 25% of these youngsters live in families whose total income is 1 minimum wage,¹³ while 129 of them, about 50% of the surveyed group, live in families whose income is from 2 to 5 minimum wages. Among this group of youngsters, 218—of which the majority were girls—claimed to like their neighborhood. Though they pointed out different problems in the neighborhood, only 35 said they didn't like it. In terms of what they considered to be the neighborhood's problems and needs, 54 mentioned the lack of security, 116 complained about the lack of sports facilities, 88 brought up the subject of cleanliness, 53 wanted a football field and 11 said they would like places for partying.

What is striking here is the sense of being closed out expressed by almost 200 youngsters who claim that they don't move around the city because they cannot pay the public transportation fares. Where they generally go is to homes of friends and relatives.

About 50 youngsters, less than 1/5 of the total, said that the spaces they spent the most time in, apart from their home and their street, were parks, squares and shopping malls. The girls tended to spend the most time at the homes of friends and relatives, outside of their own house. As regards spaces they enjoyed being in, the girls tended towards their home and their bedrooms, while the boys' preferred place to be was at the school gym, followed by their home and events. School was not among the preferences for either boys or girls. Among the least preferred spaces was the church followed by, in the girls' cases, the football field.

At school, the space clearly preferred by both boys and girls was the playground, followed by—in the case of the younger boys—the gymnasium. Thus, they tended towards broader spaces offering possibilities for interaction, sports, recreation and cultural activity.

The responses of these youngsters lead us to consider what educating paths are available to young people who cannot even afford public transportation. For these youngsters, the city is a projection of a space to which they don't belong. Life is restricted to home, places close to home and school; spaces they go to on a daily basis that are reasonably safe and where they build their identity and their relationship with the world. From this perspective, we can say that the presence of public institutions, through policies that take these young people into account and allow them access to the city, is a defining element in their insertion in the city.

The next step of this study was to look at the daily itineraries of ten of these young people and this revealed the richness of their "created

¹¹ A city in southern Brazil with a population of 1,350,000 and internationally known for its participatory practices in local public management. The Workers Party was in power there between 1989 and 2004 and the city was the site of the first World Social Forums.

¹² Two of whom gave no information about their grade level.

¹³ A minimum monthly wage is 147.28 euros.

worlds” within the community context. In the “pedagogies”¹⁴ applied by these youngsters we see educating paths forged through their experience of participating in the community radio, in creating a rock band, through the stories, poetry and song lyrics, from creating music and dance groups and from their effort to access the world of football. School was among the main spaces where these possibilities could be brought about.

The above-mentioned feeling of being left out of the city doesn’t keep young people from creating true universes of meaning, in spite of moving in a restricted space and with limited financial resources.

The invisible fence that separates them from the public space is somehow compensated for by the effort of shaping a private sphere in which life can have meaning. This idea leads me to Hannah Arendt, calling up ancient Greece:

“The main characteristic of the tyrant was that he deprived the citizen of accessing the public sphere, where he could show himself, see and be seen, hear and be heard; that he forbade the space of the polis, he confined the citizens to the privacy of their home life... According to the Greeks, to be banished into the privacy of their homes was equivalent to being deprived of specifically human life possibilities.”¹⁵

That thought makes us consider the concept of the public sphere and citizenship and also human presence in spaces that transcend the private world and that can turn these youngsters into citizens. In understanding citizen—in one of its common definitions—as a *city inhabitant*¹⁶ one must ask: how do we become city inhabitants? How can young peo-

ple become part of the city, especially those millions of youngsters who don’t have access to it or a way of moving around within it?

In the context of the debate posed by this text the elements of “reality” point to the absence of a structured public sphere able to welcome and shelter young people living in the outskirts of Latin American cities. Their wishes reflect the need for sports facilities, a football field and a space in which to party. From the perspective of a polycentric city such places should also exist in the outskirts where the home, providing shelter from the “streets,” seems to be the best space for co-existence and learning, especially for the girls. The fear of the “streets” still prevails, as well as the sense of insecurity regarding public places. For these youngsters, school is still the main place for social interaction and learning, a space for coexistence, in which identities can be forged and new views of the world developed. School is, for them, the main community space that reflects the city.

From that we may conclude that for youngsters living in areas on the peripheries of cities, the school must be the bridge to the urban universe with all of its multiple possibilities. This place/bridge will be outcome of the process of reinventing the forms, times and spaces of the school’s intervention.¹⁷ The “street” is only plausible as an educational **possibility** to the extent to which the education and integration of youngsters corresponds to the vision of those who live in the city and create it. Among those who “make” the city are the local public institutions, whose vision and whose actions may allow these youngsters to move around the city, become a part of it and recreate their own territory, with educating paths showing the way.

¹⁴ PAIS, José Machado. *Vida cotidiana: enigmas e revelações*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2003.

¹⁵ ARENDT, Hannah. *La condició humana*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2005.

¹⁶ According to FERREIRA, Aurelio Buarque Holanda. *Novo Dicionário Aurélio*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1986.

¹⁷ Regarding distinct possibilities in this process of reinvention see *Bairro-Escola passo a passo*, edited in Brazil by different authors in the educational field, among them UNICEF, Movimento Todos pela Educação, UNIDIME, Cidade-Escola Aprendiz, Fundação Educar, Ministry of Education.

Local Authorities and Their Paths for Young People

The second aforementioned study presents preliminary results from the “Youth, Schooling and Local Power” study, specifically in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre. Its main goal was to identify educational policies regarding youngsters and adults and youth policies with regard to municipal public institutions in nine Brazilian metropolitan areas.¹⁸ This was accomplished through interviews with local managers and surveys on actions taken in 2003/2004. In the case of the city of Porto Alegre there were 134 youth-related projects or actions.

First contacts with most of the municipal councils produced reactions of surprise regarding the study: “Policies for/about youth? We don’t have any specific ones” and then followed by: “Oh, but we have something in the Health Department – a project for youngsters on STD/AIDS” or in the environment department “... something related to conservation.” These answers show that young people are not on the city councils’ agendas. Young people appeared in a watered-down form in programs for children or programs for students with problems at school or even programs for the community at large which many youngsters took advantage of, especially in activities related to theater, music, dance and the visual arts. The student category did appear repeatedly, since most activities and projects regarding young people take place in the schools.

In many of the cities included in the study the youngsters were perceived as a social group absent from public policies or as one that is starting to emerge and, thus, became “recipients” of the actions created by public institutions. What stands out in the study is the non-participation of the young people as generators of projects, collaborators or evaluators of the activities or projects targeted

to them. In a great many of these projects, which last two years at the most, there is no evaluation of results nor of the projects’ outreach, which indicates lack of continuity or the fact that these projects are one-off actions or band-aid measures.

Despite the limitations found, it is worth noting that apart from the areas that could be considered “classical,” such as health and sports, some *movements* were noted in public policies directed towards the “many expressions” of youth in the contemporary context of the cities. Projects and actions in the area of the arts—modern dance, hip-hop, graffiti—which can be seen as alternatives to generating work and income, from a self-management perspective, are emerging as novelties coming from the actions of young people and which prompt a relationship with the local authorities. Projects and actions related to environmental questions, sexuality, graphic production and the creation of forums for debate offer groups of young people, who are normally set apart from public life, the possibility of entering the urban scene.

From this perspective, the occupation of urban spaces—squares, parks, community centers, sports facilities and theatres—listed in the inventoried projects show that the *ways of being and behaving* adopted by the youngsters in the complex city scenario are starting to be made visible, expanding the educational stage beyond the school walls. The positive assertions, made by youngsters who were interviewed and surveyed in these studies, regarding the peaceful use of community spaces indicates the need to question the popular perception of groups of young people (especially youngsters living in the city outskirts) as threatening and violent.

In the school space there are few activities that go beyond the classical curriculum, and those that do exist are related to environmental subjects or to sports. This shows the lack

¹⁸ Metropolitan regions of João Pessoa (PB), Recife (PE), Goiânia (GO), Porto Alegre (RS), Florianópolis (SC), Vitória (ES), Belo Horizonte (MG), São Paulo (SP), Rio de Janeiro (RJ).

of connection between the school, the city and the possible educating paths built or desired by young people. Consequently we can see the real (and symbolic) distance between the school institution (with its rituals, *tempo*s and subjects) and these new domains created when young people's interests and local political policies come together.

About the Streets, the City and Educating Processes

The ideas about city and youth presented here, based on the concept that youngsters are emerging as new subjects in the urban scenario, can be better understood in the context of the intense instability and profound crisis regarding the rules on which modern lifestyle has been based. Many philosophers call what we are living a *paradigmatic transition*, describing it in terms of everyday revolutions in the world of employment, in the universe of human relationships, in the context of our relationship with the natural world, and in the context of nature itself, in the area of scientific production, in the changes in the way time and space is viewed (especially due to the new information technologies); daily revolutions that question the way we have organized ourselves, pushing us towards the construction of *ways of seeing* that dare to reinvent what "is already there," "established," and leading us to think about the transitory nature of long known models, once considered unchangeable.

The whole of educating practices carried out in the context of the school are receiving the impact of these perplexities and instabilities, both in relationship to the new generations and in terms of the new areas of knowledge being produced. Our responsibility to the future presents us with a basic task: to understand what is happening in order to create new ways of seeing the tensions, challenges and the limits of our own practices and to create new possibilities for life in the school, in the community and in the city.

In this sense, our concepts of *educating city* or *city as pedagogy* can broaden our concept of education, allowing us to reinvent school in the same way we are trying to reinvent the city and, within it, the community as a place for coexistence, dialogue, for lifelong learning, with the aim of deepening the meaning of democracy and affirming freedoms.

These processes urge us to make changes that, though methodological are paradigmatic changes, that require creating new ways to read the world and to create what Paulo Freire called "*viabile novelty*." These don't appear as either a new *panacea* or a new model, but rather as possible changes in the short and long term that can only be built based on new social and educational pacts. In this regard, the local authorities can play an important pedagogical role by:

- coordinating social forces and subjects,
- financing actions that emerge from the needs and demands of this new agreement,
- mediating between different and even opposing interests concerning the occupation of public space.

From this perspective dialogue with schools and other institutions regarding our educating projects as a society, is a *sine qua non* condition. Does our society take young people into consideration? If so, how do different social groups—neighborhood associations, environmental groups, business lobbies, social services associations, trade unions, political parties and local public institutions—perceive them? What groups of young people live and move around in our cities and communities? What spaces do they occupy? How can we change the minds of those who only see threats and problems in the groups of youths and end up establishing many of the public policies? How can we draw in or shape young people as actors in the social process with all of their convictions, beliefs, know-how, experiences and, above all, their

intense creative capacity? How can we offer young people the public spaces and domains of the cities with their innumerable educating possibilities?

This is where a fundamental difficulty lies: we are not used to dialoging with and getting close to other subjects who make up the social fabric, and much less with young people who, gathered in “urban tribes” according to their identifying characteristics, defy our ability to understand and accept them. To bring social subjects closer—among those groups of young people—to create new educational pacts considering the city as a whole, with actions that include the involvement of different institutions, the use of urban spaces, time for the new generations and the willingness to open new horizons and make shared commitments: these are conditions necessary for turning the city into an educating setting. In that way, all of the people who live in the city become educators.

It is all about starting dialogues in which the “others” can be heard by the public institutions, as well as by other “established” social subjects. We will not achieve change if the new generations remain confined to the home, the classic school or their poor neighborhoods.

Our condition as a civilization depends on these young actors on the contemporary urban scene. In order to construct educating paths we must take them into account, listen to them, include them as individuals full of possibilities, not as bearers of problems or needy ones who are dependent on us to resolve their difficulties. Therefore, in thinking about these paths we are forced to consider broadening our point of view regarding cities, which basically implies having local policy and administrators take into account an educational project in which both school and street play a role.

To achieve this goal we need to ask ourselves:

- How do we teach young people the democratic practices of coexistence and diversity if our daily practices of coexistence provoke non-acceptance of the “other,” keep us from listening to them and understanding their *modus vivendi*?
- How can we think about educating paths for these youngsters if the city is closed to them, if they are confined to their streets and homes, without turning these—particularly the streets—into places with teaching potential?
- Is it possible for the city and the community to develop, beyond their traditional economic, social and political functions and services, an educating function, regarding collective commitment and lifelong training, in the promotion and development of all of their inhabitants—children, youngsters and adults?¹⁹ In other words, is it possible to think about the city and the community from the perspective of education?
- Is it possible to consider the city and the community as spaces of cultural and generational coexistence, as spaces in which to learn about human diversity and to discourage intolerance—necessary conditions for a democratic life?
- Is it possible to consider school as an open institution, more coordinated with the social networks and the surrounding urban setting?

Taking these questions into account, considering the city with its educating paths and—within the city itself—the network of possibilities that also includes schools, implies:

¹⁹ A postulate presented in the introduction to the *Charter of Educating Cities*, created in Barcelona in the 1990 and revised in 1994 and in 2004, is here reformulated as a question.

- **looking at the city differently**, perceiving it, with its entangled streets, avenues, squares and buildings, as a *territory of multiple plots and cultures and therefore of countless educational possibilities*;
- discussing who we are, what shared and individual needs we have, *what present and future we wish for*;
- taking on—on the part of governments, neighborhood associations, business lobbies, social movements, youth groups, churches, trade unions, universities, and other actors on the urban scene—educating tasks in the sense of **identifying needs and educational possibilities**, in order to offer and create “*new viable options*” with the population as a whole that will allow more, or at least different, possibilities in life.

This “reconceptualization” presupposes understanding the city as a large network of educating paths, both in its formal teaching spaces (schools, day care centers, faculties, universities, institutes) and informal teaching spaces (theatres, squares, museums, libraries, mass media, public meeting places, churches; as well as the traffic, the buses, etc.), whose streets become bridges for coexistence and learning and where **the intentionality of the actions** carried out can turn **the city into an educating space, a space for learning**.

In this sense, the educating process that takes place in the agora, in the streets, in the bus, at school, can be the **key** to coexistence and therefore to democracy, which means understanding and respecting different ideologies, ethnic groups, races, genders, social classes, ways of understanding life, as well as of working together to face concrete problems that concern.

This whole process means that all citizens, children, young people and adults must see themselves as part of the city, committed to an educational and cultural movement that allows everyone, as potential educators, to reflect their views off of this great **territory-mirror** with its topics and problems so that *by relearning it, they may dare to reinvent it*.

The democratic and educating city, a space of many paths is, therefore, a utopia that should be revived because it reminds us, once again, of the dreams we all share of a happy life on this planet, a sustainable life based upon solidarity. It reminds us of the city that is more than just what it can materially produce and, as the historian Jacques Le Goff²⁰ said, it revives the idea of *the city as a stage of equality and a feast of exchange, as a space of common good, of safety and urbanism as an invention of beauty—elements that bring to mind the renaissance cities*.

²⁰LE GOFF, Jacques. *Por amor às cidades*. São Paulo: Editora da UNESP, 1998.

Education and the Just Society

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1. Introduction

In recent years, analyses of the knowledge and information society have quite often surpassed the optimism expressed in initial perspectives on the democratic potential of the centrality of knowledge in society. These perspectives, justified in various manners, associated the importance of knowledge with a particular social meaning, where democracy and economic growth went hand in hand.¹ Now, however, we often see emphasis being placed on the exclusive aspects that create uncertainty and risk, which in turn leads to an intensive use of knowledge and information in the economy and in society. With the same swiftness that typifies contemporary social processes, it quickly became apparent that the centrality of knowledge brought about strong tendencies to privatize both its production and its distribution. Capitalism based on the intensive use of information and knowledge could be more unjust than traditional industrial capitalism.²

The debate consequently shifted away from education and knowledge in and of themselves and started to focus on the kind of society we want to build based on their centrality. More specifically, we could maintain that the concept of the *educating city* is now

enriched by referring to the type of city (or society) we would like or plan to build. In this article, we take the idea of *building a just society* as the major challenge facing us as a civilization. Starting with this general postulate, some observations and hypotheses are put forth, focused primarily at the role of education and of the educators themselves in the process of building this just society.

2. Meaning Deficit

First of all, we must make reference to the *meaning deficit* that characterizes the new capitalism, where separation from the past and uncertainty about the future lead to a strong concentration on the present. Richard Sennett has stressed the importance of this idea, basing his approach mainly on an analysis of the changes in the way work is organized. In his classic study on “character” and in his recent essay on the culture of the new capitalism, Sennett argues that this capitalism is based on the idea of “no long term,” something that has significant consequences in terms of the training of individuals and the processes of cultural transmission, in both public institutions (schools in particular) and in the family.³

¹ The most popular version of this optimism is that of Alvin Toffler. See, for example: A. Toffler. *Powershift*. New York: Bantam, 1991.

² D. Cohen. *Wealth of the World, Poverty of Nations*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998. Recently, even the International Monetary Fund has acknowledged the rising inequality and concentration of income in the world, associated with technological development. See: Daniel Muchnik, “El FMI ahora preocupado por lo social.” *Clarín*, Buenos Aires, October 15, 2007.

³ R. Sennett. *La corrosión del carácter. Las consecuencias personales del trabajo en el nuevo capitalismo*. (*The Corrosion of Character. The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*). Barcelona: Anagrama, 2000. R. Sennett. *La cultura del Nuevo capitalismo*. (*The Culture of the New Capitalism*.) Barcelona: Anagrama, 2006.

Ultimately, saying “no long term” erodes the possibility of building links of trust, mutual commitment and cohesion. At companies, for example, the employees know that mergers, outsourcing or other changes could one day leave them out in the cold, with no commitment whatsoever from the business owners. Today it is advisable to work outside of companies and, as Sennett says, indifference and superficial cooperation are far more useful than loyalty and service. The capacity for change is considered more valuable than experience, while the practice of consumption expands into all aspects of social and personal life, and is not limited to merchandise alone.

When this behavior seeps into other areas of social life, such as the family or civic activity, the tensions and contradictions become quite significant. The family requires commitments and loyalties in both the medium and long terms that express intergenerational solidarity. Being a citizen now also increasingly requires a strong sense of responsibility and group solidarity, which requires making decisions with an eye to the future. This also poses serious problems for institutionalized education, whose purpose has always been the transmission of a society's cultural heritage and preparation for a particular set of future plans. From this standpoint, one of the main problems facing education today involves dealing with the tension generated by this meaning deficit, not only in educational processes and in the ties between teaching and learning, but also in the political and institutional processes linked to educational activity.

3. The Meaning of Education in Modern Society

We must remember that when modern educational systems came into being, they were

directly associated with the building of nation-states. While this may not be the appropriate place for a lengthy aside regarding the history of education, it should nevertheless be pointed out that, at least in Western culture, the principles of universal, compulsory education were linked directly to the building of the State with adherence to a particular order, transcending any particularities related to ethnicity, religion, language or any other factor. This process unfolded in different ways according to the circumstances, but schools and teachers were among the institutions and social actors leading the process of building modernity, in both the political and cultural aspects.

Now there is a great deal of widely-read literature on the process of modernization. Bauman, to mention one of the more prominent authorities on the subject, has described the typically modern vision of the world as that which considers it to be an essentially ordered whole. Control is practically synonymous with establishing order, and the effectiveness of that control depends on adapting knowledge to the “natural” order of things. Such knowledge is theoretically attainable, and rising up in the hierarchy of practices measured by the control/knowledge syndrome also means moving towards universality and away from practices considered to be “provincial,” “particularist” and “localized.”⁴

Whether spurred on by the necessity for control or a genuine desire to spread knowledge, education, schools and the educators themselves were all a product of modernity linked directly to the need for specialized personnel capable of transmitting and reproducing the new dominant culture.⁵ In that respect, modern educational systems placed an emphasis on the transmission of the knowledge, values and attitudes linked to the social norms

⁴ Z. Bauman. *Legisladores e intérpretes; Sobre la modernidad, la posmodernidad y los intelectuales (Legislators and Interpreters - On Modernity, Post-Modernity, Intellectuals)*. Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmas, 1997.

⁵ Z. Bauman, *Ibid.*

required for society to function properly. In order for such content to be learned, a strong emotional charge had to be incorporated into the transmission process. A fundamental element in the way citizens were shaped at the time when nation-states and democracy were being built and consolidated was the emphasis on symbolic aspects, rituals and the authority given to the actors and institutions assigned the task of conveying the guidelines for *social cohesion*, meaning the acceptance of the rules of social discipline.

The most exhaustive theoretical explanation and justification of this system was contributed by Émile Durkheim in his essays on education, particularly those on moral education.⁶ His entire analysis is based on the concern for offering everyone the education due to them given their position on the social scale, and on achieving acceptance of a new morality, the secular and republican morality, which was to replace traditional religious morality.

This is why scholastic practices at that time focused so much attention on ritual elements while bestowing a nearly religious or sacred authority status upon those responsible for the educational process (i.e., teachers and professors). Durkheim defined the work of priests and teachers as a “moral” activity, one of mediation between general values and individual subjects, between a type of society and the individuals that comprise it. Having a vocation, a calling, and placing symbolic gratifications above material ones: these have been the main characteristics of the teaching role in the framework of the school’s “institutional program.”

In essence, the shaping of citizens based on the categories of democracy and nationhood involved specific content, key actors and a coherent institutional and curricular design. The socializing richness of this project lay

in the fact that it brought *meaning*, a term defined for these purposes in three dimensions: foundation, unity and purpose. The foundation of the proposal lay in the idea of Nationhood, democracy and market being the legs on which the collective project would stand; the unity was based on the significant interconnection of the “images of the world” promised by this ideological proposal whereby everyone had their place in the social structure; lastly, the purpose was based on the projected possibility of an ever-improving future, of a progressive widening of the spaces for participation, freedom and justice.⁷

The evolution of educational activity based on this *meaning* was not exempt from contradictions and tensions. Knowledge and teaching practices also tended toward autonomy. Because of changes in the social structure and because of the teaching culture itself, education and the educators within developed a strong critical notion of the modern conception of education, and particularly with regard to its reproductive, disciplinary and authoritarian aspects. From classical educators such as Pestalozzi, Dewey, Freinet and the Activity School movement, to more contemporary names like Paulo Freire, the professional culture of educators (far more than the real educational practices used in schools) was dominated by principles that accentuated the libertarian possibilities of education. But this “critical” thought (and the meaning it gave to the actions and identity of the educators) was part of the world of modernity. “Against” the imposing of a single order and “against” authoritarianism in teaching, the critical educators built both their individual and collective identity. To a large extent, that line of critical thinking was built around the contradiction between training people for work and shaping people to be citizens and to develop their full potential as individuals. It is this scenario that changes

⁶ Émile Durkheim. *L'éducation morale. (Moral Education)* Paris: PUF, 1963.

⁷ Zaki Laïdi. *Un monde privé de sens*. Paris: Fayard, 1994.

radically with the expansion of the new capitalism.

4. Meaning in the New Capitalism: Building a Just Society

The literature on postmodernity, the knowledge society and the new capitalism is extensive and well-known. Although each of these terms alludes to a different phenomenon, their analysis refers to a transformation process that affects all dimensions of society: work organization, political organization, cultural paradigms and the processes of building personal identities. The tendencies toward fragmentation are significant and well known. They are linked to a dual phenomenon: on one hand, inequality and social exclusion, and on the other, the explosion of identities and demands for acknowledgement of diversity. From a cultural point of view, postmodernity is characterized by a departure from the conception that there is only one valid, legitimate cultural order, to which all others are subordinate. Particularities are no longer synonymous with backwardness and traditionalism but rather claimed as rights, and negating them constitutes an attack against democratic coexistence and justice. From a socioeconomic standpoint, there are well-known tendencies toward the concentration of income and the social exclusion of vast sectors of the population.⁸ The economy and society tend to be dissociated and generate a scenario where the major question mark (and challenge) revolves around the possibilities of building a shared meaning, one capable of overcoming fundamentalist authoritarian cohesion and asocial individualism.

Raising the question of the possibility of creating shared meaning is, in essence, raising

the question of social cohesion. What kind of cohesion is possible and necessary in the framework of this postmodern new capitalism? For one thing, we know that it is impossible for there to be cohesion, based on the imposition of the modern universal order, however rational and secular it may be. Also impossible is ascribed cohesion, ethnic or religious, which excludes anything different. At the same time, we also know that social cohesion requires basic levels of social equality, based on the right to work and to a compensation that ensures access to the goods and services that correspond to having a decent life. In short, we are faced with the challenge of building a society that fights against inequality and respects diversity. The major question mark entails knowing whether the goal of building a just society would be able to garner the backing needed to offset the tendencies toward injustice, which derive from the market and the temptations of cultural domination and control.⁹

Joining in the effort to build a just society must be analyzed in a contextualized manner. Nonetheless, the contributions of A. Giddens allow us to postulate that the support needed for building a just society is *reflexive*. The organic solidarity of the new capitalism is minimal and demands citizen behavior that is based much more on information and voluntary support than what was required by industrial capitalism or by traditional societies. However, reflexivity is not synonymous with rationality nor with behavior based solely on the predominance of the cognitive aspect. Advocating justice demands a type of reflexivity that can include emotion. There have been many transcendental historical developments brought about by the struggle for justice that can only be explained by the strong emotional support aroused in that struggle. What is new, however, is the par-

⁸ For an analysis of the phenomena of social fragmentation in cities, see Loïc Wacquant: *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*, Cambridge, UK, Polity Press, 2007.

⁹ A complete analysis of the topic of social cohesion focusing on the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean is available through ECLAC. *Cohesión social. Inclusión y sentido de pertenencia en América Latina y el Caribe (Social Cohesion: Inclusion and a Sense of Belonging in Latin America and the Caribbean)*. Santiago, Chile: 2007.

ticular expression of emotional and ethical support for justice today requiring the knowledge and information necessary to carry it out.

In this regard, it might be helpful to give the example of the reflexivity required in promoting respect for diversity. Today, everyone has the right to be recognized as who they are. But this adherence to one's own reality, one's own community of origin, cannot be linked with believing that this is the only good and legitimate way of thinking. When faced with this limited vision, what needs to be promoted is "expanded thinking," which allows us to step out of our own shoes and into someone else's, not just to know and understand that person better, but to know ourselves more deeply.¹⁰

The truth is that supporting the idea of a just society is nowadays much more demanding in cognitive and emotional terms than it was in the past. In that respect, we can refer to the claim by Habermas,¹¹ that citizens today are confronted with issues whose moral weight is far greater than it used to be. According to Habermas, we are faced with the need to "moralize human nature." The challenge we face is to preserve the conditions that provide the foundation for our awareness that we act as autonomous individuals, as the authors responsible for writing our history and our life.

These decisions demand heretofore unseen levels of responsibility and at the same time that responsibility levels for individual and social decisions increase, there is a diminishing possibility of promoting an absolute morality, one based on obligations versus demands, be they of a religious or secular

nature. We are experiencing—to borrow an expression from Gilles Lipovetsky—an era of "emotional" morality, a morality without obligations or sanctions, a painless and nonimperative morality, adapted to the new values of individual autonomy.¹²

Faced with these challenges, the task at hand is to develop a responsible intelligence, one that goes above and beyond the idea of a morality without scientific basis and that of scientific development without moral control. The first leads us to powerlessness, while the second could lead us to disaster. The question mark posed by this definition regards the role of education in the process of developing that type of intelligence and the social conditions that could foster it.

5. Just Society and Just Schooling

In this context, the fundamental question regarding educational policy is: what is just schooling? In that respect, F. Dubet¹³ provides us with some rather illustrative reflections and hypotheses to fuel the debate and forge ahead with action strategies. To begin with, Dubet states that his reflections are not aimed at defining the concept of a just school but rather one that is "the least unjust possible," which speaks to the difficulty and complexity of the problem. Normally, scholastic justice is associated with equal opportunity. Dubet questions this view of justice, one whose validity is particularly dubious at the compulsory and universal levels of education. He argues that equal opportunity can be extremely cruel to the losers of a scholastic competition designed to differentiate individuals according to their merit. A just school cannot simply focus on those with the most merits; it should also be concerned

¹⁰ Regarding this difference between limited thinking and expanded thinking, see Luc Ferry: *Aprender a vivir; Filosofía para mentes jóvenes (Apprendre a vivre/Learning to Live)*. Buenos Aires: Taurus, 2007.

¹¹ J. Habermas. *L'avenir de la nature humaine. Vers un eugénisme libéral?* Paris: Gallimard, 2002.

¹² Gilles Lipovetsky. *Le crépuscule du devoir. L'éthique indolore des nouveaux temps démocratiques*. Paris: Gallimard, 1992.

¹³ François Dubet. *L'école des chances. Qu'est-ce qu'une école juste?* Paris: Seuil, 2004.

with those at the bottom of the pack. Even in its purest state, equal opportunity does not necessarily save the poorer students from the humiliation of failure or the feeling of mediocrity. Meritocracy can be utterly intolerable when the pride of the winners is associated with disdain for the losers. The exclusion and violence experienced today among a large number of students show that this scenario is very real.

The model of equal opportunity and meritocracy has never been fully applicable. In the case of France, the variation in scholastic performance between different social categories are still as pronounced as they were in the days when access to schooling was not universal or was socially unequal. This results in disappointment, which could then give rise to the temptation to react by pulling back on democratic strategies. As a counter to such temptations, Dubet proposes three main courses of action: The first of these involves policies for a more just distribution of the scholastic offerings, giving more to the underprivileged, furnishing more information about the available educational options and providing flexibility of movement within the educational system. The second course of action involves the issue of how the educational system handles the weakest students. In that respect, compulsory education should be governed by evaluation principles whereby instead of using merit-based selection testing, there would be a principle of guaranteeing access to a common good. In compulsory education, there cannot be winners or losers but rather a common ground for learning to which all have guaranteed access. Lastly, Dubet argues for the need to ensure equal opportunity on an *individual level*. This forces us to consider the training of subjects, the educational model itself and the importance that model places on individuals, their

projects, their social lives and their uniqueness, irrespective of cognitive performance.

This last reflection from Dubet tells us that a just school does not get bogged down by the institutional processes of selection, evaluation, financing and training paths. A just school cannot be neutral toward the cultural content it has to transmit. To put it succinctly, a just school must be able to offer everyone a quality education where embracing justice is a central value. This approach has direct consequences for the work done by educators. In that respect, one can postulate that embracing justice should be a requisite for entering the teaching profession. Just as doctors in many places are required to take the Hippocratic oath of respect for life, it would perhaps be necessary to instill professional educators with a far greater commitment to the scholastic performance of their students and to the values of social justice, solidarity and cohesion.¹⁴

6. Conclusion

Building a just society forces citizens to make decisions of a magnitude heretofore unseen: whether or not to include everyone, to manipulate our genetic capital or not, to protect the environment and nature, etc. The levels of reflexivity required by these decisions are also considerable and demand not only strong cognitive development but ethical and moral development as well. How much of these reflexivity levels can be formed through intentional and systematic educational actions? What institutional forms would be the most suitable for this function? Who will be the educators in these training processes? Placing universal, compulsory schooling in the hands of teachers receiving professional training through specially designed educa-

¹⁴ The idea of extending the Hippocratic oath to other social actors, such as business leaders, for example, can be seen in Otfried Höffe: *Ciudadano económico, ciudadano del Estado, ciudadano del mundo. Ética política en la era de la globalización (Economic Citizen. National Citizen. World Citizen: Political Ethics in the Age of Globalization)*. Buenos Aires: Katz, 2007.

tional institutions was the response to the demand for training from the citizen for the nation-state. Will this be the response to the demands for training made by the reflexive citizen that the 21st century demands? These issues raise questions as to the training of the elite. Although in a democratic society the distinction between members of the elite ruling class and the other citizens is a dynamic distinction, the fact is that the responsibility

for making decisions is far greater for those who work in more sensitive areas in terms of the consequences of their decisions: scientists, political leaders, business leaders. Lastly, these decisions can no longer be spatially limited to the realm of the local or national territory. Responsibility will also take on an international dimension, at the human level. As with all crucial periods in history, the door is opened to uncertainty or hope.

Governance and Education

Joan Subirats

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Governance and Education

Wikipedia

The term *governance* deals with the processes and systems by which an organization or society operates. Frequently a government is established to administer these processes and systems. The word derives from Latin origins that suggest the notion of 'steering'. This sense of 'steering' a society can be contrasted with the traditional 'top-down' approach of governments 'driving' society or the distinction between 'power to' in contrast to governments' 'power over.'

The 1970s marked the start of a transition, which has yet to be resolved, towards alternative models for regulating social conflict in response to the crisis of traditional forms of government. In this context, neoliberal ideology began to form an alternative discourse that, driven by the pressures of financial capitalism during the 1970s (fiscal crisis, capital strike, etc.), led governments to reduce and resize their regulatory and tax capacity over capital flows. It is in this context that the real capacity of governments to lead and control social change (crisis of governability) is called into question, suggesting that a market return is the only plausible, efficient and effective means of regulating social needs. The crisis of governability we are referring to has a double dimension, affecting both the fundamental principles of the democratic legitimacy of states and their ability to ensure an efficient response to new demands and new social challenges. As a response to this reality, Governance¹ is seen as a new way of

resolving conflicts, characterized by the interaction and cooperation of multiple actors organized in networks and working to undertake collective projects.

It is not a coincidence that we are exploring the theme of governance at a time when the future of education is being debated. Today, more than ever before, to speak of the future of education is to speak of the future of the societies we live in and the way we should deal with collective challenges and conflicts. We could even venture the hypothesis that the greater the educational development, the less satisfactory the traditional government parameters that are based on factors such as hierarchy and specialization, and the more necessary it is to look for methods of social accommodation to generate forms of collective government. However ambiguous it may be to speak of governance and its use and abuse by many actors in a form that is more often than not hierarchical, what is promising about the term is precisely the idea it evokes of a collective government in an educated, cohesive society.

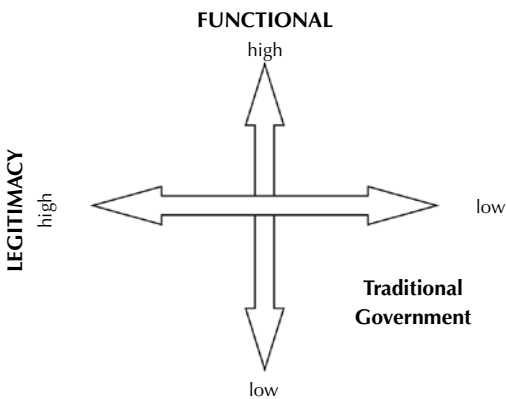
1. Governance

It might seem surprising that at a time when representative democracy has spread and become established as a policy regulation system around the world, people are becoming increasingly aware of its limits and deficiencies. It is precisely in view of these worrying signs of dissatisfaction that new forms of

¹ In English, the concept of *Governance* has acquired significance in comparison to *Government*, understood in this field as traditional government. The term *Governance* has been translated into some languages, but it is also used as a synonym for "network governments" or "relational governments."

government and social participation arise. In recent years, western democracies have experienced an ongoing rise of voter abstention and a significant fall in affiliations to political parties and pressure groups. Skepticism and a lack of interest in and distancing from traditional politics based on participation through parties, major corporate organizations and elections indicate a certain stagnation of the predominant democratic model. The delegative trend of our democracies is being questioned in a new cultural context marked by the predominance of new, post-materialist values and the emergence of a more educated and perceptive society in which individuals demand a more active role in political processes.

Figure 1: Crisis of the traditional democratic government (prepared by the author)



As shown in figure 1, traditional democratic governments are facing growing difficulties in reacting efficiently to an environment that is becoming increasingly complex, uncertain and dynamic. Furthermore, the democratic legitimacy of public institutions is weakening before the eyes of citizens who have new values, a heightened capacity for critical thinking, and are not satisfied with the mere technocratic provision of public services.

Literature on governance tends to underline the concept's complexity and high level of

ambiguity. According to R.A.W. Rhodes, the word "governance" defines "a new government process, a different form of social regulation; a new method for governing society." However, although the basic definition has been agreed on, conceptual confusion, ambiguity and theoretical controversy prevail in the existing works. Governance has taken on a wide variety of meanings: it is a new form of public management, a new system of international interdependence, a socio-cybernetic system, and a series of political networks. Other authors, such as Hirsch, compare governance with democratic innovation: "it comprises the new methods of coordination using networks, partnerships and deliberative forums that have risen from the ruins of the centralized, hierarchical and corporate representation of the 1970s."

With a view to bringing some order to the disparity of criteria, we will present three interrelated propositions which we believe comprise the conceptual core of the new model:

- i. *Governance entails the recognition, acceptance and integration of complexity as an intrinsic feature of the political process*

Complexity is generated by the implicit *diversity* of multiple actors who bring a variety of values, objectives and preferences to the political process. It is also determined by the *uncertainty* caused by permanent change, the erosion of cognitive certainties and the volatility of knowledge. Governing cannot continue to be the task of a handful of experts who apply proven knowledge; it should be conceived as a process of social learning where multiple actors offer their knowledge and personal views of reality, and try to agree on solutions to problems. This has been the case from a general viewpoint and for specific policies such as those concerned with the field of education, which has been under significant pressure in recent times.

ii. *Governance involves a government system in which multiple actors take part through plural networks*

In this context, knowledge is dispersed among multiple actors, each with their own views of the problems that arise. Authority is a vague concept that can only be developed in a framework of permanent negotiation. Resources for efficiently developing policies are shared among multiple subjects. Lastly, public interventions lead to consequences that are difficult to foresee. More specifically, there are three methods for actors taking part in these networks to separate government responsibilities and capacities:

- a) multilevel government, understood to be “a system in which different institutional levels share, rather than monopolize, the process of making decisions on a wide range of issues.”
- b) transversality, as an organizational system of the public sector that interrelates different subject areas, departments and public organizations in the framework of shared projects.
- c) social participation, as opposed to the traditional notion of society as the subject of government and public authority action. Governance underlines the confusing, ambiguous idea of separating public and private spheres while relocating collective responsibilities in a space they both share.

On the same note, education offers a good opportunity to exemplify what we have mentioned above. An educational policy that is subject to intervention from multiple government spheres and requires transversal approaches to tackle new challenges. An educational policy whose universalist approach and expansion from 0 to beyond 25 years has led it to establish a wide variety of leading roles, with public and public actors, entities and collectives.

iii. *Governance establishes a new position for public authorities in government processes, adopting new roles and using new government instruments*

The result of *governance* cannot be attributed to “executive” powers, but rather it is a spontaneous, and in some ways an unexpected, product of complex interaction between multiple actors of a highly diverse nature. While the traditional model made a clear distinction between public and private spheres, and considered public authorities the only subject of government action and the private sphere as the passive object of government action, *governance* points at a scenario where the distinction between the two dissolves, the responsibility for what is collective is shared among multiple actors and political power is dispersed among a large variety of actors.

If we work from an educational perspective not limited to schools, and understand the connection between education and life, then clearly our idea of educational policy will radically expand and demand a much more open and plural approach with more institutional actors involved in its development. It is difficult enough to imagine an approach to school problems from a traditional point of view of government based on hierarchy and specialization, but even more so if we consider lifelong learning from an open, transversal perspective.

2. Questions

Despite what has been said, and precisely because of the ambiguity surrounding the term ‘governance,’ a number of questions can be raised as to the ability to produce democratic policies using the new model:

- a) Governance involves considering the legitimacy of representative institutions as the subjects responsible for government action.

- b) If government processes are now shaped in the context of networks comprising many varied actors, then where are the principles of democratic transparency, responsibility and accountability? How are decisions made? Who is now responsible? Who should give an account to citizens?
- c) The presence and power conferred to agents such as for-profit organizations in this scenario lead us to question the type of interests that are defended by these networks, the criteria used to make public decisions, who is being represented and how we can guarantee that general interest is the driving force behind decision-making processes.
- d) To what extent are networks inevitably horizontal channels for exchange and negotiation between equal actors? Or are they in fact channels that reproduce existing inequalities and hierarchies?

All of these questions have a basic theoretical and empirical dimension. In short, governance is not a simple, unequivocal model that can be equally employed in any situation. New governance dynamics take on very different forms depending on the context, the actors involved and the values, interests and goals that conduct new organizational frameworks. The situation undeniably leaves enough areas in which to advance toward a proximity governance, opening new settings for a more radical and deeper understanding of democracy. This is particularly significant when we note that the new logics of governance and transversality in policies almost inevitably enhance local governments and territorial dynamics as the only ones capable of creating closeness, an integral response and collective involvement based on elements of identity with the local community.

3. Education and Governance

Referring more specifically to the field of education, we must recognize that we are

experiencing a time of change, and that education tends to be at the very center of the tensions that arise in any process of social transformation. Many factors contribute to the central role of education on the public agenda. It is a well-known fact that profound changes are occurring in the elements that laid the foundations of the advanced industrial society of the 20th century. Such changes have thrown into confusion the different models of society we are accustomed to as well as the role played by education. It is not surprising, then, that tensions and conflicts are arising profusely in our educational institutions, since they reflect the insecurities and fears engendered by the new reality. However, the debate has shifted to the public arena, and issues such as civic awareness and coexistence are now being discussed. In this context of community, district or city, education and citizenship issues appear to merge. Also related is the significant presence of newly arrived groups of people, who bring along their own habits, forms of interaction, ways of using public areas and spending their leisure time or practicing their religion that may collide with what is deemed “correct” and has become “mainstream” over the years.

It is therefore perfectly reasonable to ask: What kind of education for what conception of society? How do we relate education and citizenship? How do we “govern” educational policies? The three major areas of socialization have traditionally been family, school and work. At present, the impact of the new situation is clearly visible in the productive, social and family spheres, and we should not be surprised that it has a more or less pronounced effect on education as a whole, as well as on coexistence and social interaction norms.

We know that in the production field, major technological change has rearranged the coordinates of industrialism. Words like flexibilization, adaptability and mobility have replaced specialization, stability and continuity. Work has ceased to be linked to each person’s background and no longer predicts

social ties and relationships. This generates multiple impacts in numerous of directions. New possibilities have clearly emerged. People's destinies have become less permanent and defined than before. However, at the same time, people with fewer possibilities at the outset, with worse conditions in which to compete, are much more likely to "be alone in life" because they can count on fewer "vital convoys." Those who have historically lost out on free interaction and capitalist competition continue to do so, and are in fact more vulnerable and face greater risks. This generates exclusion processes that become manifest in new realities related to the field of work: a new kind of youth unemployment, as well as structural and long-term adult unemployment; low quality, unskilled work and very low-paid jobs not covered by collective agreement.

The impact is no less intense from the standpoint of social structures. The traditional industrial society had accustomed us to notably stable and predictable class divisions. We are currently witnessing a rapid transition from a classist, stratified order to a (disorganized) social reality with vast forms of inequality. In the past we had major add-ons and continuations, whereas today we see an increasingly fragmented patchwork of poverty, wealth, failure and success. There is increased individualism, with a proliferation of risks and questions that often lead those who can, to look for territorial or institutional spaces where they can feel secure with their "own kind," closing the doors to "others."

What kind of society is emerging? Firstly, there is a clear transition toward a much more complex and fragmented structure with greater levels of ethnic diversification, with major alterations to the age pyramid (with a subsequent increase of demographic dependence), and with a plurality of forms of family life. The entry of women into the workforce is ever rising, despite the clear discrimination that remains. However, although these changes are very positive in terms of returning full personal dignity to women, the truth is that roles at home have hardly changed as wom-

en continue to bear primary responsibility for care and reproduction. Tensions build due to women's double shifts, while separations and families where only the woman takes care of the children are on the rise. All of this results in new social instability and patterns of exclusion in which gender is the determining factor. Meanwhile, jobs that are socially essential continue to be undervalued. Such is the case of caregivers, who are viewed as carrying out a task of "family love" or having informal, low-paid jobs.

And what about public policies? What effect does all this have on educational policies? Public policies adopted in the middle of the 20th century throughout Europe fine-tuned the philosophy of the welfare state: redistributing interventionism in exchange for free market. The agreement, which was more or less explicit, has given rise to elements of conflict. On one hand, there is less consensus on regulations. On the other, policies have become less operational and are less capable of incorporating new demands and sensitivities. Welfare policies were built on the logic of response to demands that were presumed to be homogeneous and differentiated, and they were handled rigidly and bureaucratically. Today, for the reasons expressed above, demands are increasingly heterogeneous and multifaceted in appearance, and they can only be tackled from the political logic of new citizenship in a flexible, de-bureaucratized manner.

Of course, fragmentation of society, the impact of the post-industrial economy on employment and the insufficient inclusivity in classic welfare policies do not work in isolation, but are interrelated and often reinforce each other. Indeed, the dynamics of social exclusion are propagated by these relationships. Certain immigrant groups, for instance, occupy the most marginal positions in the ethnic employment division and face obstacles in accessing social protection systems: they are more likely to suffer academic failure and are highly vulnerable to discrimination in the real-estate market.

Moreover, dependent and elderly sectors of the population are often excluded from social services and have very low coverage rates. Meanwhile, communities living in the segregated outskirts of cities are more vulnerable to long-term unemployment, precarious labor market integration and academic failure. In short, reality shows the multifaceted and multidimensional nature of exclusion and the erosion of a concept of citizenship that has become obsolete.

We could say that because there is no collective sense of a shared project from a social point of view, and with neoconservative positions insisting that we make the most of existing opportunities and that inequality has no social basis but depends on each person's efforts, the idea given to families is "every man for himself."

In this context, education appears to guarantee better individual opportunities, thus reinforcing the segmentation and inequitable potential that education usually has. Educational policies increase their visibility and social pressure on educational agents, becoming a central attribute in the individual and collective ability to face the dynamics of change in the production, social and family spheres. But can schools and professional collectives directly linked to education itineraries take on the growing demands from society? Can they do so alone? These questions have been around for some time, and they have been either directly or indirectly posed in many of the considerations and expressions of unease concerning our educational environment.

Education has spread its influence further than ever before, but this means we must follow a path towards what is now being called the knowledge society, in which all aspects of life and social activities contain formative components and generate knowledge. One of the consequences of this is the idea that any aspect of life can be learned through formal training and by overcoming former incompetence. Moreover, when personal or social weaknesses are ultimately linked to a

real or potential training activity, everything ends up being the "fault" of education, which is turned into a huge container for collecting everything that doesn't seem to work, particularly when the socialization agents who had accompanied it are missing or have become vulnerable.

When discussing education and governance, we must defend the view of education as a public service. In other words, we must try to establish a better link between education (and not only schools) and the services and policies that attempt to enhance citizens' living conditions, while strengthening their active role in the democratic and participatory renovation of traditional welfare policies. Therefore, educational tasks should establish more networks, foster greater collaboration between professionals from different fields, encourage citizen involvement in education "from the cradle to the grave," and make a collective effort to resolve integral problems and demand integral solutions.

We all educate, and we do so more with our "noise" (our attitude, our actions) than with our words. In a volume dedicated to the experience of "educating cities," we must defend perspectives that look for the involvement of citizens in the "issue of education," going beyond the educational community *per se*, and encouraging nuclear debates that link education with society, education with citizens. In this context, we should reflect on the definition of citizen participation and particularly on the elements required to make a practical reconstruction of the democratic ideal based on promoting participation and education.

4. Participation, Education, City

According to a number of writers including Bauman, Sennett and Castel, the changes mentioned above generate dissociation and disaffiliation processes that affect a large proportion of the population and groups in advanced societies. The very foundations of the experience of living in a community, de-

defined as a group of people who are “closely interwoven” (Bauman) through many years of shared backgrounds and even longer expectations of frequent and significant interaction, are thrown into crisis. Therefore, it is not surprising that the community can be represented as a “threat,” a phenomenon that results in a loss of authenticity or a danger to individuality itself. However, we know that there are individuals who suffer from isolation and long for a community, a longing that varies according to the person’s background and position in the social structure.

If we look closer at the relationship between education and participation in the context of individualization and community, we realize that, for quite some time, government structures in representative democracies have lacked mechanisms that enable governments to know and consider the interests and preferences of citizens beyond election dates. Feelings of dissatisfaction, impotence and frustration arising from the passiveness and inefficiency of political leaders distance citizens from conventional political participation channels (elections, political parties, pressure groups) and lead them to search for new forms of expression that are usually grouped under the common denomination of “social movements.”

This situation highlights the need to channel citizens’ will to participate through new mechanisms that may enable traditional democracy—representative democracy—to narrow the distance between citizenry and public affairs. It is a matter of recovering politics as a *res publica*, or public matter, making the citizen jointly responsible for the decisions made in his or her environment, without restricting participation to voting for political representatives. Meanwhile, the participation and involvement of policy receivers in their very design, execution and assessment becomes a necessity, rather than an option.

Since the second half of the 1990s, many studies have been made on the virtues (and

limitations) of citizen participation. Experiences, books, articles, training courses and new professions have turned it into one of the most popular areas of social sciences and political strategy.

It appears a consensus has been reached regarding the contextualization of current demands for citizen participation at a time when certain aspects of governability that drive traditional governments (representative democracy) are in crisis. Meanwhile, a new context is emerging that makes it necessary to move towards new forms of conflict management that are more horizontal and complex. The dynamics of governance presented above highlight the need for citizens to become involved in decision-making processes and to be invited to manage and respond to collective challenges. Participation thus refers to any type of activity that aims to more or less directly influence political decision-making.

Participation is also essential in terms of structuring relationships and building identities. Participation fosters connections and a sense of belonging. One of the problems of current market developments and modern forms of social organization is that individual autonomy can often turn into isolation and un-supportive individualization. In effect, there are many “unheard voices” that need to be taken into account. It is therefore necessary to create new ways of understanding politics and social coexistence, enabling processes of collective identity through dialogue, civic education and a balance between individual interests, private property and the recognition of wider reciprocal links. This requires stimulating values of citizenship. Encouraging citizen participation, in its different forms, may be a key factor in achieving progress.

All of this leads us to reconsider the relationship between public and private. We should avoid falling into the trap of confusing “public” with what belongs to the scope of “public powers.” The challenge is to promote public areas in our communities and encour-

age their everyday use as places for coexistence and recognition, without heightening the role of governments. From this standpoint, the aim would be to achieve greater shared collective responsibility in addressing the problems that arise from social coexistence. Thus, “reinventing” politics requires knowing how to create new forms of collective action and institutional management that can address and demonstrate the value of educational, cultural, human and relational wealth, yielding stronger responsibilities and commitments aimed at tackling collective problems. In this context, participation becomes a central issue as a mechanism for collective responsibility and involvement, an instrument that invites all members of a community to become citizens.

If we accept that democracy requires a greater level of public participation in the current stage of development of our local communities, we should also think about the role played by community development and education in a broad sense. In other words, if we see public space as a place for reestablishing ties between people, groups, activities and the environment by means of knowledge and recognition, an awareness of interaction and the values that enable cohabitation from a viewpoint of progress and improvement for all, then the participatory reformulation of representative democracy, particularly on a local level, should take on a leading role. Community development experiences are key factors in this context.

Without wishing to simplify, the various forms of citizen participation can be arranged under two major headings: “*Participation Model*” and “*Broader Participation Model*.” Table 1 provides a summary of the differences between the two.

Participation should obviously be encouraged while underlining a clear connection with the territory from a viewpoint of proximity and be open to the special needs and features of that territory. All participatory processes must comply with two conditions. Firstly, they

must be based on *significance* criteria: participating agents must understand and share the meaning of their participation. Secondly, they must not ignore *utility* reasons: participating agents must know and be guaranteed the use of their collective involvement. To put it more simply, exercising transversality, participation and shared responsibility is not merely a sentimental or ideological matter, it is also a practical instrument for visualizing, discussing and balancing a series of individual, and often conflicting, interests. This explains why values of *proximity* and *transparency* should become the basic principles of any participatory process.

Table 1. Different Conceptions of Participation

<i>Participation Model</i>	<i>Broader Participation Model</i>
Participation: talking and deciding (meeting – moment)	Participation: doing and transforming (everyday – practice)
Deliberating and reaching a consensus	Commitments made
Consultative instrument	Binding instrument
Option	Necessity
Short term (ad hoc)	Medium and long term
Moment	Process
Momentary and isolated (“neutral”)	In the context of an ideological and political project
As a medium	As a purpose in itself
Sacrifice	Social opportunity, a chance to socialize, etc.

Source: The author in accordance with DIBA-IGOP (2006): *Els Projectes Educatius de Ciutat: Anàlisi de l'experiència acumulada i nova proposta metodològica*. Regional Government of Barcelona, Col. *Guies Metodològiques* 7, p. 18.

In recent times, new social dynamics have opened up new perspectives of education

in Europe. Generally speaking, the goal has been transferred from “teaching in the strict sense” to “education in the broad sense.” Clearly, such a change in perspective entails more than just a change in name (for instance, referring to institutional or government areas “for education” rather than “for teaching”). In this respect, reference can be made to the recent proliferation of ongoing training programs or the spectacular rise in the number of students registered in master’s, postgraduate and specialization programs. It is also worth mentioning the increasingly necessary adaptation of programs and courses in the field of what is generically referred to as “adult education.” In short, the educational process is expanding *longitudinally*: it is becoming increasingly important to undertake lifelong learning.

However, we must not forget the importance of broadening one’s outlook in a *transversal sense*. In general terms, education is seen as something that goes beyond the school, beyond what is produced in a formal, regulated teaching-learning context with pedagogical and curricular objectives designed with a view to obtaining an officially recognized diploma. To summarize, the current framework presents areas of learning (i.e., contents, skills, values) that equip people with the tools and skills required to understand and place themselves in the world they live in.

In the move from teaching to education, political and academic agendas agree on the advisability of including in the educational debate the actors who somehow generate *education*. If education is not only a matter of school teaching, then it is necessary to orchestrate tools for visualizing and harmonizing the role played by all imaginable *education agents*, including public spaces. It is in this context that the experience of “Educating Cities,” created in 1990 in Barcelona, is particularly significant. As expressed in its Charter:

The city will be educating when it acknowledges, exercises and develops not only

its traditional functions (economic, social, political and as a purveyor of services) but also an educating function, in the sense that its sights are squarely on the education, promotion and development of all its inhabitants, beginning with children and youth. (Charter of Educating Cities, 1990)

By working on and studying the concepts of proximity and education linked to a third key factor—participation (see previous section)—a new approach appears that exceeds in both space and time the meaning of “educational.” Contributions made to the debate on the Educating City are a clear example of this new paradigm.

Table 2 summarizes the main changes to the conception of education brought about by this paradigm.

Table 2. Changes in the Conception of Education

Traditional Conception: Education	New Conception: Educations
Education is school (space)	“Educations,” because everything educates (spaces)
Education of children and youth (defined time)	Lifelong learning (time not defined)
Distance	Proximity
Sector-based	Transversality
Top-down model	Participation
Centralization	Territorialization

Source: The author in accordance with DIBA-IGOP, (2006): *Els Projectes Educatius de Ciutat: Anàlisi de l'experiència acumulada i nova proposta metodològica*. Regional Government of Barcelona, Col. Guies Metodològiques 7, p. 16.

These transformations call into question the relevance of the traditional classification of forms of education (formal, nonformal and

informal education). For example, the last update of the Charter (November 2004) reflects the scope of the new conception:

The city's constant goal will be to learn, exchange, share and thus enrich the lives of its inhabitants. The educating city must undertake and develop this function while undertaking its traditional functions (economic, social, political and as a purveyor of services) with its sights squarely on the education, promotion and development of all its inhabitants. The educating city will give priority to children and youth, but with a commitment to including persons of all ages in lifelong learning.

The new Charter and contributions made in the academic and political spheres in recent years appear to redefine the definition of education in the 21st century in the framework of the city and public space. The depth of these redefinitions could be summarized using the following criteria: *space*, *time*, *social context* and *everyday life*. This exercise is expressed in the following table:

Table 3. The New Areas of Education

Criteria	Education Foundations (Models)
Space	City (urbs)
Time	Continuous education (lifelong)
Social context	City (<i>civitas</i>), social relationships, public space
Everyday life	Education as a constant and everyday process

Source: Prepared by the author.

To conclude, the city and public spaces are not merely educational actors and territories. Emphasis falls on individual citizens and their process of educational attainment and reception. We educate ourselves in our role as citizens, taking part in collective commitments, being responsible for what occurs beyond our private sphere. This is the concluding message of a text that has attempted to define and relate views on these times of change, describe new types of participation and governance, and explore the role played by education from a vital and transversal conception of its content and impact.

Lifelong Education: A Political Options

Philippe Meirieu interviewed by Joan Manuel del Pozo

Philippe Meirieu (Alès, France, 1949) is currently a university lecturer in Education Sciences, after an extensive career in primary and secondary school education. Professionally he has served as head teacher of an experimental school, Editor in Chief of *Cahiers pédagogiques*, Head of the National Institute for Education Research (INRP) and of the Lyon Institute for the Training of University Lecturers.

He currently directs the journal *Pédagogies* and is educational Head of CAP CANAL, an educational channel. He has published some thirty works including: *L'école, mode d'emploi – des "méthodes actives" à la pédagogie* (ESF éditeur, Paris, 1985, 16^e édition, 2005), *Apprendre ...oui, mais comment* (ESF éditeur, Paris, 1987, 19^e édition, 2004), *Le choix d'éduquer – Ethique et pédagogie* (ESF éditeur, Paris, 1996, 5^e édition, 2006), *Frankenstein pédagogue* (ESF éditeur, 1996, 5^e édition, 2006), *Faire l'école, faire la classe* (Paris, ESF, 2004), *Lettre à un jeune professeur* (ESF – France Inter, 2005), *Pédagogie: le devoir de résister* (ESF éditeur, 2007). In October 2007 he published his latest book: *Une autre télévision est possible* (Chronique sociale, 2007).

Lifelong Education: A Political Option

“Nobody educates anybody, we all educate each other, ‘mediated’ by the world.”
(Paulo Freire).

Introductory note

Lifelong education of citizens has been, and still is, one of the most fundamental concerns of the International Association of Educating Cities. Nowadays, knowledge acquired for any sort of work seems to require constant updating. However, it is also true that the apparently easy, ubiquitous access to sources of information cloaks, and at times even prevents, access to knowledge. In reality, we need to reassess the challenges of lifelong education within the current context and, particularly, more clearly identify the role that Educating Cities could play therein.

We have asked Philippe Meirieu and Joan Manuel Del Pozo to share their ideas on these questions.

(Pilar Figueras, Secretary General of IAEC)

Philippe Meirieu:

In the first place, I believe we should clarify the semantic ambiguity surrounding the term *lifelong education*. In effect, it may be used to refer to very different realities that are linked, or not, to professional development, and, above all, it should not be reduced to referring merely to the latter. Moreover I find myself questioning just how opportune or not it is to use the term *education* when we speak of adults, within the context of the current ideological debate. Philosophers, such as Hannah Arendt, consider that what characterises the adult is that he or she can continue to learn, but can no longer be educated.

In her view, education consists in determining what another person is to learn, as specifically occurs in childhood. Hannah Arendt however goes beyond this, and emphasises the fact that if a State attempts to educate it is either a totalitarian state, or is bordering on totalitarianism. According to Hannah Arendt, the passage to adulthood occurs precisely when the subject is able to decide what he/she should learn. Thus when she states that adult education and democracy are incompatible, she refers to a political problem of no slight importance... Which is why I proposed to the UNESCO Committee on which I served, the use of the notion of *continuous* or *lifelong learning*, as I believe it underscores the fact that under no circumstance are we saying that we decide what an adult should learn. Indeed, quite the contrary, we are convinced that an individual's very involvement in the choice of what he/she wishes to learn or be trained in, helps shape him/her as an adult and, at the same time, that involvement acknowledges and promotes the individual's status as a citizen.

Joan Manuel del Pozo:

It is true that whatever the term used to associate the responsibility of the powers that be regarding what an individual should learn, it should never be in the vein of *lifelong education-training* of an authoritarian ilk. Nonetheless, in the Castilian and Catalan languages, for instance, the word *education* (“educación/educació”) is not necessarily laden with authoritarian connotations. The word *training* (“formación/formació”) is acceptable, since it is fully compatible with respecting an individual's autonomy.

On the other hand the term *learning/apprenticeship* (“aprendizaje/aprententaje”) is of a

markedly instrumentalist nature, and thus is directly associated with vocational training or professional development.

P. M.

In Hannah Arendt's analysis, upheld today by the majority of theoreticians in democracy, she defines a totalitarian regime as one which mistakes the role of the individual. That is, a regime which acts as if children were adults and adults children. According to Hannah Arendt, one must respect the essential boundary between the time in which the child, not yet capable of choosing for itself, needs to be educated by those who decide, who know "what is good for" him or her, and when the adult, as a citizen, must be acknowledged both as a stakeholder in his/her own destiny and as a player in the life of the City. Although the distinction proposed may be questioned from a pedagogical point of view—I personally believe that pedagogy should enable the individual for this essential transition—, I believe it better to avoid the risk of appearing to conceive continuous training as the indoctrination of our minors. In the current debate in France—which has seen a significant growth in authoritarian thinking—Hannah Arendt's theory is widely used to discredit any kind of teaching aimed at developing the child's autonomy in his/her own education. Her theories should not be further employed to discredit adult training.

J. M. P.

We speak of lifelong education in the liberal sense of the term, not as a state programmed system of education designed to control the citizen. It means education as a spur to autonomy. Thus I believe the terms *education* or *training* can be used indistinctly.

P. M.

One must constantly bear in mind the fact that democracy, according to Claude Lefort, is a regime in which the seat of power is left vacant. It is a space which nobody is empowered to occupy: it is the collective in discussion that exercises power, a power which no one person may attempt to embody. Nev-

ertheless, it is not true that democracy remains firmly in place. One of the problems of the 21st century is that the theocracies, in the geopolitical sense of the word, wield tremendous power all over the planet. And that in those states considered democratic, theocratic nostalgia remains likewise powerful. It is a natural temptation to those pressed to decide on their future; people who, at the end of the day, would rather others decided for them. The seat of power, which should remain vacant, is still greatly coveted, and thus we must remain constantly vigilant ... even of ourselves. So we constantly need to reaffirm that to us continuous training is essentially something seen from a democratic point of view. It is the "user"—a word most inappropriately coined in this context—that must decide, and not any kind of priesthood or technostructure.

J. M. P.

Within that context, what do we understand today to be "pertinent knowledge" in the area of continuous training?

P. M.

Today there is nobody that doubts lifelong education is an unavoidable necessity. They say that any kind of work requires the pertinent knowledge base to be constantly refreshed. But is that really true? It is possible that our society may still continue to exist, and even develop, with part of the population occupied in subordinate forms of work, without any need to understand the underlying mechanisms and challenges. And that is precisely why I believe the need for continuous training does not answer to economic necessity but to democratic ambition ... If we examine the contradictory forecasts made by economists, we cannot exclude the possibility that the economies of the western countries may continue to develop, without encountering any major difficulties, even if we were to keep 15-20% of the population at a very low level of qualification and working at menial tasks. Whatever some may say, our western economies still require the performance of many tasks which can be carried

out without any real culture, qualification or training ... or for which the training would cost more than the yield obtained. Given the above then, to state that any kind of work requires the constant refreshment of the knowledge base would obviously be to opt for a society in which each and every individual, in his/her work, would benefit from collective evolution and would acquire the means by which to understand and master the world. Such would be a political option, a choice therefore which would, unsurprisingly, meet certain resistance.

If in reality our societies truly required the general cultural, intellectual and conceptual level of the citizen to be raised, and if our economies were unable to survive without that, the kind of television we see in the western world would be very different to what it is. On the other hand, our school systems would stop farming out the children with greatest difficulties to vocational training programmes, we would not systematically reduce them to courses purely aimed at the so called "manual" trades. It is not certain that, in the current liberal configuration, our societies require us to maintain the distinction between those that work without understanding and those who understand but do not "work," in the sense of not "working" in production, that is, not getting their hands dirty with manual work, not even in their own personal lives. There is nothing to guarantee that our economies will require the population as a whole to have achieved a high level of training. For example, in France we have established a professional baccalaureate, attended by a third of all the country's youth. And everybody considers it normal for these young people not to be taught philosophy. That is to say, normal that a third of all French baccalaureate students, merely because they are to work at a so-called manual trade, are deprived of the right to reflect on love, death, desire, justice, truth and all the other existential and political issues. There are those who believe that to be a blacksmith or mechanic one doesn't need to study philosophy. Consequently I feel convinced that the develop-

ment of continuous training, in the strictest sense of the term, is not something which is inevitable: true continuous training is a political option, a societal option ... We don't have to sit with our arms crossed waiting. We must take up the battle cry.

J. M. P.

I believe lifelong education to be a right.

P. M.

Yes, in effect, I fully share your view. To speak of "a right" means to leave the paradigm of supply to one side and consider it insufficient to offer no more than training that will guarantee things continue to work. It could even be said that a multiplicity of supply is not mechanically democratising. This is what Bourdieu indicated back in the 1960's, with regard to developing the supply of culture. He underscored the fact that multiplying the number of options available did not necessarily mean that people would buy more theatre tickets or go to museums more. What occurs is that it is the *same individuals* who buy *more tickets*. As the amount of culture supplied increases, so do the inequalities. A parallel is to be drawn with training. In any country today the consumption of continuous training is directly proportional to the level of initial training. The higher the level of initial training received, the greater the level of access to continuous training. And the opposite is also true, the less initial training people receive, the less they will benefit from continuous training. The main difficulty is in reversing this trend and at least attempting to ensure that a lower level of initial training does not prove a handicap when it comes to benefitting from all continuous training has to offer. The drama and resentment that some may feel with regard to our ideas on continuous training, derives precisely from this paradox: it represents a second chance only for those who have already benefited from the first chance of going to school, ... and is thus not in the least democratic. Rather than levelling the differences, our continuous training policies would actually seem to tend to accentuate them.

J. M. P.

And thus the fundamental role of Educating Cities: to press forwards with action that will allow us to counteract this tendency, so that people can benefit from a higher level of training. To achieve this we need to crosslink policies and transversally articulate the different areas and departments involved in regulating city life.

P. M.

Yes, that is obviously essential. We need to be able to create collective components which have no more than compartments. To such ends Bertrand Schwartz, founder and director of the National Institute of Adult Training in Nancy, proposed that when training, the different levels of responsibility should be, at least partially, mixed. He established a method based on the analysis of the dysfunctions. The joint effort made to discern the dysfunctions, and the difficulties that emerge along the way, establish a dynamic in which each individual commits to seek an understanding of the problem, engages in an exchange with others and discovers new horizons, new needs and a new wish list for training. Schwartz pointed out that when a dysfunction appears, it represents an opportunity, a way to make people reflect on how they can jointly set out to resolve the problem, thus harnessing and developing the creativity of all. It is a good example of how collective, plural, transverse reflection can benefit the development of training.

Nevertheless, continuous training is not limited merely to professional development. I personally attach great importance to training people in parenting. The northern European countries have started to look at such issues, but in my opinion they focus too strongly on psychology and psychotherapy. One must not forget that the problems parents currently face are compounded by a want of pedagogical reflection on the new issues that have emerged. Thus we see parents with problems because their children are addicted to video games. They are not necessarily "sick," do

not require treatment. They are people with whom one needs to reflect on the kind of alternative that could be offered, and on how such alternatives should be suggested to the teenager in question. When society refers all educational problems to the health or medical services, it means that it has, in reality, renounced education.

Nobody can deny the great difficulties many parents face today and instead of stigmatising them or treating them like people who have shirked their parental duties, instead of systematically treating the children with drugs or placing them on behavioural reconditioning programmes (merely to ensure they stay calm), it would be far better to establish real training spaces. Such spaces should be open, should not assign blame, in order to help the parents tackle the problems they face with their children and for which there is no "off the peg" solution available, quite simply because when they were young such problems did not exist and thus they are unable to refer to the educational heritage they received from their own parents.

J. M. P.

The Charter of Educating Cities refers to the training of fathers and mothers. It is essential, both for the individual and the family. One can educate for complexity, but must avoid education based on automatic solutions.

P. M.

Consequently parental training should always mobilise professionals of different kinds, with different areas of knowledge. Such training should tackle problems of a psychological nature as well as others like access to written information, in which we know that the family environment plays a decisive role. Of course, it is evident that one must work with the parents on citizen training, the construction of norms, the identification of the legitimate authorities, etc..

J. M. P.

Even the politicians have to be trainers. They should put forward continuous training

programmes. The increasing complexity of knowledge would seem to require continuous training not to treat any single field of knowledge in isolation.

P. M.

That is absolutely essential. The danger we face in our societies is that we tend to present the citizen with technical decisions which highly specialised experts have told us are inevitable. To reintroduce complexity is to introduce freedom, to demonstrate that all is coherent and that it is possible to adopt different solutions, depending on one's orientation and priorities. Introducing complexity means opening the road to inventability, since the solution to any complex situation must be invented, and not deduced.

J. M. P.

Here one must condemn the resort of magic: *technical magic*. Technology is the magic of our age. It is mobilised to justify and cloak political ineptitude, ill political intent, authoritarianism or paternalism, that is, the different ways one may close oneself off to democratic dialogue. It is paradoxical. Normally one would assume technology to be the antithesis of magic. In principle, technology permits us to tackle our problems with rigour and excludes magic. But, in reality, technology offers itself as the solution, against which nobody has the right to protest. In philosophical terms, it is the *technoscience* of our times, that is, a science which invades the responsibilities and purposes of life, and which ceases to be science to become technology.

P. M.

That is why, with respect to what you have just brought up, my team and I have developed a training method that we call the *scenario method*. We start with the problem, be it of a family, professional or political nature, and work on the different components of the problem together with the stakeholders; we attempt to discover where we may have an influence and to understand what effects

acting one way or another may have; we try to discern all of the foreseeable options and construct all of the possible scenarios: we analyse all of the consequences we are able to foresee in the short-, mid- and long term. I have even used this technique with children's municipal councils, to attempt to make them understand that there are no magically imposed solutions, but rather a series of options and possibilities each with its own different consequences, and that these will depend on the different value options and views of the future chosen.

To me, one of the roles of continuous training is to demythologise the *allant-de-soi*, that is, all that is taken for granted; to demythologise the magic solutions and knee-jerk responses; to imagine other possible eventualities such as: What would happen if we were to act in a different way? If we were to take up other options? If we were to deposit the money somewhere else? or, What would happen if fate were not to take a hand in all of this? For example, when I am leading continuing education courses for teachers, I ask questions like: How much does it cost the school and state when children have to repeat a year at your school?; What would happen if we were to decide to take that money and use it for something other than paying for children repeating years? In today's society it is important for training to help people understand that other possible options for using public money do exist, that there are other forms of social organisation than those which we are offered, and that decisions are not imposed, quite the contrary to what occurs in a theocracy or technocracy ...

It is no mere coincidence that Harry Potter is front page news today; it is because we have all fallen under the spell of magic. Ours is a world in which we seek to resolve all problems with technical solutions, most likely developed by the intelligence of the few, but which in reality end up short-circuiting the ability of others to use their own intelligence. Thus technology, the all powerful, becomes the instrument of our individual

and collective regression to childhood, of the temptation to direct everything with the power of the word, or of our expression. We dream of a world in which collective discussion has disappeared, from which contradictions have been erased, in which tension has been suspended. A world in which each and every one of us can sit in the seat of God. However, such a world would represent the most terrible return to barbarism, for god's are always at each other's throats. Citizens, on the other hand, know they are not gods and that is why they can and, indeed, must discuss issues. Thus they need to denaturalise and de-technify problems to reveal the challenges and thus be able to choose. Continuous training is essential if we are to return man to the world of modernity, to return to freedom, responsibility and temporality.

J. M. P.

The problem with our civilisation is that it is a civilisation with means, the purpose of which is not known. Our civilisation is the first in the history of humanity to possess so many refined means at the service of such confused purpose. We have so many "*how to's*," but so little knowledge of *what they are really for*.

P. M.

Moreover, the confusion is so great that *means* are mistaken for the *ends*. After a certain point, as there is no clear purpose, all we are left with is the means. For example, it is not the purpose of a school to organise the children in classes, but a means, one which has proven itself effective and useful since, at some point in its history, it has helped the education system to progress substantially. Nonetheless, it is no more than a means. However, after a time people come to believe it to be the end purpose: they no longer think of the end purpose of the school—to learn and to learn together—and it is sufficient for them to ask themselves how to make the classes meet with the demands placed on them and their timetables ... The end purpose is forgotten as the means is totemised. To me, continuous training has the duty to question the means

for the sake of the end purpose. Thus we may open up new prospects, release ourselves from the influence of the organisation and of mere management. It gives us a key to the future, instead of remaining incarcerated in an infuriating reproduction of the past.

J. M. P.

I believe, then, that instead of merely teaching knowledge we should place the emphasis on developing a taste for knowledge, for learning and for the truth, a taste for exigency...

P. M.

That is true on all levels. Children have the right to perfection in the simplest of things since we should always demand of ourselves the highest level possible, regardless of how we are classified. The child has the right to be expected to be perfect in each and every act, as well as the right to be helped to achieve said perfection. When we do something apparently banal, it does not mean it has to be mediocre. It can even be perfection itself, of the most absolute purity. The Chinese calligrapher, whose writing achieves the utmost simplicity, also attains perfection, as does the cabinet maker, the engineer, the farmer or the surgeon... Any human act has access to perfection, and should always be performed with such an aim in mind... Unfortunately, our society tends to mistake perfection for the social status of a task, exigency for elitism.

This is an area in which continuous training has a fundamental role to play: to make people internalise the exactitude or exigency of any activity whatsoever—from cookery to artistic creation, from craft work to political action—to allow people to grow and commit themselves to a task which leads them to use their increasingly sophisticated knowledge, to set themselves challenges and then excel, to develop personally and thus to contribute more and more to the collective. If this is not all firmly embedded during childhood and throughout an individual's training then, with regard to knowledge, we will always find

ourselves in a utilitarian, “economic” (in the strictest sense of the term, as established by Adam Smith) relationship. That is, to expend the minimum effort possible to achieve the greatest possible number of useful effects. A true human being will only enter into such a relationship with an action if, beyond material and technical efficacy, something else takes place on a different plane, on a symbolic level.

P. F.

When a city’s educational conscience becomes more visible, what changes in collective life could one expect to see?

P. M.

City policy in the area of training has often-times consisted in opening up spaces of encounter, mobilisation and exchange. As far as I am concerned, my interest is strongly drawn to a movement that has been growing in France, in a somewhat marginal way, and is called *networks for the reciprocal exchange of knowledge*. It a movement inspired on the one hand by Paulo Freire or Iván Illich while, on the other, by local dynamics (the movement first emerged in Orly, just outside Paris). It permits the cities to weave a fabric of training networks between different individuals. With the “Tree of Knowledge” software, developed by the philosopher Michel Serres and colleagues, it is fairly easy to do nowadays. This software tool permits one to identify and exchange knowledge and skills between different people, without necessarily having to go through the institutional structure nor incur any sort of cost. Better yet, the cities may become instances that stimulate the exchange of knowhow, knowledge and skills in such a way that people of different cultures, sensibilities, trades and ages may come to know each other and reciprocally benefit in a serious, deep way, generating new solidarity through training. We must be able to connect those that have the skills and are available with those in need thereof. We must be capable of engendering encounters, however improbable they may seem, to promote inter-training. To contribute to develop-

ing training via citizen exchange is, without a doubt, one of the most important missions of Educating Cities.

J. M. P.

There are other notions I would like to introduce, such as the spirit of cooperation and solidarity, notions of highly significant value from a democratic point of view. They lead to the exclusion of paternalism and consist in seeking a situation of equality in order to learn and exchange. In this respect, workers offered additional training opportunities should never have to run the risk of losing their jobs. Training should guarantee their finding a new job, more fitting to the new skills they will have acquired.

P. M.

To permit people mobility within their economic and social space is, once again, one of the greatest challenges of continuous training. In effect, it is far too frequent that human society assigns definitive posts to individuals. In terms of inhuman society, they will incarcerate people in such posts. Training offers the possibility of escaping such incarceration, of avoiding the fate of one’s sociocultural legacy, of avoiding the individual being classified as a being radically incapable of thinking any other way or of becoming anything else because of his/her pertinence to one particular ethnic group. Contrary to the utopias of the 19th and 20th centuries, our modern societies must be societies of assumed mobility ... To me, a society that progresses is a society in which one’s position is not unavoidable, that is, a society in which individuals may project a future for themselves different to the situation in which they currently find themselves. No longer are they condemned to continue where they are.

This would then lead us to a banality: from this time forward we should change trade several times during the course of our lives. Nonetheless, this should not be considered as simply obeying the commands of the great enterprises that require more flexibil-

ity from their workforces. It may also be a right granted to the individual, to seek professional change when he/she wants change and believes him/herself capable of greater self-realisation in a different line of activity. When I was director of IUFM (University Institute for Teacher Training) in Lyon, I developed a device by which to make such change, for people from different trades who wanted to start teaching. The device has given excellent results; highly motivated people with a wealth of professional and personal experience that decide to go into teaching and thus bring supplementary dynamism to any school. Here then, a change of trade is a way of achieving self-realisation and of helping a public institution to better achieve its mission.

In fact, we should refuse to impose house arrest on anybody's professional identity. We should refuse to involve ourselves in the deadly logic of a society that classifies, selects and pigeonholes individuals, labelling them with indelible ink. We tell them that it is possible to make something else of yourself and act differently. Beyond the mere technical issues of work management, a progressive society is one in which the person, as a whole, may develop their own life project, and not remain condemned to reproduce the project others have determined for them. And we must help individuals to achieve this, provide them with the means they require to make their project a reality. Politically speaking, this lies at the heart of the dynamics of democracy.

J. M. P.

I fully agree. But moreover, the concept of citizenship could be made complete with this political aspect. That is, the individual does not only have the right to their own autonomous individual project, but also the right and duty to participate freely in collective projects. This is yet another side of our society which is still somewhat lacking. We are all familiar with the criticism that for so

long has fallen on our western democracies; the want of a spirit of participation. Something to which many citizens offer a rather singular response: they say they do not feel themselves competent to participate in the public arena. Together with the usual discourse on politicians ("politicians are corrupt, they are too distant from the people ..."), there is part of this problem which directly affects continuous training: citizens declare their failure to understand politics and their inability to participate in the public debate. This should not be forgotten as it contains a hidden demand for people to come to feel themselves socially competent. In effect, if we speak to these people we discover they have great interest and indeed raise the fundamental issues. And if, as politicians, we do not tackle the question of these representations for "citizen competence," the people will not go out and vote. Thus the problem is to know how to develop a training programme which will permit people to commit themselves to the collective in a lucid way.

P. F.

But here we face a fundamental deficiency: we find ourselves wanting in political pedagogy. We would seem to be incapable of explaining to the citizen what is being done, and what is going to be done. It is the responsibility of the politician to explain to the citizen why certain policies are adopted or certain actions taken. This is a basic issue for Educating Cities.

J. M. P.

We need a continuous training programme that will allow the politicians to explain to people just what their daily work consists of. In some cases this is done, but not to the extent that it should be. It is necessary if people are to understand the collective process, to feel motivated to participate, to do far more. But to achieve this, politicians must come closer to the citizens, in order to explain the choices to be made.

P. M.

Faith must be placed in people's intelligence. Some years ago I took part in a series of TV broadcasts on how taxes were used. I compared the cost of building a school to, for example, the cost of building one kilometre of motorway. In the same vein, I explained the cost of an educator, and that of a prisoner. A prisoner costs 1.5 times more than the salary of an educator. We need to learn to talk about such technical issues as taxes and the use of public moneys in a lively, involving way, spelling out what room there is for manoeuvre. We need to modernise such questions of finance, to escape from this demobilising opacity, so that the citizen understands just what things cost, the social costs in the mid- and long term. In effect, one of the significant problems is that the politicians never talk about the social costs, the costs with the consequences deriving from their choice. Victor Hugo said: "When we open a school, we close a prison."

At present in France we massively suppress all aid to associations (especially those dealing with juvenile delinquents), and instead invest the money in the building of closed educational centres (prisons for teenagers). It's an option, but one that brings serious problems along with it.

J. M. P.

Is there a space for progressive humanist education? Greek philosophy associates humanism and elitism: of truly cultivated men there cannot be many... Many people today still believe that if you speak properly then you are cultivated and elitist. If we say, for example, that our students should speak properly, there are those who would say that ours is a humanist and elitist programme. To me, one of the great purposes of life is to know, recognise and enjoy the beauty which many, unfortunately, have been unable to access. This is something that I believe should be incorporated into continuous training: we should all have a better knowledge of the dif-

ferent forms of artistic expression, and use them in our lives.

P. M.

I do not agree at all with the idea that cultural exigency is intrinsically elitist. It is a long held belief that if culture is widely disseminated and democratised, it will become diluted, mediocre. As if a few of the chosen could guarantee the goodness of paradise! As if by sharing it, the knowledge were to lose its qualities! On the contrary, knowledge has an extraordinary quality: the more it is shared, the better it is possessed and the better command one has over that which is given. The more it is shared, the more exacting the knowledge will become...

In particular, the exigencies related to language, to the exactness, the precision and the beauty of expression is a constituent, constructive demand of the human condition. I have always focussed my pedagogical work on exigency; I have always asked myself how to be exacting and how to convey it in such a way that another will adopt it and so progress ... I am very sensitive to the way humanism has offered us this principle of perfectibility which permits us to excel. If I battle in the schools, it is for the principle of the perfectibility of both what we do, and of ourselves. Through our work we contribute to our own perfectibility, and that of humanity as a whole.

I often say that culture is what brings together the inner self and that which is universal or, rather more modestly, "universalisable"... Greco-Roman mythology speaks to me of things that are infinitely personal and intimate—my relationship to life and death, my relationship with others, my fear of being devoured by them and, in turn, my desire to devour them—things which Hesiod or Ovid manage to give form to with a linguistic and symbolic beauty which is capable of reaching out to us all. All culture—Western and African, Oriental and American Indian, but also

scientific and academic literary culture—can help us build ourselves and discover that humanity which makes us deeply supportive of others.

J. M. P.

We are symbolic creatures. The individual constructs him/herself via symbols.

P. F.

And, from that point of view, we should also analyse the role the Association of Educating Cities is to play in the future. I hope we will continue travelling that road together.

3

Educating Cities: 20 years

Educating Cities. International Congresses

Eulàlia Bosch and the IAEC Secretariat

The 1st International Congress of Educating Cities took place in Barcelona in November 1990. An assemblage of 63 cities from 21 countries around the world discussed the importance of education for good governance of urban life. The first international meeting was driven by the steadfast resolve of Barcelona's mayor, Pasqual Maragall, to create public awareness about the inherent educational capacity of contemporary cities.

The presentations made at the 1st Congress highlighted some aspects of the urban experience that, being so linked to everyday life, often go unnoticed, not only by many local government representatives but also by many professionals in the educational sector. The debate on the city as a breeding ground for education, which emerged from the presentations of Saskia Sassen, Fiorenzo Alfieri and Roland Castro, was a fine example of the change of focus towards which this new educational forum was aiming. In the words of Saskia Sassen:

"To speak of the city as landscape or stage is to speak about the economic, political and cultural processes that constitute the city and assume distinct visual forms. The central business district dominated by corporate office buildings, the spaces for organized culture with their theaters and museums, the neighborhoods where the working class lives. These visual forms declare themselves to us; they tell a fairly straightforward story. But if we are going to pursue the theme of the conference—the city as it educates us—then more than mere description of visual forms is called for. Then we need to uncover what the city tells us about the broader narrative contained in its landscape, in its diverse built spaces. [...] The different urban spaces we see

as disconnected are in fact part of a common dynamic, one that is increasingly difficult to see and hence to recover at the level of the politico-cultural processes through which the city educates us." (pp. 56 & 72, *1st International Congress of Educating Cities. Final Papers*; Barcelona, Spain; November 1990)

Public urban space was presented as a place of memory, a meeting point and a platform for urban transformation. The complexity of human relations implied in this multifaceted concept of the contemporary city served to underline the need for the participation of children and young people in general, which at that time were social groups with little say in public matters.

Thus, the message put forth at that first international meeting was that local governments should strongly encourage the identification and recognition of other actors and settings as educational agents, in addition to families and schools. This meant opening the door for all citizens to participate, while inviting educators to view the city as a huge center of resources at their disposal.

The 1st Congress ended with the approval of the initial Educating Cities Charter, which defined the principles and values that the participating cities undertook to promote in their political activities. The *Educating Cities International Documents Databank* was created to provide a permanent link between the cities. It is managed by the City of Barcelona.

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The cities attending the 1st Congress expressed willingness to develop the contents of the

Educating Cities Charter and agreed to meet two years later in Gothenburg. Additionally, the Permanent Inter-Congress Committee was formed, consisting of the following cities: Barcelona, Berlin, Birmingham, Geneva, Gothenburg, Montpellier, Rotterdam and Turin. The primary function of the committee is to decide the location and dates of the following congresses, collaborate with the host city and investigate the possibility of creating an organization that promotes communication between cities and encourages actions of solidarity in accordance with the principles of the Educating Cities Charter.

From 1990-1992, the Permanent Committee was active in designing the content for the Gothenburg Congress; the Barcelona Secretariat collaborated during those two years of preparation, providing criteria and experience. Meanwhile, the Secretariat worked with cities that had taken part in the first Congress as well as others, in order to publicize the Charter, supply material for the Database and get new cities to join the movement.

The committee was operational until 1994, when the International Association of Educating Cities was created.

From November 25 to 27, 1992, some 900 participants from 130 cities and 43 different countries met in Gothenburg for the 2nd International Congress. From day one, the Congress endorsed the Charter's ideas and opted for a central theme that called for education beyond traditional education centers: *Lifelong Learning in the Educating Cities*. The purpose of that theme was to extend the education of children and young people to become lifelong training. Like the previous edition, the Congress program included the framework papers as well as the presentation of experiences that could potentially serve as points of reference for participating cities; a total of 75 experiences were presented. One noteworthy aspect of the Congress was the involvement of the city's different agents in organizing the event.

Among those invited to speak at the Congress was Paulo Freire, who talked about the importance of infusing justice and equal opportunity into the policies of a city at the service of its people:

"It is important to state that it is not enough to recognize the city as educating, independently from our wishes or desire. The city becomes educating from the need to educate, to learn, to teach, to know, to create, to imagine, and all of us, women and men alike, infuse its fields, its mountains, its valleys, its rivers; infuse its streets, its squares, its fountains, its homes and its buildings, leaving the footprint of a given time, the style and taste of a certain epoch. The city is culture, and creativity, not only because of what we do in it and with it, or what we create in it and with it. It is also culture because of the proper aesthetic aspect or the mere horror we give it. The city is us and we are the city. But we must not forget that what we are contains something of what was. Something coming to us through the historical continuity we cannot escape—yet upon which we can work—and through the cultural traits we inherited.

While educating, the city is also educated. Much of its task as an educator is connected to our political stand and, obviously, to how we exercise power in the city and the dream and utopia that permeate our politics in the service of what and whom we render it—the politics of public expenditure, cultural and educational politics, the politics of health, transport and leisure. The very politics about how to stress one part of the city's memory or another, through the mere existence of which, the city exercises its educational role. Even in this, our political decisions can interfere....

Since there is no education without education policies that establish priorities, aims, contents, means, and infuse dreams and utopias, I don't think it would harm anyone in this meeting to dream a little. Let us be a little adventurous and risk thinking about certain concrete values that might be incorporated

into our educational desires and those of the educating cities as we head toward the end of a century, and the end of a millennium.

One of these dreams to struggle for—a possible dream, but one where the concrete realization demands coherency, courage, tenacity, a sense of justice and the strength to fight, from all those who give themselves to it—is the dream for a less ugly world, where the inequality diminishes and where discrimination based on race, sex and class are a matter of shame and not of proud affirmation or constant, purely hollow regrets.

This is essentially a dream, without the realization of which the democracy we talk so much about, especially today, is a farce.

What kind of democracy is it that finds climatic explanations or reasons of genetic incompetence for the sufferings of millions of starving and rejected, forbidden to read the word and badly reading their world.

Another fundamental dream, which we should incorporate in the teaching of the educating cities, is the one about the right we have in a true democracy to be different and, by extension, the right to be respected in those differences." (pp. 18-19, Farrington, Freire, Revans, Sapp: *Four of the main speakers at the 2nd International Congress of Educating Cities*; Gothenburg, Sweden; November 1992)

For many of the participants, it was clear that the concept of *Educating City* was in itself becoming an instrument for better understanding the urban phenomenon, without any exclusion, and of its mechanisms for management and reproduction.

In this respect, the message delivered by Marta Mata, Councilor of Education for the City of Barcelona, was fundamental (transcribed below).

"The organisers of the Second International Congress of Educating Cities asked the Bar-

celona delegation for a contribution on the common objectives of all those cities, in the hope of clarifying the nature of the organisation jointly created two years ago at the First Congress of Barcelona, *Educating City*, a concept which is growing strongly and rapidly.

Where are we heading? What are we looking for? What is our objective? The delegates at Gothenburg formulated the question jointly: what are our common objectives? The concept of *Educating City* is not an abstract idea but the concrete expression of *Educating Cities* grouping together, of the objectives common to all the *Educating cities* which assembled for the first time in Barcelona, those which met in Göteborg, those which made the firm and public commitment of becoming *Educating Cities*, those which we will be meeting in two years' time at the Third Congress and all those which will become *Educating Cities* over the years.

We should ask ourselves right from the beginning what are the common objectives of the *Educating Cities* because it is these objectives only that *Educating Cities* should have in common. The cities which have gathered with the intention of exchanging experiences on the long road of education differ from each other, and it could even be said that they must differ greatly precisely because they have the extensive and complex common objective of becoming *Educating Cities*.

In the same way as the particular character and personality of each different teacher responsible for the education of pupils is a very forceful and essential factor in education—which is always a matter of relationships between people—similarly the specific character of each city—and we notice it all the more as it is more characteristic—influences the development and the character of its citizens, adults, young people and children alike.

Indeed there exist differences even between the citizens of the same country and the same

social background; for example, the citizens of Gothenburg consider themselves different from those of Stockholm. These differences already stand out quite clearly in the alphabetical list of papers presented by the cities present at this Congress in Gothenburg.

The significance of being born, of living and working in Adelaide, Barcelona, Berlin, Bologna, Budapest or in Cerdanyola del Vallès, that active pugnacious little town near Barcelona, shows us how deeply the character of its citizens is shaped by the city and its characteristic features.

There are elements of diversity between cities: their history, either ancient or more recent, its remaining monuments and archives, their rate of development, the changes they undergo, sometimes dramatic, occurring erratically or in sudden bursts, their urban development, their festivals, their provision of services, their geographical situation (different continents, on the coast, in a plain, in high mountains, their climate). How much better we are able to know and understand the citizens of Gothenburg now that we know the specific character of its climate and its way of life.

The linguistic differences are even greater, since languages codify all the other differences and mark the character of each individual, as Paulo Freire said. Even in education there are wide differences between cities; for example between Barcelona, the seat of the First Congress, which has no competence in the education system itself and which has built only a small number of schools and Gothenburg which is totally responsible for its education system and which has built and managed its schools and colleges for more than a century.

There may be many differences, many different languages, many different cities but they all have a single love in common, as the Catalan poet Salvador Espriu said. One sin-

gle love. Or is it two? A love of the city and a love of education, the training of individuals, humanity itself. Or maybe these are one and the same thing: humanity, the human community, the city as creator of human communities.

As *Educating Cities*, we started from this two-fold reality and joined together under one single idea. What idea? We shall endeavour first to answer the question with ten premises which define this concept of man and the human social grouping which we call the city.

1. The city regroups people into a single space. It offers the possibility, in varying degrees of quality, of living in proximity with others while preserving privacy, of sharing public services, of having neighbours who can help one and whom one can help and above all with whom one can communicate.
2. In varying degrees of generosity, town planning provides public spaces, streets, squares and parks, and communication, whether physical or personal.
3. The city is a variable source of work, providing employment which each individual seeks and may choose according to his interest and his requirements and which will, in turn, produce goods and services of mutual benefit.
4. The city provides health assistance through careful and sophisticated health care and must become a provider of health itself through the recuperation of its ecological balance.
5. The city provides culture, be it plentiful or scarce, popular or elitist, pluralistic or unitary: it provides music through its concerts, fine art in its museums, theatre, sports as well as ways of life, a deep-rooted culture and naturally education. We shall be discussing education in greater detail later on.

6. The city is, to varying degrees, a supplier of more or less personal and dedicated social services aimed at giving assistance to those in need, providing solidarity and security.
7. The city provides a possibility of dialogue between people with the same interests and situations who associate in order to cultivate these interests, to discuss them and have a collective voice to assist dialogue with other city groups.
8. The city also provides organisation, more or less democratic, more or less participatory. Starting with dialogue between collective and between individuals, it defines its objectives, elects its leaders and builds its future.
9. A city is located inside a territory and should protect its ecological balance and its relations with neighbouring populations, with their daily influx of communication and contributions in every sense of the word and in all fields, thereby attracting new citizens. Cities are the nerve centre of nations; they give them shape and character.
10. Finally, a city is a concrete voice made up of the voices of all its citizens whether they were born there or came there from outside; it is a concrete voice in the collective voice of the world. It cannot survive alone; it cannot exist alone; it needs to engage in dialogue with other cities in order to develop its own personality, different from the others, based on common interests but with its own unique characteristics and aspirations.

One of these aspirations, education, is manifesting itself in the present gathering of cities who wish to become Educating Cities.

However, in order to become an Educating City, it is not only necessary to be a city with the ten attributes which we have just enu-

merated, however positive. In order to be an Educating City, it is also necessary to fulfil, or get closer to fulfilling some of the conditions which we discussed at our first meeting in Barcelona and defined in a Charter, the Charter of Educating Cities.

The twenty items of the Charter of Educating Cities explain and contain ten basic commitments, based on one fundamental commitment which Mrs. Farrington recalled on the first day: the development of the individual and the development of mankind, the individual and mankind being the epitome of nature and the basis of society. This requires a public undertaking on the part of cities which must change from being "educative," as they all are, to becoming "educating" cities as those who wish to do so have become.

It is not so much a problem of vocabulary and the meaning of the terms "educative" and "educating" which each language will have to resolve; the question is more fundamental than that: the city influences the education process inexorably, but there is nevertheless a danger that it will impose its influence. In order to be truly educating, the influence must be clearly defined as such, and freely accepted.

The city, like an individual, can be considered to be educating when its objective is to liberate, to draw out the pupil's potential, to help develop his ability to become a free individual. This is not achieved with concrete formulae but with the will to go forward, with a twinge of fear and emotion in the heart of the teacher.

Because there is an element of fear in the task of helping each individual, whether a new-born child, a new acquaintance or a new arrival, to develop his own personality at his own pace and to play an active role in his own history in solidarity with the history of his fellow citizens and also outsiders in an ever greater circle which has the city as its nucleus.

These are the requirements of an Educating City:

1. The city must guarantee all its citizens the right to education, the right to take an active part in society, according to age, personal circumstances and in accordance with the educational processes in force, which are at present very diverse.

To this aim, the city must not only promote compulsory education (schools and formal education) but also stimulate informal extra curricular institutions and educational projects which are outside the formal education system but are related to it and remove the obstacles and negative influences on education from city life so that it may also itself become an informal source of education.

Above all, the city must coordinate all these sources of influence on citizens and change from playing a passive “educative” role to becoming an Educating City with the will and the means to do so.

The first mandate of the public coordination of educational resources is self-evident. However, it will need to be explained.

2. The second mandate is to provide clear and comprehensive information on educational resources available in the city at all levels. This information must be available in an appropriate form to all sectors and all levels of the city.
3. The third mandate is to organise the city through town planning in such a way as to prevent the creation of ghettos or to dismantle them so as to avoid the marginalization of minorities and majorities, to provide meeting places to promote communication, dialogue and cooperation between generations.
4. The fourth mandate is to promote and set up, if necessary, the possibility of special-

ised training for parents in the education of their children and offer young people before adulthood new perspectives, new horizons in a changing world that neither the family nor the schools are in a position to give them and which they cannot develop themselves.

On the first day of the conference, Mr. Bengtson of OECD, talking about his study of Lifelong Learning in different cities, was telling us about the college-work-city environment triangle in adults and how this environment generates the will to participate in their own education in order to close the triangle.

5. To stimulate human solidarity, through association which we mentioned previously, promoting it in sectors and areas where it is scarce, so that all forms of life, all issues and all citizens may be a part of and participate in, city life.

It is the responsibility of the Educating City to promote, stimulate and facilitate association between adult citizens, who will be able to participate on an equal level, which will then help to educate children by reinforcing their ability for social participation.

6. So that the trend of participation and dialogue can establish itself and become free-flowing, the Educating City will have to provide its citizens with training in each and every language used in their social environment.

Historically, schools were created to teach the written word, a basic requirement in our history and in modern times. Children were taught to write as well as to read and it was even noted that the best way to learn to read was to learn to write. Today, as cities are permeated with a whole diversity of languages, which people speak and understand and frequently are only able to understand, we cannot leave our citizens unarmed, succumbing blindly to the force of new messages.

With the whole variety of languages which our citizens are exposed to, from the language of transport to the language of film, through the language of machines, musical language, which is invading our lives, the specific languages of art, architecture, urban planning, they must not only be able to read them, they must also be able to write them.

Indeed, we cannot read freely, critically and creatively if we do not know the art of writing every one of these languages, whatever the cost.

7. The Educating City must above all respect those who bring in new languages, new customs, as should those who come to settle there. They must encourage their own language, leave behind their fears and break their silence and help build the city through the diversity of their contributions, thus forcing it to remain active, to integrate, to become more complete and more open to outside influences.
8. An Educating City must not only have its own historical identity, physically displayed in its museums, in its libraries and its urban development; it must also be open to change, its own constant renewal, accepting new languages as well as the old ones, regenerating itself through the participation of its citizens in the knowledge of what is past and of what is to come, the unknown as Paulo Freire was telling us yesterday.

An Educating City is conscious of its geographical situation and of its history which are always present but which are above all developing into the future, building its future, its identity and its role in the world context.

9. Considering all these functions and common objectives, each Educating City should have someone who is responsible for each of the following functions:

1. Coordination of educational projects in the perspective of permanent education.
2. Information.
3. Urban development, town planning.
4. The specific training of non-professional teachers.
5. Association.
6. Knowledge of urban languages.
7. The integration of immigrants.
8. The city's identity.

The responsibility for achieving all these objectives must lie with the local government or City Council which has access to all the resources. Whether they are plentiful or scarce, they make progress possible.

These services either come under local government such as town planning, local transport or street cleaning, or under central, regional or local government depending on the country in the case of health, education and safety. These services come from public or private initiative, are more or less social, more or less commercial, more or less mixed. But the coordinating authority, the final control must be in the hands of the local city government which is in a position to achieve and coordinate the implementation of the common objectives of the Educating Cities.

For this reason we are asking for the final undertaking to come from the local government of each city and for its signature of the Charter.

Those who are interested in their city becoming an Educating City but who are not responsible for its government have two options: the development of comprehensive education projects and taking action to get their local government, which is the only authority able to achieve it completely, to sign the Charter and thereby undertake to achieve all the common objectives of the Educating Cities.

10. To round off the ten commandments and in order to retain an open mind, we need to add something to the Charter of Educating Cities; not a small afterthought but something very important: those cities who wish to become Educating Cities must construct a framework for their achievements, pursue their good work and share their ideas and experiences with other cities which are interested in them and in turn accept and assimilate theirs in an open system of feedback and enrichment.

It is from these principles that the proposal to form an International Association of Educating Cities arose, with the aim of providing the Educating Cities with a constant point of reference and an established means of stimulating education and to pass the torch from one Educating City to another.

This Association has two extremely important tasks. All cities all over the world with the common objectives of the Educating Cities wish to associate because we firmly believe that we have a role to play in the making of the history of the world and humanity with our doctrine and our work. We also wish to ensure that our ideas will gradually spread to all corners of the globe.

The idea to present ourselves as Educating Cities began in Barcelona, which was preparing to host the historical world event of the Olympic Games in an atmosphere of peace and freedom.

In Göteborg, the idea began to develop in the industrious context of a city deeply interested in questions of employment and the relationship between education and work and lifelong learning which is the training of individuals seen as complete human beings combining their work, their leisure and personality.

Bologna is offering us the possibility of strengthening and broadening the concept of Educating City with its work on ancient and new cultures, the differences between established and imported cultures, the definite problems which are posed by them and the possible and wonderful solutions.

But we shall not discuss them here. New insights will be added to the Charter of Educating Cities. In the meantime, our organisation will be going through its own learning process. It is, I repeat, an organisation of cities under the government of leaders who have been democratically elected. But a city is composed of citizens and it is for this reason that we have presented this paper today, so that you may all, if you so wish, spread the word of Babel, of the Educating City in your own cities and let it take the form of a total, responsible commitment.

We await these cities, joined together by these common objectives." (pp. 17-22, *Lifelong Learning in Educating Cities. 2nd Congress of Educating Cities*; Gothenburg, Sweden; November 1992)

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The proposal to create the International Association of Educating Cities, presented by the Permanent Inter-Congress Committee, was enthusiastically received by the official representatives of the cities gathered together in Gothenburg.

Between 1992 and 1994, the Permanent Committee became known as the Executive Committee and after a few changes were made, it was now formed by official representatives from: Barcelona, Birmingham, Bologna, Chicago, Geneva, Gothenburg, Lilongwe, Rennes and Turin.

During this period, the Committee worked to prepare the Statutes and collaborated with the City of Bologna (Italy) on the organization of

the 3rd International Congress. The Congresses were gradually becoming established as a meeting place where cities could exchange and compare experiences on a certain topic, and stimulate thought and discussion about the Educating City, with collaboration from expert advisors.

In 1994, the halls of Bologna's Consiglio Comunale hosted the following General Assembly of Cities. The Statutes of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) were presented, leading to the creation of this organization, which brings together local governments committed to the *Educating Cities Charter*. Forty of the 63 cities that helped prepare the Charter in 1990 joined the Association. Since then, more than 300 cities have added their names to the list. Time has shown that there are plenty of reasons for an association of cities to be founded, developed and strengthened.

To ensure that it functions properly, the Association comprises three constitutional bodies: the General Assembly (supreme governing body encompassing all associated cities), the Executive Committee (responsible for the direction, management, operations and representation) and the Secretariat, entrusted with carrying out the plan of action approved by the General Assembly, handling day-to-day operations, and administration. The assembly agreed that both the Secretariat and the President's Office should remain in Barcelona, the city giving impetus to the movement.

The 3rd International Congress of Educating Cities was held in November 1994 in the city of Bologna. The theme was: *Getting to Know Ourselves and Recognizing Each Other: For a New Geography of Identities*. The general rise in migratory processes was a new reality becoming recognized as the fundamental path of the changes implicit in the modernization of urban life.

In Bologna, a debate arose on a subject that was very new at the time: multiculturalism

as an emerging urban phenomenon. This led, yet again, to the expansion of the Congress framework, which already offered a theoretical scope and a setting for presenting educational experiences and was now inviting associations and volunteer groups working in the area of immigration to take part.

With the parallel activities and projects organized, as had been done for the previous two editions, the venues and daily life of the organizing city also became a reference point for those attending the international meeting. The city of Bologna offered the Congress organizers some of its most emblematic buildings and municipal services for hosting the meetings and conferences. The underlying idea was to bring the Congress closer to the general public and demonstrate how the history of the city, its economic system, social relations, politics, etc., are reflected in the city. It aimed to promote the relationship between education and existing cultural heritage, both in the immediate vicinity (streets, neighborhoods and districts) and in museums, libraries and other metropolitan institutions.

Perhaps it was this multiplicity of voices wishing to be heard at the Congress that led the inaugural speech to be replaced by a round table, where Umberto Eco, with these words, asked participants to voice their opinions on the transformation process in Europe: "Europe will gradually become a federation of cities, where contact between metropolis and different languages may take place and commercial and cultural links will emerge that cross traditional borders. Therefore, it may be necessary to get cities ready for this type of encounter."

Interestingly enough, the round table reached the same conclusion that Paulo Freire did in Gothenburg: tolerance is a great virtue that cities must possess and the International Association of Educating Cities must encourage. Without tolerance, democracy will not advance.

More than two hundred cities attended the opening of the Congress. Everyone present heard and then discussed the text with which Franco Frabboni tried to define the core concept of the meeting: the multicultural city.

“My mission is to consider, during this closing plenary session of the third International Congress of educating cities, the analysis of materials and projects discussed and developed by the work commission called ‘The function of public and private social and education agencies in a multicultural reality.’

This work commission has compiled six reports, benefiting from a mix of codes, orals, icons, video, etc., and an extensive discussion by way of conclusion.

The materials for scientific consideration and socio-cultural projects produced by the group H have been condensed and distilled into one manifesto forming a Decalogue of 10 theories; a sort of inventory of problems as previously defined by Furio Colombo.

These are the 10 words of the language used by public and private sectors in a city we have defined as project-city, a multicultural and intercultural city.

These ten theories deal with socio-cultural issues of a superstructural nature requiring solutions, by the highest authorities, to the structural problems of a city attempting to define itself as multicultural, that is, the major problems of work, housing, health and others.

The following is a description of the 10 theories:

1st Theory: the multicultural city is called to battle social pathologies (isolation, separation, solitude), cultural pathologies (double standards, both in the codes of the mass media—when the ether is monopolised—as well as in the anthropological localisms) and existential pathologies (formation of hierarchies and conflict between

generations and the differences of gender, class and ethnic group), pathologies generated by a mono-cultural city, by the ‘monster city’ that is disorganised, materialistic, liberalist, productive as a result of marginalising and submission of the weakest, low-risk social groups (immigrants, unemployed, handicapped).

2nd Theory: the multicultural city must pursue the profile of an ecosystem producing distributed cultural interconnections, based on a pact-alliance between the formal system, the school, and the informal system of educative entities (families, local organisations, the private-social sector, churches) in view of an integrated education system based on the idea of continuous education.

3rd Theory: the multicultural city must rise to the challenge of expanding services and socio-cultural offer, by which it is possible not only to respond extensively to the demands of a collective, but also to create new and different social cultural and axiological demands.

4th Theory: the multicultural city demands of public schooling pluralism of knowledge, values and cultural codes. This means not only transmitting and developing culture, but also searching and encountering other cultures.

5th Theory: the multicultural city requires a multiplication of the efforts of families regarding their presence, solidarity and responsibility. It also requires parents to teach their children awareness so that they may identify for themselves the important differences, similar to the indispensable alphabet for reading, so that in the future they may better describe the differences of others.

6th Theory: the multicultural city requires of local organisations, town halls, provinces, regions a triple political and institutional function:

- a) To govern the city by a function of coordination of macro-funding projects, initially spread to the public and private sectors;
- b) To directly manage services and socio-cultural offers when certain sections of the city (neighbourhoods, peripheral zones) do not benefit from these;
- c) To develop new projects and to experiment with meta-services, the latter not necessarily directed at users but at agencies, public institutions and private service providers.

7th Theory: the multicultural city requires that the private associative sector, the non-profit third sector, construct an organic and interconnected network of urban micro-projects addressing the immediate needs of the community and directly managed by users, from those groups suffering high rates of marginality, diversity and exclusion.

8th Theory: So, the multicultural city must commit to promoting a high quality of life, using a regulation plan of social and civil coexistence and solidarity with the ability to transform the multicultural aspects, understood as the addition of cultures, into intercultural aspects that is, a dialogue and interaction between cultures.

9th Theory: the intercultural city requires that men and women, citizens of the city, have the capacity to decentralise, to step outside of their own way of thinking in order to return, having dialogued with other ways of thinking, other thoughts, other writings, so that their own thinking is put into relative terms and opens up new perspectives, new hopes, other ideals thus becoming a nomadic way of thinking or migratory thinking.

10th Theory: the intercultural city both requires and also permits all citizens to become actors and protagonists in the decisions and modifications of its multiple morphologies

from the child city, an indispensable prototype model, perhaps, for authentic diversity." (pp. 208-209, *Getting to Know Ourselves and Recognizing Each Other: For a New Geography of Identities*; 3rd International Congress of Educating Cities; Bologna, November 1994).

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The city of Chicago hosted the 4th International Congress of Educating Cities in 1996. The organization traveled to the Americas for the event, whose theme was: *The Arts and Humanities as Agents of Social Change*.

Since 1990, the year of the 1st Congress, the cities providing impetus for the International Association had put considerable effort into getting local governments interested in a broad, far-reaching concept of education. New to the 4th Congress was the emergence of some clearly visible links between political structures and the cultural life of the general public.

Musician and composer Wynton Marsalis was invited to open the Congress and some of the sessions were held outside the central headquarters of the Congress at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Cultural Center.

In his opening speech, Marsalis talked about the role played by the arts, particularly poetry and music, in understanding the human condition:

"You like to read Shakespeare's version of what happened to Julius Caesar because you know Marc Antony didn't say that. No way could he have been that poetic. He probably just said, 'Now it's over with.' But the poetic fact makes it so great that you want to believe that's what he said. He said what *Shakespeare* said that he said.

And that's where the arts come in, because the arts are a matter of reenactment. The first person that played a trumpet probably picked up an elephant tusk. They looked at it, saw a

little hole in it. Maybe they heard the wind blowing through it, and they said: [Marsalis plays a note on his trumpet]. Now somebody else heard it. When they picked up that elephant tusk, they said, 'I want to play this elephant tusk just like old Ulu played it, so I'm going to play: [Marsalis plays trumpet].' The fact is, that didn't really sound anything like Ulu, but this is an example of the poetic fact as opposed to the cold, hard fact.

Louis Armstrong hears Buddy Bolden play. Now, you know nobody has a recording of Buddy Bolden, but we know that he really liked to play in the key of B flat, so maybe Buddy Bolden went: [Marsalis plays trumpet]. Louis Armstrong hears that and to him it sounds like: [Marsalis plays trumpet]. He would tell you, 'Well, I'm just trying to play like Buddy Bolden.' We have to realize that the poetic fact lives on because it takes a phenomenon and makes it greater. It makes the baking of a cake for somebody a majestic act of soul.

We always have to separate the poetic fact from the lie because each can be confused with one another. The lie really takes a lot of energy for it to resonate. It doesn't harmonize with things around it, but the poetic fact harmonizes. It harmonizes. And because it harmonizes with things that are true about human nature, it resonates. And because it resonates, it has an echo, and it lasts forever and ever and ever, and that's the importance of the arts. That is the importance of the reenactment that is at the center of the arts. The memory of poetic fact—that's what makes us who we are." (p. 7, *The Arts and Humanities as Agents for Social Change*. 4th International Congress of Educating Cities; Chicago, USA; September 1996).

In Chicago, the Congress of Educating Cities, now a consolidated structure, once again expanded its spectrum by exhibiting art along with the presentations of experiences and speeches. As a result, the periods between congresses provided a broad record in which cities had access to enough examples to

bring about specific projects to subsequently share on an international level through the Documents Databank and, in person, at the biannual Congresses.

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For the International Association of Educating Cities, the 20th century came to a close in the city of Jerusalem, host city for the 5th Congress, which took place in March 1999. The central theme was: *Taking Heritage and History into the Future*.

As occurred in Chicago, the selection of specific venues for presenting papers took on a special meaning: museums, cultural centers and auditoriums responded enthusiastically to the invitation to open their doors to the participating cities in 1999. It is particularly noteworthy that the Congress chose to meet in the city of Jerusalem to exchange experiences and proposals for the future in the areas of heritage and history.

Two new elements came into play: the importance of material and immaterial heritage and the urban presence of religions.

One significant aspect of this Congress, which gave a new direction to the IAEC, was the Decalogue approved by the organization's General Assembly, which stated:

- *The Association trusts in the validity of its message and in the utility of the concept of Educating City as a service to the general public.*
- *The Association will make every effort to introduce itself into the core of all universal cultures.*
- *The association defends a global concept of education that shall permeate all aspects of city life and involve everyone.*
- *It is imperative that city mayors take the lead in educational activities insofar as they are the ones with global vision.*

- The educating cities cannot and should not renounce any opportunities for educational dialogue aimed at improving the conditions for coexistence and quality of life.
- Compliance with the principles of the Educating Cities Charter deserves an application of global policies where actions are derived from the best strategies.
- The exchange and assessment of experiences is a valuable asset of the Educating Cities movement.
- The principles of the Association's Charter and Statutes shall be analyzed and, when appropriate, revised in light of social changes and the new millennium.
- Citizens' opinions should be the principal source for updating the principles behind the Educating Cities movement.
- The educational values emerging from the different forms of cooperation between cities should be recognized by Educating Cities as a source of updates, without forgetting that the city has a primordial responsibility for the development of its citizens within a framework of coexistence and personal and collective progress.

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The 6th International Congress of Educating Cities was held in November 2000 in the city of Lisbon (Portugal). A variety of circumstances led to a delayed start of the Jerusalem Congress and, as a result, the Lisbon Congress was held just a few months later.

The meeting in Lisbon, whose theme was *The City: An Educational Space in the New Millennium*, addressed many of the topics that had emerged as fundamental in previous Congresses. Its program was divided into five main areas:

1. Appropriation of city space by the people: planning and practices
2. The memory and identity of the city
3. Local development, solidarity and interdependence
4. Diversity as an educational resource for the city and for schools: New models of participation and citizenship
5. Education, training, employment and leisure: The strategic role of the city

At this Congress, the presentation by Raul Pont, former mayor of Porto Alegre (1997-2001), highlighted how important it is for an Educating City to have its citizens participate in matters of public concern:

“How do we reduce the delegation of power to a minimum? This is the central question for us, the principal question that should concern educators and committed politicians involved in creating a city that educates, builds and produces citizenship. Readdressing the subject of reducing the delegation of power implies countering the growing loss of legitimacy in representative democracies and creating participatory mechanisms of democracy where citizens can truly create their present and build their future at every moment. There are basically three elements that we would like to focus on in considering this subject: first is the need for true participation by the people. It is impossible to create a city that produces and builds citizenship if there is no real participation by the people. Citizens must have a space in which to discuss the budget. Take, for example, our experience of some years with a Participatory Budget, where the city budget was put forward for discussion; this idea soon found its way to the school level through the School Boards that involve parents of the students, the community, the school teachers and administrators. And so, a very rich experience—the Participatory Budget applied within the school system—grew out of an idea that the city was

already carrying out on another level. When teachers, students, parents and members of the community take part in discussion of how resources earmarked for maintenance of, and improvements to, the schools are to be used, they become more involved in the management of the school. This process that worked with the schools is also valid with regard to social service policies and a number of other areas. In our eyes, participation by the people is decisive and essential in any process of transforming a city into one that educates and that truly builds citizenship.

This brings us to the second basic element, which is direct involvement of the people. They must participate in this process because it is impossible to take on responsibility as citizens unless they can exercise this right directly. That possibility of speaking in public, of using a microphone. Most citizens have never had the experience of organizing a community meeting, have never had the opportunity to make democratic decisions, to create mechanisms so that decisions can be both collective and democratic. All of that involves a learning process for which there is no substitute. The process is not in the hands of the officials, the local government or the political parties. Certainly the government and the parties should encourage the people, but they, the people themselves, must have the means and the possibility to directly exercise that right.

We can say from our experience that it is exciting to see how these people, men and women on the street—when given the opportunity, when handed the microphone, when given access to a group meeting—can express their needs, defend their interests, and also act with solidarity. They are capable of making decisions that are not just guided by their own personal interests, by a specific problem in their home or on their street; the process makes them grow and understand the complexity of modern life. I can give an example of an experience we had that involved opening the discussion on the City's Guidelines for Urban Development to the public,

not simply limiting it to technical experts and specialists on the subject. In order to do so we made a substantial change, with the city council's approval, to the previous City Planning Guidelines, adding a new element: the integration and right of people in the different neighborhoods and the different districts of the city to participate directly with the City Board in charge of carrying out the plan. This was accomplished through regional forums where citizens can make their voices heard on specific issues with regard to planning for the neighborhood, district and city in which they live. Experience has shown that this is a viable process, and perfectly feasible in a democratic setting.

The third element that we found important is a respect for peoples' capacity for self-organization. From our point of view, these mechanisms should strengthen, respect and stimulate the self-organization of the communities so that they can have decision-making power and the potential for action. Our adult literacy programs for those who have never had the chance to go to school, and our other support programs guaranteeing everyone—regardless of age—the right to a basic education, essentially take into account the demands and decision of the individuals themselves, not the proposal, idea or knowledge of the head of the government. From the moment we allowed people to express themselves and handed over decision-making power to them, our schools began filling vacant after-school hours with courses for young people and adults, precisely because those people saw—thanks to debate and discussion on topics affecting their area of the city—the chance to claim their right to this kind of service to which they had never previously had access.

This type of self-organization gives people concrete powers that allow them to discuss the budget, decide public policy, establish regional municipal councils on subjects such as education, health, traffic, and children's and adolescents' rights. Mechanisms like these create organizations with a broad

social base, independent of the political parties, that can exert pressure on the governments which, in turn, can redirect resources and reorient the public budget to the benefit of the people." (pp. 34-36, *La ciudad, espacio educativo en el nuevo milenio [The City: An Educating Space in the New Millennium]*. 6th International Congress of Educating Cities; Lisbon, Portugal; November 2000.)

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The Finnish city of Tampere organized the 7th Congress in 2002, whose theme was: *The Future of Education: The Role of the City in the Globalized World*.

Over the first dozen years of the International Association of Educating Cities, significant changes were transforming the lives of individuals and, consequently, the cities where they lived. During that same period (1990-2002), two terms became established around the world: *globalization* and *Internet*.

Thus it was no coincidence that a city in Finland—a country noted for its use of the latest technology in the production of consumer goods as well as in its teaching methods—would be the one to host this Congress. Nor does it seem surprising that at the entrance to the Congress venue was a bus equipped with computers and permanent Internet connections for Congress attendees to use for personal or professional purposes. The bus, known as *Netti-Nyssa*, drove around the city as part of a larger project called *eTampere* that the City Council developed in conjunction with various companies and universities in the city with the aim of promoting knowledge, business, public digital services and citizens' acquisition of the skills required in the knowledge society.

The Congress also saw the unveiling of a new project: *The Virtual Educating City* (www.ed-cities.org), a new portal designed to promote mutual exchange and learning between cities. The site is operational today, consisting of

a central page where the Secretariat regularly publishes general-interest news and where each associated city, thematic or territorial network can have a web page to publicize their activities. Thus, the portal provides not only general information about the Association, but also news from the associated cities and networks. Additionally, the site offers on-line access to the Document Databank.

The presentations were grouped into five areas, which varied considerably with respect to those featured in Lisbon:

1. *The role of the city in creating and maintaining educational systems*
2. *Modern teaching environments: local and global networks*
3. *Values: ethical and ethnical aspects of teaching*
4. *Equality, inequality and marginalization*
5. *Teaching and employment*

In Tampere, new terminology was required in order to continue the dialogue on Educating Cities—new words and new concepts for designing new realities. The Congress spoke of education as a set of educational systems, at a time when the world had, seemingly overnight, assimilated the idea of a computer network supporting a single world market.

The proposal was by no means exclusive to the Congress. For several years, a new conception of the world had been emerging, one that was forcing all of the social sectors to reconsider their plans and development strategies. Notably, however, the Congress proposed—simultaneously and with considerable force—the philosophical aspects that were to be redefined based on these changes: the ethical and ethnical values of teaching, equality, inequality and marginalization.

In combining the transformation occurring at a global level with the social repercussions

being generated, the International Association of Educating Cities provided a necessary perspective for responsibly steering urban life through this new stage of clearly perceptible change. Educator Manuel Castells summarized it as follows:

“Changes of mentality are always dependent on the transformation of the basic social structures of society, and particularly on production structures. This flexibility, this culture of freedom, this individual project is based on the transformation of the world. It’s based on the emergence of flexible labor and an individualized relationship between labor and management. It’s based on the emergence of organizations that are based on networking and, therefore, networks of individuals rather than vertical structures. It’s based on a process of communication, which is global and local at the same time. Global production of media but local customization of media and adaptation to people’s needs and values. It’s based on a process of crisis of traditional ideological systems such as official churches or political parties. It’s based also on the crisis of patriarchal family and on the traditional forms of the nuclear family. It is through this process of material change of the world we live in that we see the emergence of the individual and the individual project as a source of reconstruction of society, and this is the material that the process of learning has to work on.

This cultural and socioeconomic shift uses and develops a new technological environment that is marked by the Internet. It is not simply one technology; it is the key technology that organizes the metaparadigm in the same way. Internet and computer networks in general are equivalent to the role of electricity in the industrial society. It is not about one way of doing things; it’s the tool, the instruments through which this network individualism, this individual project-based society, develops. In other words, the Internet is not the instrument of isolation and individualization; it is the instrument of connection and networking on the basis of individual

defined projects of interest, and this again has all kind of consequences for the process of learning.

The issue then becomes, in general terms, when we think about society at large, how to, on the one hand, unleash this creativity, this productivity, this innovation, but at the same time how to manage this process of constant change in a way that does not disintegrate society, in a way that does not disintegrate individuals. People need increasingly flexible personality systems, innovating enough to constantly adapt to a changing environment, at the same time strong enough so as to not disintegrate in this constant process of change, in which they have to redefine the parameters of their life, to reconstruct their systems of behavior.

We need innovation and at the same time we also need values, but not too many. If you have too many values, you are paralyzed; but a few good, firm, solid values that do not move when everything else changes and moves. The relationship between a flexible personality system that combines constant adaptability to a constantly changing environment, and the ability to define the roles on the basis of their values. Innovation is most effective when it is both competitive and cooperative at the same time, and this cooperation is the social dimension or, otherwise, the structure of innovation.

Within this new kind of sociotechnical paradigm, what are the transformations that we see in the school as a learning environment and in the city as a learning environment? The most important thing is a school adapted to this type of economy and society. It’s not a school that transmits knowledge; it’s a school in which the essential model must be ‘learning to learn,’ to install in people’s mind the capacity of learning to learn throughout their life, the autonomous capacity of reprogramming themselves throughout their world, and throughout their personal life. To some extent, there are no models to transmit any longer, and therefore innovation is risk; there

is freedom, but freedom to light the light that one develops. Very simply, the knowledge that was transmitted ten years ago in the university cannot be used today. Knowledge that was transmitted ten years ago, today has to be constantly reprogrammed; and to some extent, knowledge that was transmitted without adapted capabilities is knowledge that is blocking the development of new things. It's not only useless, it's harmful." (*Cities and Learning in the Network Society*. 7th International Congress of Educating Cities; Tampere, Finland; June 2002)

The 8th International Congress of Educating Cities was held in Genoa, Italy, in 2004, under the title: *Another City is Possible: The Future of the City as a Collective Project*.

The Tampere Congress placed the debate of the IAEC member cities on a new plane, which required detailed analysis. The aspects of urban life that the cities had provided to the forums for debate at the Congresses had now acquired new signs of identity. The way new technologies were facilitating things brought together very different geographical areas in a surprising manner. Many of the issues and problems that in the past had been restricted to local areas were now the object of global attention.

The final program of the Congress declared the following: "A well-shared educational and cultural project in the city is a fundamental pillar of any local sustainable development theory that is able to positively combine local society not only with the stimuli, but also with the potential loss of structure caused by globalization."

The environment and sustainability, the identity of cities subjected to strong international competition, continuing education marked by the constant change in production and distribution systems, new health needs, healthcare and prevention programs, the need for agreements as a form of managing public life...none of these issues were new to the Association of Educating Cities

but each required reviewing in light of the present situation where cities did not have equal access.

One of the main objectives of the Genoa Congress, which led to the concept of *shared city*, was to reconsider urban life through a concept of education that, without ignoring school systems, was being introduced into public institutions as a result of the permeating influence of international communication networks.

Participation is the very foundation of the *shared city*, and the contemporary democracy that aspires to build a sustainable future for everyone. Once again, an idea already present in the previous gatherings of this movement was heard throughout the congress: to steadfastly defend tolerance as an undisputable value of the educating cities.

The members of the congress in Genoa concluded that tolerance should be strengthened to match the extent to which migratory processes had intensified and spread; and that schools and cultural centers needed to start appropriating unto themselves the various political, linguistic, religious and social issues of the public towards whom their educational and cultural offerings were directed.

The city could no longer rely solely on the initiative of the political powers in office, and instead ought to seek ways for public participation to generate new, creative input in order to understand the emerging social phenomena. If the public were aware of the importance and weight of their own voices in the development of urban life, then they would consider themselves as agents of change and local life would not crumble as a result of globalization. At the Congress' opening ceremony, the mayor of Genoa, Giuseppe Pericu, gave this explanation:

"Today's society is increasingly fragmented, people live much more individually in comparison to the past. They are increasingly influenced by mass products coming from

different parts of the world. We have an inexorable tendency to lose our cultural identity; community is not forming but is disintegrating into individuals. There is a strongly felt need to recreate, insofar as possible, a series of community mechanisms. These can only be constructed on the knowledge and sharing of reality as well as with major and minor objectives defined by the majority of citizens."

The activist tone of the Congress' central theme (*Another City Is Possible*) was clearly appropriate in light of the objectives proposed.

An updated version of the *Educating Cities Charter* was presented at the Congress. It was the result of a process in which all member cities were invited to contribute. The aim was to respond to the need to adapt the Charter to the urban, educational and social transformation taking place in the cities, while maintaining the initial spirit of the Barcelona Declaration.

The new Charter consists of a preamble and three sections: "The Right to an Educating City," "The Commitment of the City" and "Serving Its Inhabitants." The charter covered themes such as lifelong learning, access for everyone—particularly for those with functional disabilities or dependencies of any type—to all urban services, buildings and facilities, along with access and training in information and communication technologies, sustainable development, etc.

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In 2006, Lyon played host to the 9th International Congress of Educating Cities. The various proposals from the Genoa meeting were now to be analyzed as essential components of a new humanism that needed to start defining itself. The topic of discussion for the 9th Congress was: *People's Place in the City*.

Naturally, this was an overly ambitious goal to work out in just a few days, but the inten-

tion was to initiate brainstorming about the conditions for the internal development of individual cities and the capacity for collective development among the member cities.

In an attempt to delve deeper into the concept of *participatory democracy*, the Genoa Congress proposed issues such as: formal education establishing links with continuing education in the urban environment, local networks maintaining an acceptable level of health care, the sustainability of everyday life and its implications for school programs, the opening of educational and artistic centers to the general public without excluding anyone, the use of public areas as meeting points and spaces for coexistence, etc.

The Lyon Congress took the list of specific elements that each city could make its own and added a new section featuring an analysis on the different ways of sharing objectives and cooperating between cities.

Presentations made at this congress revolved around four central areas:

- Lifelong education: formal and informal education
- Human relations in the city: living together, democracy and equality
- Urban spaces and the times
- Cooperation between cities

Digital solidarity was proposed as an answer to the inequalities created by and within the network: "The struggle against digital fracturing entails developing infrastructures aimed at connecting the network so that interactivity is extended to the creation of online content, going beyond electronic commerce. Digital insertion in the networks of social agents involves training in new tools as well as culturally and linguistically diverse content."

The attempt to mold all the aspects reviewed at the Congress into a new conception of hu-

manism brought a truly mistreated concept into the fore in our contemporary world: peace. At this Congress, it became clear that a number of administrations felt a responsibility and were aware of the benefits of contributing to the democratic development in other areas of the world; therefore, they were willing to cooperate with administrations from other countries on international projects of cooperation and decentralization. In addition, it was clear that the cities decided to work in the area of international relations in order to influence regionalization processes and international policies from the viewpoint of the cities and the public.

Diplomacy between cities is the tool available to local administrations to contribute to creating situations of stability where members of the public can live together in an environment of peace, democracy and prosperity. In this respect, many proposals were carried out at municipal level: twinning and other ties between cities in different countries, technical aid, advice in the development of municipal politics, cooperation with the public and civil organizations, awareness programs, the promotion of mutual comprehension at the local level, training programs, international solidarity, the creation of coalitions and coordinated action, etc.

Educating about and for peace was defined as a focal point from which to review future projects and lines of action. Perhaps in the same way that Educating Cities suggested to local governments that they consider education as a component of their activities rather than maintaining it merely as a sector in itself, making it part of the municipality's different departments. At the same time, the Educating Cities Charter was in itself a commitment to peace.

The central theme of the next Congress, to take place in the city of São Paulo in April 2008—*Building Citizenship in Multicultural Cities*—rekindles this desire for and commitment to peace.

There, the Association's cities will meet, prepared to invest in the comprehensive training of every individual and in the public as a whole, with the aim of overcoming exclusion, while being aware that education reduces inequalities and is a fundamental element for social cohesion. The conferences and exchange of experiences within the framework of this Congress will generate thoughts and ideas on how to advance and confront the challenges involved with the coexistence of different cultures.

The new leading role and revaluation of cities, both politically and socioeconomically, have convinced local governments that tasks such as the renewal and reconversion of the productive base, the creation and maintenance of the urban infrastructure, the maintenance of acceptable levels of quality of life and the coordination of social-integration mechanisms should be considered goals that cities can not achieve in isolation. Therefore, cities from all around the world turn to international cooperation in search of solutions for their local development requirements and in search of shared and coordinated solutions for addressing common problems. Thus, the Congresses organized by the IAEC are heartily welcomed by current member cities and by the gradually emerging new member cities.

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Charter Of Educating Cities

The cities that were represented at the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities, held in Barcelona in November 1990, set forth in the initial Charter the basic principles that were to constitute the educational driving force of the city, theirs was the conviction that the edification of their inhabitants could not be left to chance. The Charter was revised at the 3rd International Congress (Bologna, 1994) and in Genoa 2004, in order to improve and adapt its concepts to the new challenges and social needs we face.

This Charter is based on the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the World Declaration on Education For All (1990); the Convention, which was adopted by the World Summit on Children (1990), and the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001).

Preamble

Today more than ever the city, large or small, offers countless opportunities for education. However, the city can also be influenced by educating forces used in a negative way. In one way or another the city contains within itself major elements for integral education and training that makes it at one and the same time a complex system, object of educational attention and a permanent, plural, multi-faceted, educating agent capable of counteracting inimical educating elements.

The educating city is a city with its own personality, forming an integral part of its nation. Therefore, its identity is interdependent with that of the country it belongs to. The educating city is not self-contained; it has an active relationship with its environment, with the other urban centres in the nation and with cities in other countries. The goal of this relationship is to learn, exchange and share experiences and thus enrich the lives of the inhabitants.

The educating city must undertake and develop this function while undertaking its traditional functions (economic, social, political and as a purveyor of services) with its sights squarely on the education, promotion and development of all its inhabitants. The educating city will give priority to children and youth, but with a commitment to including persons of all ages in lifelong learning.

The reasons which justify this function are social, economic and political; orientated especially to an efficient, coexistence-based cultural and educational project. These are

the great challenges of the 21st century: firstly, "investing" in education, in each individual, to increase his or her ability to express, affirm and develop his or her own human potential, with its uniqueness, creativity and responsibility. Secondly, promoting the conditions for full equality so that everyone can feel respected and can be respectful of others, capable of entering into dialogue with others. And, thirdly, unifying all these factors so that we can create, city by city, a true knowledge society that does not exclude anyone, for which we will have to provide, amongst other things, easy access for all the population to the information and communications technologies that can allow everyone to achieve their potential.

Educating cities, with their formal educational institutions, non-formal interventions (for educative purposes external to the formal education system) and informal interventions (neither intentional nor planned) will collaborate either bilaterally or multilaterally in the exchange of experiences. In the spirit of cooperation, educating cities will aid each other in supporting study and investment projects, either in the form of direct cooperation or in collaboration with international bodies.

Humanity is not only living through a stage of changes, but also an authentic change in stages. Persons must educate themselves for the sake of their critical adaptation to and active participation in the challenges and possibilities opening up as a result of the globalisation of all economic and social processes, so that they can intervene, through their local world, in a complex international scenario, and in order to remain autonomous subjects in the face of a flood of information controlled by economic and political power centres.

On the other hand, children and young people are no longer passive subjects in the life of their society, and, therefore, their city. The United Nations Convention of November 20, 1989, which further developed and consid-

ered binding the principles of the Universal Declaration of 1959, made children citizens with full civic and political rights. Thus, they can enjoy the rights of association and participation that are suitable to their level of maturity.

The protection of children and youth in our cities no longer consists merely of protecting them as such. It is also important to find them a proper place next to adults who have the civic virtue of finding satisfaction in inter-generational coexistence. At the beginning of the 21st century, all generations are clearly more and more in need of life-long learning opportunities that are constantly being updated.

Global citizenship is now in the making even though we still lack a global democratic structure, even though many countries still have not been able to attain and constitute a democracy that is effective while being respectful of their genuine social and cultural patterns and where democracies with a longer standing democratic tradition can feel satisfied with the quality of their democratic systems. In this context, cities in all countries must act, in their local dimension, as platforms for experimentation and consolidation of a democratic citizenry, as promoters of peaceful coexistence through ethical and civic values education, respectful of the manifold nature of the possible different forms of government while acting as the drivers of widely representative, participatory mechanisms.

Diversity is inherent in the modern city and the feeling is that it will increase even more in the future. Accordingly, one of the challenges facing the educating city is to foster a balance and harmony between identity and diversity, taking into account the contributions of the communities of which the city is comprised and the right of all those living in the city to feel that their own cultural identity is being recognised.

We live in a world of uncertainty that is giving ground to a quest for security, which is often

expressed as the negation of the other and as mutual mistrust. The educating city is aware of this and does not seek simple unilateral solutions: it accepts this contradiction and puts forward processes of knowledge, dialogue and participation as the best way forward of living and coping with uncertainty.

Therefore, the right to an educating city is hereby affirmed. This right must be understood as an effective extension of the fundamental right to education. There must be a true fusion, in the phase of formal education and adulthood, of the resources and educational power of the city with the ordinary development of the educational, labour and social system.

The right to live in an educating city must constitute a relevant guarantee of the principles of equality for all, social justice, and territorial balance.

This emphasises the responsibility of local governments in the sense of developing all the educational potentialities that the city has within itself, incorporating the principles of the educating city into its political project.

Principles

1. THE RIGHT TO AN EDUCATING CITY

-1-

All the inhabitants of a city have the right to enjoy, in liberty and equality, the means and opportunities for education, leisure and individual growth that the city offers. The right to an educating city is understood as an extension of the fundamental right of all to education. The educating city constantly recommits to the lifelong education of its inhabitants in the most varied ways. And to make this possible, all groups, with their own particular needs, must be taken into account.

In city planning and government, suitable measures will be taken to overcome every

type of obstacle that restricts the exercise of the right to equality, including physical barriers. This will be the responsibility of both the municipal government and other levels of government that affect the city. The citizens themselves will also be committed to this task on an individual basis as well as through the various associations to which they belong.

-2-

The city will promote education in diversity as well as understanding, international solidarity and cooperation and world peace. This is an education that fights against any form of discrimination. The educating city will foster freedom of expression, cultural diversity and dialogue in equal conditions. It will also avail itself of both avant-garde initiatives and those of popular culture, no matter what their origin. It will contribute to correcting inequalities that arise from cultural production based solely on mercantile criteria.

-3-

An educating city will foster dialogue between generations, not only as a form of peaceful coexistence, but also as a way to seeking out common projects shared by groups of persons of different ages. These projects should be orientated towards civic initiatives and actions whose value consists precisely in their cross-generational character and in the use of the respective skills and values of the different age groups.

-4-

The municipal policies of an educational character shall always be understood as referring to a broader context inspired by the principles of social justice, democratic community spirit, quality of life and the edification of the individual citizen.

-5-

The municipalities shall undertake to exercise their powers effectively in matters

of education. No matter what the scope of these powers may be, they shall put forward a broad and integrated education policy, in order to include all the modalities of formal, non-formal and informal education and the different cultural manifestations, sources of information and paths of discovery of the reality of the city.

The role of the municipal administration is, on the one hand, to set down local policies that are seen to be possible and evaluate their effectiveness, in addition to obtaining the legislation required from other central or regional administrations.

-6-

In order to undertake appropriate action, the persons responsible for municipal policy must obtain accurate information on the situation and needs of the inhabitants. Thus, the city shall undertake studies and surveys, which it shall keep up to date and make available to the public and shall establish channels that are constantly open to individuals and groups that allow the formulation of specific proposals and general policies.

Furthermore, the municipality in the course of its decision-making in any area of its jurisdiction shall bear in mind the educative and training-related impact of the decisions made.

2. THE COMMITMENT OF THE CITY

-7-

The city must know how to discover, preserve and display its own complex identity. This will make it unique and provide the basis for a fruitful dialogue with its inhabitants and with other cities. Its customs and traditions must be compatible with international ways of life. In this way it will be able to offer an appealing image without spoiling its natural and social environment.

At the same time, the city shall promote the knowledge, learning and use of the languages that are spoken therein and use them as an integrating element and factor for social cohesion.

-8-

The transformation and growth of a city must be governed by a harmony between its new needs and the preservation of buildings and symbols of its past and of its existence. City planning must consider the enormous impact of the urban environment on the development of all individuals, on the integration of their personal and social aspirations, and resist the segregation of generations and the segregation of people from different cultures, who have much to learn from each other.

The organisation of the city's physical urban space shall meet the requirements of accessibility, encounter, relations, play and leisure as well as a greater closeness to nature. The educating city shall pay special attention to the needs of the handicapped, the elderly and children in its town planning, facilities and services, in order to guarantee them a city environment that is friendly as well as respectful of the limitations that they may have, without their having to renounce their maximum independence possible.

-9-

The educating city shall encourage citizen participation from a critical, co-responsible point of view. To do so, local government must provide people with the information they need and foster, from an integrated perspective, orientation, and educational activities in ethical and civic values.

At the same time the educating city shall use its institutions and civic and social organisations to stimulate citizen participation in the collective project, taking into account private initiatives and other forms of spontaneous participation.

-10-

The municipal administration must equip the city with spaces, facilities and public services that are suitable for the personal, social, moral and cultural development of all its inhabitants, paying special attention to children and youth.

-11-

The city must guarantee the quality of life for all its inhabitants. This requires creating a balance with its natural surroundings, providing the right to a healthy environment, as well as the right to housing, employment, leisure and public transportation, amongst others. At the same time, the city shall actively promote health education and the participation of all its inhabitants in the best practices of sustainable development.

-12-

The educational project that is explicit and implicit to the city's structure and system, the values it promotes, the quality of life it offers, the celebrations it organises, its campaigns and projects of all types, must be the subject of reflection and participation, together with the necessary means that can help people grow personally and collectively.

3. SERVING ITS INHABITANTS

-13-

The municipality will assess the impact of all cultural, recreational, informative, advertising-related and other types of activities offered, and of the realities which make a direct unmediated impression on children and youth. In such cases, the municipality will take non-authoritarian action in an attempt to provide a rational explanation or interpretation. The municipality will ensure that a balance is struck between the need for protection and the need for the autonomy necessary for discovery. The municipality

will also provide educational forums and debate, including exchange programs between cities, to enable all inhabitants to fully accept the changes generated by the urban environment.

-14-

The city will make an effort to provide parents with the education they need to help their children mature and make the city their own in a spirit of mutual respect. In the same vein, projects will be developed for educators in general and people (private individuals, or public service personnel) who undertake educating functions often without being aware they are doing so. The educating city will also assure that the police and civil protection forces that depend directly upon the municipality act in concert with these proposals.

-15-

The city must offer its inhabitants the perspective of occupying their place in the society: it shall provide them with the necessary counselling for personal and vocational orientation and make it possible for them to participate in social activities. In the specific area of education-work, we should underline the close relationship that should exist between educational planning and the needs of the labour market.

Thus, the city shall define training strategies that take into account social demand and shall collaborate with trade union and employers' organisations in job creation and in formal and non-formal life-long training.

-16-

The city must be aware of the mechanisms of exclusion and marginalization that affect it and of their various forms, and develop the affirmative action policies needed. Special concern is needed for newly arrived persons, whether immigrants or refugees, who have the right to freely feel that their adoptive city

is their own. The city shall strive to foster social cohesion amongst its neighbourhoods and inhabitants of all walks of life.

-17-

Intervention that minimises differences may take various forms, but it must always be based on a comprehensive view of the person, on a model shaped by the interests of each individual and the rights to which all are entitled. Any meaningful action must guarantee coordination amongst the various administrative bodies involved and between the services provided by these bodies. The city shall also foster the cooperation between administrations and its citizens freely and democratically organised in institutions in the so-called tertiary sector, non-governmental organisations and similar associations.

-18-

The city will encourage the formation of associations as a form of participation and civic co-responsibility, in order to channel action that provides service to the community and to obtain and divulge information, material and ideas in order to promote the social, moral and cultural development of the individual. At the same time, the city shall contribute to educating activities so that people can participate in decision-making and planning and in the management processes involved in the life of associations.

-19-

The municipality must guarantee sufficient, comprehensible information and give incentives to its inhabitants to inform themselves of what is going on. Taking into account the value involved in selecting, understanding and treating the large flow of information currently available, the educating city shall establish resources within everyone's reach. The municipality will identify the collectives that require special attention, and will place at their disposal specialised information, orientation and help centres.

At the same time, the city shall establish programmes for training in information and communications technology for all ages and social groups in order to fight against new forms of exclusion.

-20-

The educating city must offer all its inhabitants, as a necessary, growing objective for the community, education in the values and practices of a democratic citizenry: respect,

tolerance, participation, responsibility and interest in things public, its programmes, heritage and services.

This Charter expresses the commitment of the cities undersigned to all the values and principles expressed herein. It defines itself as being open to revision and expansion in respect of all such aspects that swift social evolution may impose in the future.

Testimonials

The following is a collection of testimonials from mayors of member cities of the International Association of Educating Cities. These testimonials help us understand how the Educating Cities Charter is applied in different places far and wide: Belo Horizonte (Brazil), Budapest (Hungary), Córdoba (Spain), Dakar (Senegal), Genoa (Italy), Lomé (Togo), Montevideo (Uruguay), Rennes (France), São Paulo (Brazil) and Vallenar (Chile). They give us a good overview of the daily practices of some cities that have made education the backbone of their political activities, demonstrating their concern for improving the quality of life for all citizens, both individually and collectively. In the IAEC, these and many other cities have found a platform for dialogue, exchange and action, where they can share their day-to-day difficulties and successes.

Belo Horizonte: A City that Educates!

Fernando Damata Pimentel,
Mayor of Belo Horizonte

Educating in a city is not a simple task. It truly represents a challenge in changing the metropolis into an educational object itself, and providing that all its public spaces can offer educational experiences to its inhabitants. It is a never-ending challenge. It is ongoing, and requires political commitment on the part of the city's leaders who, in the end, will make the difference in the conception and execution of public policies in different situations.

In Belo Horizonte, the coordinating city of the International Association of Educational Cities Brazilian Network, we could cite several policies that illustrate our efforts:

With regard to education, the Integrated School program is already benefiting about 14,000 students between the ages of 6 and 14 in 50 schools within the municipal network. These students have full-time activities, which provide them with a broad, quality apprenticeship. Children and adolescents occupy their after-school schedule with cultural and educational offerings, participating in artistic/cultural and ecological/environmental projects, sports, and language classes. The activities involve not only schools but also NGOs, universities and the community itself. With the Integrated School, different places in the city such as museums, cinemas, theaters, parks, libraries and cultural centers are transformed into educational centers.

The First School Program has built and maintains 44 city-sponsored Infant Education Units (UMEs), where more than 13,000 children spend their day. The majority are children whose mothers have no one with whom they can leave their child. Above and beyond the units, more than 20,000 children up to

the age of 6 attend the 191 Day Care Centers set up in conjunction with the city government. The City Hall First School Program is a national reference in terms of a quality infrastructure for the attendance of children up to five-and-a-half years of age.

We have various different projects with regard to health, the BH Life Program standing out among them. The core of this program is the organization of basic health attention through the Family Health Program and the organization of care units with their users at all levels of assistance within the public health system, and based on the following fundamental guidelines: guaranteeing access, trying to provide those who turn to the health unit adequate attention and the best handling of their case; creating a tie between the health teams and the families in their care through building relationships of trust and mutual responsibility; assuring thoroughness in care giving, with teams providing users with the appropriate guidance for each case; using multi-specialty teams, since the goal of the BH Life and Integral Health programs in defense of life depends on the joint and coordinated action of all team members; helping the user to become more autonomous and responsible for his/her own care; and encouraging people's participation in the planning and developing of actions involving both the government and citizens in the area of health care.

As regards urban renewal we can cite the Vila Viva (Living Village), which is an urban social and environmental program that is changing the lives of the 46,000 inhabitants of Aglomerado da Serra, the largest shanty town in Belo Horizonte, which occupies an area of more than 1.4 million square meters.

The program promotes citizenship values of its inhabitants by means of the urbanization of alleys, through construction of residential units, eradication of dangerous areas, building of parks with sports and leisure equipment and the refurbishing of fountains. In addition to that are community development projects, environmental and health education efforts and vocational training programs. The actions taken make it possible for citizens to have access to basic services such as public transportation, treated water, waste collection and sewer treatment. The program began with an in-depth study of the lives of the inhabitants—Specific Global Planning of the Agglomerado da Serra—which was set up in three stages: data survey, the elaboration of a diagnosis of the main problems and the definition of priorities and necessary actions to address them. One of the sustaining bases of the program is community involvement, shaping citizens to become leaders in the community and carry on the process so vital to the Vila Viva project of informing fellow citizens on environmental issues and how to improve the quality of community life. Among the main subjects stressed are correct waste disposal, water conservation and maintenance of public areas.

Another aspect of the program is the support it provides to generating employment and income, in partnership with the Human Work Studies Center of the UFMG (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais). One example of this partnership is the Dressmakers' Cooperative, which makes the construction workers' uniforms. Another example is that 80% of the 450 workers in civil construction projects live in Agglomerado da Serra itself.

The municipal government's social policies are also present in the program through the building of public facilities such as the BH Citizenship Space, Municipal Child Education Units of Child and Health Centers.

Nonetheless, in order for a city to become truly educational, it must share responsibilities

and decisions. In Belo Horizonte, not only the municipal government but also citizens, the private sector and other government bodies have a parcel of responsibility and clear tasks in the permanent construction of a commitment towards building citizenship. In that model, government and society build on each other, acquire responsibilities and share solutions. Encouraging its citizens to participate in the decisions that transform the city's reality is a good path. The exercise of democracy and the promotion of coexistence with diversity, together with strong encouragement to know the city's own history and local culture, is what probably sets an educating city apart from the others. The encouragement of people's participation is perhaps the biggest tool for change and for support of the principles of an educating city: transparency, dialogue with the city, the shaping of citizens who are conscious of their rights and duties. In this regard, the city of Belo Horizonte stands out. Here the government's actions are discussed with the people in different ways. Citizens are involved in the decision-making process through several formal channels such as the municipal councils; and informal channels when the public government turns to the community to encourage dialogue and involve it in distinct stages of public policies: defining needs and planning and carrying out the resolutions of those. The participatory budget is an example of this, allowing citizens to become involved in decisions regarding the allocation of public resources. In 2006 we took this a step further by expanding the process and making it digitally accessible. That resulted in the participation of more than 200,000 citizens.

Thus, being an educational city is not simply about creating efficient educational policies. It is much more than that. It is about deepening democracy and allowing people to become a part of the process and the end result of public actions, and also about sharing responsibility and power with those who are, after all, the major day-to-day educators: the citizens.

An Educating District of Budapest

Gábor Demszky,
Mayor of Budapest
György Alföldi,
Architect

Dear Reader,

I warmly welcome you on behalf of the citizens of Budapest. Our city has been a member of the International Association of Educating Cities for several years now and I am especially pleased that Budapest is the regional center in Central and Eastern Europe.

The aims of IAEC are universal and I am convinced that member cities can benefit a great deal from the experiences of their fellow cities. I am pleased to present to you a short description of one of our major projects in the city, namely the urban renewal program of the Magdolna Quarter. I hope that reading this presentation will provide you with useful information and will be of benefit to your city as well.

Magdolna Quarter, Budapest – Józsefváros District

The Magdolna Quarter Program (Budapest–Józsefváros) was launched in 2005 in Hungary. It is a pioneer project designed to renew a disadvantaged urban district with the involvement of its residents and is based on a broadly encompassing social, cultural, and technical program.

The Józsefváros Quarter—the 8th district of Budapest—is 34 hectares in size, with approximately 12,000 residents. The quarter is the largest poor metropolitan area in Budapest.

Renewal Programs in Budapest

The capital's administrative structure determines how the city develops and how that affects the lives of its inhabitants. A two-tiered administrative system ensures that most tasks are accomplished: in addition to the Budapest City Council there are 23 district councils working in the capital. These councils have a voice in city-scale development policy, although much still remains to be done in terms of fine-tuning this cooperative effort.

In 2004, the Budapest City Council and the Józsefváros local government made a commitment to integrated social urban renewal by creating a consortium: Rév8—Józsefváros Rehabilitation and Urban Development Ltd. It developed the Magdolna Quarter Program¹ as a medium-term renewal project for a 15-year period. In 2005, the City of Budapest decided to launch a number of socially/culturally-based urban renewal pilot projects in several areas of the city. Three urban renewal areas were focused on in Budapest for 2005-2008: Ferencváros (9th district); the so-called Dzsumbuj by Illatos út, Köbánya (10th district); and Bihari út, Józsefváros (8th district), the Magdolna Quarter.

Conditions in the Magdolna Quarter

A large number of disadvantaged families—for the most part Romany families—live in

¹ *REV8* "Regeneration Program in Budapest – Józsefváros, Magdolna Quarter program 2007" available at http://www.rev8.hu/csatolmanyok/eng_dokok/eng_dokok_2.pdf

the Magdolna Quarter. The unemployment rate is the highest here for all of Budapest and the district as well, and the proportion of the working population is the lowest in the city. The education statistics also speak for themselves: the proportion of people without primary schooling is high and the number of those with university studies is low. This is one of the weakest areas in Józsefváros as regards economic potential and the Quarter's position on the employment scale. The crime rate is high in spite of improved public security. Another serious problem is the use and trade of drugs as well as the long history of prostitution in the quarter, which has practically disappeared in public areas.

The Model Renewal Program

The general purpose of the program is to introduce an urban renewal scheme in Hungary where all of the program elements are built upon the active involvement of those living in the quarter. It should act as a catalyst for public programs and thereby develop a uniquely-shaped and attractive part of the city by creating new public and cultural spots and renewal of the existing areas.

The social aim is to improve the overall standard of living by providing appropriate living conditions in three ways: involving local residents in the program, strengthening the unity of the local community, and maintaining social diversity.

The economic aim is to improve the generation of income and self-reliance in the area by developing the local labor market and thereby reducing long-term unemployment. The environmental aim is to expand public and green areas in both size and quality. This will be achieved by creating a sustainable living environment through the continuous upgrading of buildings. This will be imple-

mented in small steps, by saving buildings of architectural value and constructing new housing.

Our programs include: 1) Building renewal with tenant involvement; 2) Public space renewal with Greenkeys;² 3) Community Center; 4) Educating Program; 5) Crime prevention; 6) Employment, Entrepreneurs Program; 7) Community Development Program; 8) "Living Courtyard" Program.

The Community Center and the Educating Program

A complex will be created in the abandoned former Glove Factory providing a space for alternative cultural and training programs and a public cultural space for neighborhood residents. An important feature of the building is its openness and multi-functional capacity.

An important aim of the Community Center, in addition to focusing on community development and providing consultation services, is to support the Erdélyi Primary School education program by offering special sessions focused on fostering creativity and awareness among children from different social and cultural backgrounds attending the school, and at the same time, providing the opportunity for them to test themselves, as well as to play and learn together.

It is most important for children in disadvantaged circumstances to be able—through developing their own knowledge and skills—to overcome those blocks built up over the course of generations. In addition to traditional education, more attention should be paid to creativity, freedom and openness. The proposed digital visual and arts program, in addition to being an asset for the school, could be a true alternative for the young in-

² See the Greenkeys web page (Urban Green as a Key for Sustainable Cities): <http://www.greenkeys-project.net/hu/home.html>

terested in video, photo or other media and for other young people from within or outside the quarter.

The cultural events are designed to bring people of different cultural backgrounds together and encourage acceptance through the openness and playful nature of the activities. The variety of organized programs allows everyone to choose his or her own favorite activity. To date there has been no institutionally organized space in the district, cultural or otherwise, in which to spend free time. The local urban renewal management offices for the quarter will also be located in the building.

The educational program is a key element in the quarter's renewal. As a part of this program the Erdélyi Primary School will be transformed, an institution with new educational tasks will be created (Community Center) and stress will also be placed on kindergarten education.

The renewal of the Erdélyi Primary & Secondary School is fundamental, as it is absolutely essential to have an open education facility providing both quality education and opportunities for continuing education and courses for adult training. The primary effect of the institutional reorganization will be to draw in the primary school—with its nearly 100% Romany student body at present—as well as to provide an opportunity for disadvantaged young people (and adults) in the quarter to obtain a certificate by continuing their primary school education: a prerequisite for many skilled-worker jobs.

The opening and operation of the recreated school that also provides arts education could contribute to change in the longer term, given that it leads to an appreciation of the value of learning and work, and the usefulness of both.

Moving children into the secondary school should "open" the school to the residents

of the quarter, offering new, expansive programs and encouraging the development of the Community Center programs.

The Kidpix "Digital Childhood" creative educational art program began in 2006. Once a week, a four-hour period is set aside for teacher education and a two-hour period is dedicated to the children. Fifteen children and twenty teachers participate in the project. Since the educational program is primarily computer aided, the school needed to bring its computer-rooms up to par, which was completed in October.

A Swedish educational pilot project, the "Tricky Fox," sponsored by the Swedish Embassy and the Swedish Institute was launched in 2006. The weekly project offers a biweekly/2-hour interesting activity for elementary students from grades 1-4. Fifteen pupils participate in the program. In December a little book was created with the help of the children. The program involves close cooperation with libraries.

The development work is meant to be coordinated with the Erdélyi Primary & Secondary School educational program, supporting disadvantaged pupils in order to ease these children's transition from kindergarten to primary school. Currently, the majority representation of Romany children in the two kindergartens of the quarter does not reach the segregation level of the primary school. The kindergartens should also be connected to the primary and secondary school programs as well as to those of the Community Center.

The Community Center and the school together host both the "Public Area Renewal Plan" and the "Employment and Training" programs.

The Educational District

The main purpose of our program is to stitch together the already-torn social fabric. With

an eye to this, we have made it our priority—apart from improving housing conditions—to rebuild the social network: to provide the means for various social and cultural strata to have a voice of their own, represent their own interests, and establish proper social contacts. The renewal of the school's educational program is the first step towards helping different generations of local inhabitants gain these skills, and inspiring children to learn. The second step is to develop a system for lifelong learning, as the adults living here missed out on this first step in their lives; they must be lured back so that they may improve their social skills (to establish new contacts) and develop a competitive edge in the labor market. In this way they will be able to take

responsibility for their own futures. Community center programs will target social “drop-outs”.

Thus, this program is entering uncharted territory, not only in Hungary, but in Eastern Europe as a whole. We planned our program in accordance with the example provided by the Educating Cities program and other EU programs, but there are no guidelines at present to measure the success of our efforts. In light of this we developed an intelligent, constructive, and flexible approach which will allow us to see—year by year—if we are on the right track. In the interest of success we must learn all the time and continue on the path that we have chosen—this is the third phase of our educational district project.

Córdoba, An Educating City

Rosa Aguilar Rivero,
Mayor of Córdoba

After twenty almost-consecutive years of political action based on equality, social justice and freedom, we can say that Córdoba—true to its historical roots—has positively established itself as an Educating City.

The premises that have served as necessary points of departure in order to achieve this are the following:

- The right to education,
- Education as a tool of social change, and
- The city educates.

Government action has an impact on the present and future lives of citizens, on their quality of life and on the city's identity.

The Principles in the Charter of Educating Cities are those that, since 1990, have served us as points of reference in order to build our own individual model.

Staying firm and in line with those principles in a competitive, consumer-oriented and utilitarian society such as ours, has not been—and still is not—without its difficulties. Day-to-day work and a coherent overall plan based on coordination among the different city departments, citizen participation, transparency and information, have served as our governing tools.

We would like to spell this out in the following chart indicating the principles and aims that have materialized in concrete actions:

THE COMMITMENT OF THE CITY (Section 2 of the Charter of Educating Cities)	CITY ACTIONS
Art. 8: "City planning must consider the enormous impact of the urban environment on the development of all individuals."	Two Master Zoning Plans. VIMCORSA, municipal corporation for subsidized housing. Two Strategic Plans for the city. Accessibility Plan.
Art. 9: "The Educating City shall encourage citizen participation from a critical, co-responsible point of view."	Participatory Budget Process. Citizen Participation Guidelines. Subsidy Program for citizen groups.
Art. 10: "The municipal administration must equip the city with spaces, facilities and public services that are suitable for the personal, social, moral and cultural development of all its inhabitants, paying special attention to children and youth."	Network of Civic Centers (10 throughout the city). Network of sports facilities. Network of libraries. Network of Social Service Centers. Educational Center: Road Safety "La Ciudad de los Niños" (Children's City) Park Córdoba Zoo. Playground equipment in all of the parks and squares in the city. Museums: Julio Romero de Torres Museum, Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos (Fortress of the Christian Monarchs), Archeological Museum.

THE COMMITMENT OF THE CITY (Section 2 of the Charter of Educating Cities)	CITY ACTIONS
Art. 11: "Creating a balance with the city's natural surroundings, providing the right to a healthy environment..."	Botanical Garden Foundation. Program of Compliance with Agenda 21. Riverside Renovation Program.
Art. 12: "The city's educational project ..., the values it promotes, the celebrations it organizes...must be the subject of reflection and participation..."	Celebration of the following International Days: Universal Children's Day, Day of Disabled Persons, Day of Peace and Non-Violence, Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, among others. Public School Festival. Guitar Festival. National Flamenco Art Competition. Biennials of Visual Arts and Photography. Cosmopoetic. Celebration of Córdoba patios, gates and balconies.
Art. 14: "The city will make an effort to provide parents with the education they need to help their children mature..."	Parents' School. Family Orientation Service. Support program for the AMPAS (parents and teachers school association). Cooperation with the University, unions and associations for educational renewal, and with the Center of Teacher Training through conferences, seminars, meetings on educational training.
Art. 15: "The city must offer its inhabitants the perspective of occupying their place in society..."	Municipal Institute of Economic Development and Labor. Social Participation Programs.
Art. 16: "The city must be aware of the mechanisms of exclusion and marginalization that affect it..."	Local Immigration Board. 1st Immigration Plan. Unit for Social Intervention for the prevention of child begging.
Art. 17: "The city shall also foster the cooperation between administrations and its citizens freely and democratically organized in institutions in the so-called tertiary sector..."	Local Council for Social Cooperation. 1st Social Cooperation Plan.
Art. 18: "The city will encourage the formation of associations as a form of participation and civil co-responsibility, in order to channel action that provides service to the community..."	Participatory Budget Process. 2nd Citizen Participation Guidelines. Creation of District Councils and Local District Boards. Member of the Commission of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy. Member of the World Social Forum. Participant in the URB-AL Program.
Art. 20: "The educating city must offer all its inhabitants, as a necessary, growing objective for the community, education in the values and practices of a democratic citizenry: respect, tolerance, participation, responsibility and interest in things public..."	Educational Program "Educate for Peace, Coexistence and Solidarity" (pre-school and primary school). Educational Program "Solidarity: everyone's task." "Fathers' and Mothers' School" Program.

Finally, I wish to make clear that the Córdoba project is the result of the work of many and of the strength of citizens, specialists and

politicians to manage to turn ideas into projects and the projects into reality.

The Way Things Are in Dakar

Pape Diop,

Senator and Mayor of the city of Dakar

The realm of education is of prime importance to every human society, above all for developing countries and, in particular, their local authorities.

Sweeping changes are taking place nowadays in local development in most of our countries. This is true of Senegal, for example, where, under Law 96/07 of 22 March 1996, education now falls within the new areas of powers transferred to local authorities, thereby acknowledging the existence and importance of these bodies.

In a context of this nature, the construction of a developed, peaceable and lasting urban environment demands that the training and education of social stakeholders in civic awareness and citizenship—encompassing values, relationships with others, ways of life, etc.—should fall increasingly and permanently within the remit of the management of our local authorities.

The policy of Dakar City Council on this issue is close to that laid down by the government of Senegal, the purpose of which is to achieve sustainable development, peaceable social integration and the participation of all citizens in the life of the nation.

Our strategy is in essence based on willingness, listening, collaboration and communication in order to achieve true popular support for our actions, an indisputable factor in building social cohesion.

This is the purpose behind the creation of Dakar Municipal Radio, which is intended to serve as a link between the municipal authorities and citizens.

We raise awareness, we inform, we define and we contribute to the education of the population, in particular our youngsters, in order to make them model citizens and advocates of peaceful cohabitation between people from different ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds.

Unfailing Support for National Efforts

The desires and aspirations of minorities are systematically identified and taken into account in order to prevent the build-up of frustration or radical opposition characterised by struggles for power, uprisings and civil wars.

Within the strict realm of knowledge, in addition to our bold and determined policy on universal education, in which we place great importance on schooling for girls, we have directed our efforts towards the Directorate of Education and Culture (DEC) by creating a modern infrastructure reflected in the existence of a commendable blueprint for schools (the ratio of establishments to the number of pupils), as well as other laudable results-driven initiatives.

We support a government that devotes 40% of the national budget to education, whereas the target for Africa stands at 20%. This policy has resulted in the democratisation of education, above all in the realm of nursery schooling and playschools, as demonstrated by the Case des Tout-Petits (Tots' Cabin), a project set up by Senegal's head of state that has been welcomed by UNESCO.

We also encourage citizens' access to the information and communication technolo-

gies through training and social and professional placements. This programme is aimed at children who drop out of school and at housewives and unemployed young adults.

Collaboration Accord

In view of the close involvement of citizens in the development of the city, we are drawing up a useful and friendly collaboration accord between the municipal authorities and development agents based on awareness and mobilisation around the issues of education and training.

This accord embraces the two major federations of the association movement: the Collective of Local Development Committees and the Alliance of Development Movements and Associations. These bodies are arenas for reflection, consensus and action and provide

an opportunity to evaluate every category of stakeholder, be they civic or institutional.

The experience of the city of Dakar is undoubtedly modest, yet it confirms our optimism regarding the proposition of a new urban culture that is more productive and which promotes the citizenry through partnership management of the city.

It encourages the commitment of every element in the city and it fosters activities and projects set up by citizens working to help our city take its place among the 'Educating cities' and directing their efforts determinedly towards the emergence of a knowledge city.

Nevertheless, this experience in Dakar, like others elsewhere in poor countries, will unquestionably need the support of organizations such as ours and of development project partners if it is to remain on course and to spread.

The Educational Dimension of Local Government Policies in Genoa

Marta Vincenzi,
Mayor of Genoa

Participating in what? Participating How?

This year, Genoa Educating City will celebrate its eighth year. It is perhaps too brief a time to be able to evaluate the possible success and concrete results but it is enough time to observe the ground covered and to imagine future directions to be taken.

The analysis and reviews of its history, especially those of 2005, underline the need to reweave the threads of this project with the present changes—political and social, global and local—taking place at this time while considering new projects, other tools and varying commitments.

The need to bring the Genoa Educating Cities map up to date is a question extending from the growing democratic demand for effective participation and the search for space by public services operating in wider educative contexts.

The initial proposal in December of 1999 was intentionally characterised by the extent of involvement and philosophical content while offering a vehicle for the theme of collective construction of an educating project for the city. Certainly, it was a cultural project aimed at sharing a vision: the idea of a city for people and, above all, their relationships. The town authorities supported this idea of combining its own capacities and those of the citizens involved, individually and on an organizational level, interacting in given mutual spaces in order to define the quality of life in the city together.

Later, development of this idea brought, through a participatory process evolving

over three years, clarity to the original concept with regard to the political and institutional aspects. Discussion was focused on the function of local government in the development of territories, in keeping with the international debate dealing with connection models as well as urban and social changes witnessed, or perhaps even suffered, in other cities, considered as veritable laboratories. The same aims were discussed during the 10th Congress of the International Association of Educating Cities, held in Genoa in November 2004. Perhaps not all of the answers and solutions were found or applied, however, the risk of using only local references was avoided.

The initial proposal placed such issues and concepts on the table as government, governability and representation along with those concerning the public domain, collective decisions and decentralization. Initiatives, seminars and debates were used to broaden the circle of dialogue and opinions among the movements, groups and individuals who, in the 70s, lived through the first great period of participation in our country, those who combined their own professional interests with civic commitments, and those who were just beginning public life.

This debate has been gradually broken down by the confrontation of different forms of authority and the demand to participate in decisions regarding the common good. Different points of view, subjects and languages coexist and conflict: from influential institutions to enlightened political leaders, from examples of civil coexistence formed at the foundations of society to projects promoted by the town hall, and from central government policies to territorial relationships.

The question of dialectics between power and participation is part of the complex discussion linked to the postmodern meaning of democracy and the attempts, still in progress, to combine the transformations of the evolutions of western democratic systems with the presence of an idea of plural and changing power.

Issues related to this discussion can be seen today in some of the local best practices, well-defined results and isolated responses for quality in our city, but which are faced, however,—accompanied by a chorus of denunciations—with the absence and inability of traditional politics to provide ideas and instruments. Certainly, in many cases these are efforts that perhaps may be too isolated to be read, interpreted and understood perfectly.

In reality, the discussion on these aspects has not been, and still is not, easy because conflict arose on the ground in the wake of the crisis of the *State of well-being* models. The differences, the dysfunctions and the withdrawals that have been building up over time cannot be resolved using legal engineering of the concept of subsidiarity, tributary to European law and, today, constitutional law. The political praxis affected by issues such as social unity, public responsibility and citizenship, in reality, are deeply compromised by the collision and the instability of two fronts: the search for new public-private associative relationships and that of the serious reorientation of public resources.

The Eugenia proposal (named after the Genoese attempt, the Eugenia Pact) in fact was quite commendable in that it elaborated, confronted and reconsidered questions about the future of the city through an interpretive framework that spoke of overcoming the management, administrative and bureaucratic approximations while highlighting wealth and the undeniable aspects of other rapprochements.

Symbolically, this represented a place for development, testing and comparing positions, knowledge and expectations solely to

create relationships, to work on differences and to maintain the confidence generated. Thus the debate was centred on individuals believing in overcoming membership and individualism using a concept of participation that remains to be developed in the wake of research based on values, idealism and passions and that should be promoted as an engine for social unity for groups and organisations. A choice was made to discuss the pact, before subsequent developments, as a sustainable form of collective return, conceived as something based on fiduciary capital rather than being solely based on the economic components of social dynamics. The eugenics identity is composed of all this data.

The profound belief driving this debate is that emergency actions, disorganised and disoriented, are useless whereas time for consideration and a certain distance regarding everyday life are required in order to adopt new points of view, to discover new horizons, and to sort out complexities, etc. Proposal of this participation was strongly ideal, because it attempted to give priority to the quality of citizenship while recognizing the existence of multiple routes of access to public life through which people, citizens, active and conscious groups, could be reached.

Thus, today, after almost a decade following the experience of the Eugenia pact, after a period of consideration of services and of the establishment of other actors in society, and also after having begun, in 2004, a social planning process for the city supporting interventions and resources linked to the involvement of citizens, the public administration (Civica Amministrazione) is introducing participation as the first point on its own political agenda as a method and a substance of government.

So, that participation continues to be a political question linked to the growing demands for democracy and the duty of citizens to concur with decisions having a significant impact on daily life of neighbourhoods and

territories. Often these decisions are defined as “public” from a procedural and administrative point of view whereas, in reality, they are experienced as “private” decisions from the procedural and political point of view in the broadest sense. Certainly, this kind of decision is distanced from the recognition and approval of a shared public sphere.

The work that the public administration attempts to implement, while giving meaning to the words of the Educating Cities roadmap which states that *the educating city will promote the participation of citizens from a critical and responsible point of view*, is today centred on an analysis of the existing participation tools and those that remain to be built.

More dedication and commitment is required to promote technical, procedural and administrative participation while appreciating its significance and power: citizens must know how to use the tools put at their disposal through legislation.

The urban centre is among the instruments to be evaluated and that, by applying the resolution on architectural quality of the urban and rural environment approved by the Council of the European Union in 2001, confirms that urban democracy is indeed a central point between municipal administration and the population.

Indeed, the belief that urban regeneration and cohesive social unity not only provide quality of life in our cities but also help us to combat exclusion and marginality, is fundamental.

In the wake of other cities who have established the centres, Genoa hopes to establish and maintain dialogue and discussion on major urban development processes, announcing and discussing them within a framework of listening that will place the concept of co-responsibility in decision-making at the centre of debate. The different visions of reality

must be constructive, must define a framework for thinking, build proposals of a discourse aimed at enlarging the public space for openings and not for violations, for exchanges and not for attacks and for conflicts but not for destruction.

The project to draft the Genoa Social Balance Sheet (*Bilancio Sociale de Genova*), with regard to relations with other countries, is in keeping with the city's social regulations and planning that have already been implemented. Measurements of the impact of local government policies regarding the well-being of citizens is both an important milestone for an administration and a fundamental beginning for the spread of practices and tools for listening to and acting upon collective participation.

Otherwise, all of these objectives belong to a final purpose symbolised by a leap forward in quality, the construction of a veritable Project for Genoa, a project that the public administration is promoting but cannot complete alone.

The dynamic aspect of this project should be expressed through the ideas desired and put forth by young people and that the city is open to and capable of providing. Our idea of Genoa Educating City continues to reflect awareness that cities require a new definition of the political function: as a practice that cannot dispense with the rapprochement of knowledge and the appropriation of reality as a purely phenomenological element, but that can also never interrupt the continuum of service, proximity and respect.

We would hope that all of the efforts implemented by local government to support efforts to reconstruct communities *for* society will fill this ever-growing void in relations between institutions and society.

To What Extent Is the Capital of the Republic of Togo, in Western Africa, an Educating City?

Lodé Aouissi,
Mayor of Lomé

Lomé, the national capital of Togo, is a coastal city with over a million inhabitants that has consolidated itself nationally and throughout Western Africa as a driving force for the social, economic and cultural development of other cities in both Togo and the inland sub-Saharan countries.

Lomé is a city that offers a wealth of education and training opportunities for young people and adults through its numerous schools, improvement and literacy centers, vocational training centers, etc.

These resources, whether they belong to the private or public sector, are open to all of the city's inhabitants looking for a very positive cultural environment. Everyone is welcome to make use of the many cultural centers as well as the sports, social, health, and communication infrastructures. The media (press, radio, television) are in the process of development, while Internet access is assured thanks to a high density of cybercafés in the urban area.

The city has a number of unique symbolic places and structures that leave lasting impressions with inhabitants and visitors alike, such as the "Colombe de la Paix" traffic circle, the city's main symbol. Lomé is considered to be a messenger of peace, an educating city for peace, and a haven for peace.

Living in Lomé gives you a different citizen experience, one that enables you to avoid isolation and instead belong to a community that is linked through religion, activities,

neighborhood, sports, leisure, and much more.

Thanks to its cosmopolitanism, the city of Lomé is wide open to the world. It educates every citizen in the fight against racial discrimination, and towards tolerance and acceptance of others. The city districts facilitate the cohabitation of different social strata (rich and poor) without any marginalization. The habitude of respecting others is still alive, which demonstrates the richness of traditional values that include showing consideration for the elderly, children and youth. Family life educates people about their responsibility towards others from an early, impressionable age.

The city educates about maintaining a healthy environment. Collective actions are organized to improve the city's healthiness through the Lomé Clean City Operation. The municipality invites every citizen of Lomé to participate in cleaning up their city.

The city also educates about civic-mindedness and prevention (security, traffic, health, etc.) through the associative movements that transmit mass education. The abundance of meeting places is an asset for Lomé that remains, above all, an important transit point, a crossroad of encounters and intercultural exchanges.

Lomé creates, for all its citizens, spaces that are propitious to urban actions and the development of debates and activities to promote local democracy.

Montevideo: A Learning Space

Ricardo Ehrlich,
Mayor of Montevideo

The early space of exploration that opens up beyond the family sphere, inevitably becomes an important point of reference throughout life, surpassing time and distance, when those elements are attained that create a sense of belonging, that create identities and are linked to those involved. These are reference points one comes to love, contexts in which one feels loved and which engender this initial bond of belonging; with the inflections of a language, the profiles and colors of a landscape, the smells, tastes and sounds that one discovers in public spaces.

Urban spaces which generously open themselves to people, continue creating reference points in the course of one's life and for all of one's life: for those born in their midst, for those adopting them in one period or another, and for those who visit and discover them for the first time. The beauty, culture, history or material richness of these spaces are not sufficient if that subtle bond of belonging isn't established.

Taking care of the human spaces in the city is what gives it this special quality and is key in the creation of social coexistence and cohesion. But that includes—and very much so—recognizing the role of the city as a learning space. Beyond the link with the formal educative system and its different levels—which

can vary from city to city—the urban space is an educating space in and of itself. One reads a city, just as one reads nature: you read a building, you read a public space, you read the design of the public services. Sometimes the messages are limited, and other times overflowing with warmth and poetry.

A city, a local space, must open doors and paths to follow, to explore. Paths which lead to unique experiences of personal discovery, paths which are taken once and again, just like children's stories which are told and re-told and generate security and confidence. But these doors and paths must also lead to learning and the discovery of abilities that are not only developed within the spheres of formal education and not only meant to support those spheres.

The city should be, for all, from the time a child takes his/her first steps and throughout life, a space for learning. That is what builds quality and dignity of life. That is what builds city and society. Giving priority to urgent issues and battling against exclusion should not diminish the importance of building spaces for learning, for discovering skills and acquiring abilities; on the contrary, these are necessary building blocks for a cohesive society committed to the principles of fairness.

Non-Formal Education: An Initiative for the Residents of Rennes

Edmond Hervé,
Mayor of Rennes

In my view, the mayor of an educating city must perform a conscious and comprehensive concept of his or her action.

I. Exposition

We need to build “a new equality,” an equality of knowledge. Civilisation and the knowledge society are poised, waiting for us. It is our job to identify the existing social, economic and financial inequalities, but also the cultural, educational and scientific inequalities. It is our task to identify the regional divide that these inequalities are a part of. By accurately diagnosing them, we will make it easier to select and mobilise the resources likely to reduce them.

The second point to be made is that there is no longer a “time for education” restricted to the first stage of life. The time for education is always with us.

Education throughout the length and breadth of our lives, in every aspect of life, this is the challenge that faces us in modern times.

The third point is that public schools in France have ranged themselves against society in order to impose the values of the Republic, namely liberty, equality and fraternity. There have been reasons for these “schools as sanctuaries” and they have had their successes, but it is now evident that we need to make them more open.

II. Solutions

These are founded on principles, a method, ethics and organisation.

A) Principles

There are some in our societies who are engaged in promoting “non-formal education,” a form of education that has sprung from the world of employment, cities, associations, trade unions, political parties and the organisations that work with educational establishments.

Every piece of knowledge needs to be passed on and to be useful.

Non-formal education is not opposed to formal education, that is to say, academic and continuing education leading to qualifications.

It is politic for us to find the connection that will unite them and ensure that they complement each other.

This search concerns not only the realm of education. It governs the relationship that should exist between our institutions, and society is underpinned by institutional responsibility and social solidarity.

Democracy and effectiveness both enjoin us to engage in a dialogue that encompasses society as a whole, including employers and employees.

In recognising the “Educating city,” we consecrate this society-wide dialogue.

In effect, these terms describe the mobilisation of all the elements of the city for the benefit of the creation and distribution of knowledge.

To talk of the “Educating City” is to suggest modesty (the limits of schools has to be acknowledged) and exigency, since we need to make a complex system function, to bring about co-education and to abandon the unilateralism of yesterday.

B) An Example of the Methods

I believe that every collective, every public institution, ought to have an “educational initiative” that is in keeping with its competencies and properly coordinated.

By way of an example, as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Rennes University Hospital, I have insisted that the hospital’s strategic plan should include “education in health” under two headings, for people both inside and outside the establishment.

As mayor, I see the shared educational initiative as based on partnerships, all-encompassing, forward-looking, specific, firm and open to the public. An initiative with these characteristics will serve to mobilise, inform, regulate and establish contracts.

C) Ethics

An initiative of this nature ought to be interdisciplinary and pluralist, and it should involve the realms of education, instruction and training and citizens.

D) Organisation

The watchword should be trust rather than suspicion (the principle of precaution derives specifically from suspicion, does it not?).

For reasons of economics, a solution should be found to the legislative crisis (in other words, its content, meaning and effectiveness).

The primacy of communication and excessive sensitivity towards the media and public opinion prompt changes in direction and leave the authorities disoriented.

Good organisation calls for good relations between the decentralised tier of the state and decentralised authorities (in the case of France, regional, departmental and city).

Turning to the city, we should note the importance of relations between towns and cities, a level of apprehension that is perfectly legitimate at a time when a sense of multiregional belonging is developing.

More specifically, in the building of non-formal education, we can see the contribution made by three essential entities: cities, the association movement and companies.

- Cities: these are centres with a wealth of resources near at hand. Imagine the knowledge that can be extracted from clean-ups, improvements, transport, twinning arrangements, energy consumption, history, demography, local democracy, etc.
- The association movement: regardless of the challenges associations are constantly forced to face (changes in actors, level of professionalism, territorial remit, demands for support, limited resources, etc.), the movement complements the representation of society, harbours skills, is capable of adapting to new circumstances, puts democracy into practice, and supports lasting as well as temporary constructs, institutional and social structures. It brings difference to life.
- Companies: these too play a part in the realm of non-formal education.

They survive on knowledge, they keep it up to date and they anticipate it. Let us take a construction company as an example: it needs to be familiar with its mate-

rials, to protect the environment, to bear the neighbours in mind, to safeguard the health and safety of its employees, to calculate and assess, etc.

Like cities and associations, companies too need formal and non-formal education.

III - Conclusion

The steps taken in non-formal education are good for democracy and the values of equality, liberty and fraternity.

We need to win the battle and establish the need for it and its meaning.

To achieve this, the educating city must reinstate the idea of the future in the collective civic consciousness.

Doing this in turn calls for a philosophy simply termed laicism.

Laicism is not limited solely to the relationship with religion or schools but concerns society as a whole since it involves freeing oneself from the religious, financial, technocratic, partisan and media powers-that-be and from subservience to the moment or the ephemeral.

This laicism inspires an approach intended to benefit individuals and society, and conduct that eschews exploitation and manipulation.

São Paulo, an Educating City

Gilberto Kassab,
Mayor of São Paulo

A member of the world network of Educating Cities since 2004, São Paulo was born to educate in 1554, and has continued to do so ever since. Over four centuries ago, the Portuguese Jesuits climbed the Serra do Mar and, on reaching the Piratininga plateau, realized it was the perfect location for building a school. Since then, this site where the city of São Paulo was founded—has been known as the Pátio do Colegio.

Today, one of the City's main programs is called *São Paulo é uma Escola (São Paulo Is a School)*. It encourages students to spend more time at school, where they are offered an extracurricular array of cultural activities, sports, recreation, arts and crafts, and so on. The spaces at many schools are used to the full for a variety of workshops and other activities.

The program is not solely about getting young people out of the streets, though this is certainly a common objective and one deserving of many projects aimed at this segment of the population. More than that, *São Paulo é uma Escola* champions the universal right to participate in activities that enrich the social capital of students and teachers alike, in addition to providing continuity to the educating spirit of the capital city. Furthermore, concern for continuity is a hallmark of the current administration, which has sought to cultivate—rather than abandon—the initiatives of its predecessors.

Such was the case, for example, with the Unified Education Centers (CEUs). The so-

cial and educational plan of the former administration was maintained while introducing changes designed to add functionality to the facilities. Thus, children in daycare and preschool stayed on the ground floor and were not moved to the upper floors—something done in the original project that made it difficult for employees and parents to move about, especially those with small children.

Taking care of education is part of the history and tradition of São Paulo. From its earliest years, “the Portuguese colonists mixed with the indigenous people, giving rise to an original society, and leading São Paulo to be considered the most Brazilian of cities, creating a new pattern, formed by Portuguese, blacks and the indigenous.”¹

Interculturality constitutes the very nature of this city. To get an idea of how far back that goes, figures from the census carried out in 1893 indicate that, “of the city's 130,775 inhabitants, only 59,307 were Brazilian; the remaining 71,468 were foreigners: Italians (35% of the total), Portuguese (11%), Spanish (4%) and German (2%).”²

In São Paulo, many different races, cultures, languages, values and beliefs have always lived together. Brazilians from all states find their second birthplace here. Immigrants from every continent settle here to start families, in perfect peace, without the slightest trace of the ancestral enmity that caused such strife back in their homelands.

¹ Toledo, Roberto Pompeu de. *A capital da solidão, uma história de São Paulo, das origens a 1900*. Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2003.

² Ibid.

As mayor, and in consideration of the right to the city, to aesthetic fruition and to new spaces that open the door to new social exchanges, we now undertake an arduous battle to rescue the urban landscape. The *Cidade Limpa* (Clean City) project aims to recover the architectural identity, harmony and history of the buildings and monuments that constitute our city's heritage. The project involves establishing regulations for the placement of billboards and identification plates and advertising, where lack of control and abuse hid the true city from its inhabitants and created a chaotic atmosphere that demanded prompt corrective action.

The *Cidade Limpa* project is underway, receiving broad support from the local population and making a surprising impact. Similar to an archaeological dig, it reveals a new city, one that was unseen for at least three generations. Many young people have expressed surprise on discovering—along the very same streets and avenues where they have always walked—the city as described in stories and appearing in photographs from their grandparents and great-grandparents.

Continuing with the issue of quality of life, we will finally control pollution by imposing a regulation on all motor vehicles. Given the topography of the city—which faces huge difficulties every winter in trying to rid the air of contaminants—we can no longer postpone the introduction of this environmental protection measure. This is an educational line of action that will raise citizens' awareness of their duty to the city in which they live and breathe.

The municipal government has also signed the Earth Charter and the set of measures proposed by the UN to conserve the planet's environment. A number of actions will be carried out by the different departments of the City Council. These include: building schools according to specific ecological guidelines, the use of eco-friendly materials, incentives for reducing water and power consumption, and so on.

With the recently launched *Comunidade Protegida* (*Protected Community*) project, people and their environment are top priority—not vehicles. Thanks to this measure, residential neighborhoods should remain free from alternative flows of traffic caused by vehicles trying to avoid congested areas. The measure is still in its pilot stage, but the wider sidewalks, additional landscaping and expanded meeting points will undoubtedly lead to citizens enjoying a new relationship with their neighborhoods and their city.

In São Paulo, new generations are being brought up to live together, without prejudices, and openly discuss contrasts and differences. In this respect, the City Council support for the Gay Pride Parade is noteworthy. In 2007, the event brought more than three million people together on Avenida Paulista. This happens to be another legacy of past administrations.

The intrinsically educating nature of the city is also revealed in the urbanization of *favelas* (shanty towns) such as Paraisópolis and Heliópolis. In all the *favelas* undergoing the process of urbanization, the improvement of physical and environmental conditions has made a huge impact on the sociability and self-esteem of residents. Councils have been set up in all the *favelas*, formed by representatives of the residents, public authorities and the social organizations working there.

When we promote aid programs for those living in the streets, and when we provide skilled employees to offer these people a decent shelter, the city is also educating. This is a contentious and controversial subject. However, if we realize that the right to the city presupposes certain rules for coexistence and limits designed to protect public space, then it will be easier for us to join forces to find solutions that are respectful of needs and desires, and offer dignity to the people living in this situation.

There are many examples of how São Paulo coordinates its public policies and sectorial

actions based on the concept of the educating city. One of these is the *Virada Cultural*. On the most recent occasion of this festival, held May 5-6, 2007, 3.5 million residents of São Paulo were able to attend, free of charge, 350 events at 80 different locations throughout the city, for 24 hours nonstop, including: theater, dance, music, shows, movies, choral singing, *sarões* (soirées), pop concerts, lectures, and so on. Once again, the City

Council offered a wide variety of events to the citizens of São Paulo, who now consider the *Virada Cultural* as a can't-miss event on their calendars.

Through its efforts to develop better, more sensitive and capable citizens, our City Council is adding to the legacies of the educators who founded São Paulo.

Vallenar, an Educating City: An Ongoing Challenge

Juan Horacio Santana Álvarez,
Mayor of Vallenar

On July 8, 1998, at the initiative of Mayor Juan Horacio Santana, and with the unanimous agreement of the municipal council, our city formally joined the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC). That decision started a process aimed at developing our city by focusing primarily on education. It marked the start of a search for paths forward that has enabled us to build this dream by working together with the community.

The next step was to set up a working committee to identify the best way to move forward with the initiative. A short time later, the city created a department to coordinate projects with the community and schools. Through its various departments, the local government is carrying out efforts that are gradually moving us onto the right path, while maintaining a broad perspective that stresses integration of all members of the community. In this context, it is important to open up intersecting spaces for participation and innovation.

New perspectives are gradually emerging. In terms of urban priorities, a very rundown area (where the Huasco River passes through the city) needs to be restored. The plan is to urbanize this area, create a number of green areas, and build sports and community facilities. These projects will generate multi-functional spaces for outdoor activities and provide areas where people can meet and participate, thus improving quality of life for residents.

Construction and development of this project is ongoing. Given the cost and the scope of the undertaking, it is being carried out in stages. One aim is to correct a situation in which the city has turned its back on the river. The project will include the eventual creation

of two educational centers of higher learning—the headquarters of the Universidad de Atacama and an environmental technology center—at the two points where the river enters and leaves the city. The establishment of these centers is expected to be a decisive step forward in the process of incorporating this new urban space in the city, generating private investment that will in turn lead to the creation of new centers of cultural, recreational and commercial activity.

For their part, municipal departments have also worked on a number of projects. The Transportation Department has created an educational campaign featuring a character called “Transitín,” aimed at raising awareness in road safety. Activities are carried out with schools, and groups of child traffic inspectors convey to their peers and family members the importance of responsible road behavior.

Health campaigns are undertaken by the Vallenar Educating City Community Committee. This committee was set up for the purpose of improving specific health indicators based on a broad approach that seeks to change behavioral patterns which can improve quality of life. The committee is, first and foremost, participatory and focuses on generating collaborative partnerships, providing training, maintaining an intersectorial scope and building a network of diverse participants.

Additionally, in order to promote the participation of organizations, a competitive fund was created to finance projects based on the “educating city” principles. Financing has been provided for projects related to heritage, sports, art and the environment. Those receiving assistance are based on principles such as participation, working in collabo-

rative partnerships, freedom of expression, intergenerational dialogue, quality of life, the intersection of education and innovation, and valuing identity and origins. This is a very valuable undertaking for us because it enables organizations to plan, develop and carry out actions aimed at making Vallendar an educating city, while leaving them enough autonomy to ensure the creation of new spaces for community-developed innovation.

Other community efforts are geared toward providing support for those in need. For example, at the end of the year, a time when family budgets are overstretched, the campaign known as “Vallendar Puro Corazón” (Vallendar Pure Heart) is run to guarantee that everything needed for a proper holiday meal is delivered to the homes of those who need help. The campaign ensures that all local people are able to enjoy a family gathering during the festive season.

The campaign engages community organizations in an activity that employs the principle of solidarity, within the framework of the concepts that define an educating city. Now nine years running, the campaign is proving to be increasingly successful. Neighborhood residents’ associations participate in the decision-making process for the campaign, working with health centers and schools in each area. Together, these groups form area committees that define how the campaign will be carried out, who the beneficiaries will be, and how the packages will be delivered.

The projects described above exemplify the effort being made by this local government to build an educating city by working hand-in-hand with the community. We see education as a complex human activity, not simply a matter of developing skills and competencies based on a defined set of objectives. This understanding underlies every decision related to the development of our city and the specific actions taken based on our over-

all vision. The aim is to advance the development of the city by: maintaining our identity, strengthening the community, improving social harmony, and receiving participation and input from all areas.

At the same time, we recognize our weak points and are conscious of the need to address them. When the Educating City Project got underway in Vallendar with the creation of a working committee to develop and implement the idea, it was believed that this office should go above and beyond municipal authority. However, as it became operational, the committee faced ongoing changes as it strived to find the best way to shape the experience through a formal plan of action.

Over the last 10 years, a number of successful efforts have been carried out. More and more people in the city know about and identify with the project in broad terms, as an undertaking aimed at bringing everyone (local government and the community) together to build an educating city. Nevertheless, there is still much to be done. The efforts already underway need to be better integrated, and all municipal work—planning, general management and corporate image—needs to be more clearly defined to convey a message that is consistent with the values and principles of the educating cities project. An effort also needs to be made to recruit other cities to the project and generate development links with these twin communities. This step will also contribute to strengthening the overall project.

The challenge is great. We need to join forces and act with collective determination. We need to believe that together we can build a better city, one that draws us all in and effectively facilitates each individual’s development, one that provides opportunities for growth and strengthens the local government, which has made the decision to pursue a development option based on working and learning together with the community.

Epilogue

Epilogue

*Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura,
Director-General of UNESCO*

Koïchiro Matsuura (Tokyo, Japan, 1937) has been serving as Director-General of UNESCO since 1999. He studied at the University of Tokyo School of Law and received a B.A. in economics from Haverford College, USA. Mr Matsuura began his diplomatic career in Ghana, leading to a lifelong passion for the cultures and people of Africa. During a highly accomplished diplomatic career, he served as Counsellor at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C., as Consul General in Hong Kong, and as Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, where he was Japan's Sherpa for the G-7 Summit.

In 1999, while serving as Japan's Ambassador to France and chairing UNESCO's flagship World Heritage Committee, he was elected by Member States to his first term as Director-General of UNESCO, a position he continues to hold following his re-election in 2005. Mr Matsuura has authored numerous books on UNESCO, international relations, the intersection between diplomacy and development cooperation as well as a history of the G-7 Summit.

Challenges to Cities in the 21st Century

With the world population growing annually by about 70 million people, urbanization is taking place at an unprecedented scale and pace. This means that the battle to attain the Millennium Development Goals will be won or lost in cities. Unless major investments are made in urban development over the next two decades, the majority of the growing urban population in the South will face the risks of poverty, deplorable housing conditions, poor health and sanitation, poor nutrition and low productivity. Yet, notwithstanding the threat of increasing urban poverty, cities are also engines of development and social change, as well as centres of communication and cultural expression, innovation and inter-cultural exchange.

International events such as the World Urban Forum III, held in Vancouver, Canada, in June 2006, attest to the important and complex roles that cities play as:

- areas that generate riches—but also social exclusion and segregation;
- valuable places of heritage;
- spaces that suffer the greatest attacks on the environment;
- spaces where ways of life and societal values combine modernity and tradition;
- places where collective identities are re-defined.

What needs to be done in order to maximize the opportunities and minimize the risks of

accelerated urban development? What, in particular, can UNESCO do?

UNESCO and Cities: Education for Sustainable Urban Development

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), of which UNESCO is lead agency and international coordinator, provides a framework for stakeholders at all levels to move forward in building sustainable and inclusive urban environments. The Decade draws attention to the vital role education can play in tackling such challenges as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, gender inequality, health, conflict, and the violation of human rights. The Decade is also a framework for collaboration and networking, calling on all those engaged in addressing these development challenges to work together in partnership.

Education and training are the most valuable assets of cities in the context of globalization. Cities offer many opportunities for education. At neighbourhood level, the school is a unique means of establishing connections between global problems and local life, of enabling change and facilitating acquisition of the knowledge and skills required to function as an active and responsible citizen. Local authorities have a strategic role to play in making these means of training and expression available. In this area, the role of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) is of a catalytic importance. Partners such as United Cities and Local Governments, Metropolis and UNESCO National Commissions and Centres also contribute to these actions.

UNESCO views cities as the main centres of thought and action when it comes to education and learning about sustainable development. To maximize this potential, the UNESCO Chair “Growing up in Cities” at Cornell University (USA) has established a platform for children and city professionals aimed at empowering children to shape their urban existence and encouraging city mayors to involve children in urban management (e.g. in Bangalore, India; Johannesburg, South Africa; and Trondheim, Norway).

In addressing daily living conditions and sociocultural issues, the activities of the UNESCO Chairs “Landscape and Environment” (Montreal, Canada) and “Urban Policies and Citizenship” (Lyon, France) clearly show that people are at the heart of urban development challenges. Their specific knowledge, know-how, identity, social links and settlement patterns are vital to forming effective policy decisions.

Lifelong education, a concept at the centre of UNESCO’s priorities, covers basic schooling, adult and community education, technical and vocational education, and higher education—vital elements engaging the responsibility of local authorities, who themselves often need capacity-building. Inculcating concern for the environment is a basic part of education for sustainable development. All age groups must learn about the need for an economical consumption of energy and raw materials and the importance of reutilization and recycling—and accept the resulting changes in lifestyles. If everyone possesses the requisite knowledge, skills and will to live sustainably, then conflict management, decision-making, project development and choice of appropriate technologies will be greatly facilitated.

Balancing Urban Growth and the Environment

As cities grow in population and sprawl in size, they place a huge strain on natural resources and the environment. Water, in par-

ticular, is becoming an increasingly fragile resource. UNESCO’s International Hydrological Programme (IHP) seeks to improve knowledge of hydrological processes and to develop approaches for the assessment and sound management of water resources. A particularly novel project deals with “Urban Water Conflicts,” seeking to define the different types of water-related conflicts in cities. Another innovative initiative is the “SWITCH Project” for urban water management, coordinated by UNESCO-IHE, which aims at developing efficient and interactive urban water systems and services for the world’s newly emerging megacities.

Urban sprawl and pollution adversely affect the natural environment and biodiversity both inside and outside cities. To minimize their effects, UNESCO, within the framework of the Man and the Biosphere programme (MAB), upholds the integrated ecosystem approach to urban management, applying the biosphere reserve concept to the city and its hinterland.

Fighting Exclusion

In large cities, education policies have to cater for highly contrasting populations. Providing education for all, in particular for girls, people with disabilities, the poorest and immigrants, is complicated and requires the expertise and collaboration of numerous partners.

The joint UN-HABITAT/UNESCO initiative “Urban Policies and the Right to the City: Rights, Responsibilities and Citizenship,” launched in 2005, seeks to promote ‘inclusive cities’ and targets mayors, municipalities, city professionals and international NGOs by providing information kits, capacity-building training seminars and examples of best practices.

The intention is not to propose an international normative instrument on ‘the right to the city,’ but rather to promote an international research project identifying best prac-

tices in the field of law and urban planning such as inter-religious municipal councils, citizens' municipal charters on rights and responsibilities, the participation of women in urban management, and the spatial and social integration of migrants in cities. All these areas are included in the UN-HABITAT campaign on urban governance, and in both UNESCO's strategy on human rights and the Organization's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.

Reinventing Local Democracy by Promoting Empowerment

The city is an essential link between the individual and the state, and a major instrument in promoting democratic citizenship. UNESCO programmes include projects like the "International Coalition of Cities against Racism," "Working together with Migrants" and research projects about cities and social transformation, urban policies and democracy, the renewal of historical cities and the training of city professionals.

UNESCO accords high priority to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups through actions that enable local communities to voice their needs and participate in decision-making processes. The International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) provides wide-ranging support to media and communication development projects in urban areas.

Making the City a Place for Intercultural Dialogue and a Living and Liveable Cultural Heritage Space

Throughout history, cities have been cradles of civilization and major forces for intercultural dialogue. Initiatives such as the "Creative Cities," "Cities for Peace Database" or "Culture in the Neighbourhoods" illustrate UNESCO's efforts to promote pluralistic policies supporting the diversity of cultural identities and expressions at the local level.

The World Heritage Cities Programme was established in the framework of UNESCO's World Heritage Convention, along with networks of cities such as the Organization of World Heritage Cities, which aims at enhancing the exchange of experience at the international level. The Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture and the Declaration on the Conservation of Historic Urban Landscapes, both drawn up recently, serve as guiding tools for the integrated management and planning of historic urban areas.

IAEC's Role in UNESCO's Actions for Urban Sustainability

IAEC is a major partner of UNESCO in such projects as the Coalition of Cities Against Racism and the joint UN-HABITAT/UNESCO initiative "Urban Policies and the Right to the City: Rights, Responsibilities and Citizenship." IAEC's Charter for Educating Cities is an excellent example of an international normative tool addressing education for citizenship and the rights and responsibilities to be shared by local authorities and urban dwellers.

Consequently, it would be highly beneficial if IAEC would encourage the involvement of cities that are already very active in the IAEC network to join UNESCO initiatives for creating inclusive urban societies, in particular the joint research project on indicators and parameters for inclusive cities, which will be launched in February 2008 at the World Conference on Development of Cities in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Furthermore, the contribution of IAEC cities to the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development would be a solid asset for launching innovative initiatives to promote education for new forms of citizenship, cultural pluralism, and the sustainable use in cities of natural, cultural and human resources for future generations of city-dwellers.