

BECOMING “EUROPEAN”? INTERPRETATIONS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE

Daniel Habit

Abstract

This chapter focuses on the way that the ECOC program was negotiated at the local level in Sibiu/Hermannstadt/Nagyszeben in 2007. Following the approaches of urban anthropology, the city itself stands at the center of attention, highlighting material changes in the urban space, the discourse on cultural heritage, and the roles of the different institutions involved in the context of the “City of Culture – City of Cultures”, the slogan of the event. The different ways of interpreting heritage leads to contrary appreciations. By looking at the various understandings of authenticity, the clash between individual rights and collective conceptions can be exemplified. Particular attention is given to the strategies of “self-culturalization” that characterize the process of becoming a European Capital of Culture. I will also demonstrate that economic, political, and administrative questions were discussed through the lens of culture and under European auspices. In this context, the EU’s way of governing Europe becomes obvious and the strategies of a cultural governance are stressed.

Key words: Cultural heritage, European capitals of culture, “self-culturalization”

Among the diverse programs, strategies and approaches in the European Union’s cultural policy, the concept of the “European Capital of Culture” marks an outstanding measure. The interference between the Union itself, the aligning city (or even region) and its civil society and the consuming visitors demonstrate Brussels strategy of governance without government that can be found in various other political sectors. On the initiative of the then Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri, the idea of a European City of Culture was born in 1983. In 1985 Athens became the first in a row of 47 cities (till 2012). Invented as Cultural City of Europe, the title was awarded for one year to a European city until 2001, when a new EU decision expanded the program to two cities. Until 2019, the countries hosting the capital have already been chosen and are requested to suggest two candidate cities to the Union. Rather than isolating the concept of the European Capital of Culture, it must be considered within various fields of the Union’s internal development policies – especially those using culture in the broadest possible sense. After focusing mainly on economic issues in its early years, the EU became quite active in the cultural sector. While there is no confirmed European identity that the Union can refer to, its strategies focus on fostering an awareness of the diversity and pluralism of identities, of ethnic, religious and cultural belonging. Therefore, the Union’s device of ‘unity in diversity’ can be considered an alternative to the two major positions that dominate the way of thinking about European cultural identity: on one hand, the Euro-federalist notion of a essential unity of Europe and, on the other hand, the liberal reasoning that emphasizes moral universalism over cultural diversity in Europe. This motto allows the Union to incorporate all sorts of cultural activity in its different programs as an interpretation of the diverse landscape in Europe and thus ‘offers an escape from the dilemma of universalism and particularism’ (Delanty/Rumford 2005: 63). The idea of creating a European culture on this basis has come to occupy a strategic place in the thinking of EU officials. The 1996 European Commission ‘First Report on the Consideration of Cultural Aspects in European Community

Action' summed it up clearly: 'Cultural policy must make a contribution to strengthening and to expanding the "European model of society built on a set of values common to all European societies"' (EU-COM 1996).

Turns toward peripheral regions

The European Capitals of Culture program and Sibiu's 2007 edition have to be seen in this light. Mapping the development of the ECOC's spatial spread allows us to unearth the changes in the Union's structural and cultural policy. Since the beginning of the 1980s, with renowned representatives of European art and cultural history such as Florence (1986), Berlin (1988), Paris (1989), and Madrid (1992), the focus shifted from the metropolises to the periphery and 'second' or even 'third' cities like Thessaloniki (1997), Bergen (2000), Graz (2003) or Patras (2006) appeared on the European cultural map. This development will continue over the next years with cities like Turku and Tallinn (2011), Guimaraes and Maribor (2012), Košice (2013), Umeå (2014), and Mons (2015). In addition to the ECOC program, rather peripheral European cities and even cities from non-member states had the chance to get on the EU-European agenda. Between 1990 and 2004, thirteen cities received the title of 'European Month of Culture'. Beside established metropolises such as St. Petersburg or Barcelona, mainly central and eastern European cities were part of the program, e.g. Krakow, Nikosia, and Plovdiv. This geographical turn to Eastern Europe and, especially, not to provincial cities rather than capitals, reveals the expansionist spatial strategies of the European Union and the EU-ization of space through cultural labeling processes. As a central dimension in the context of the manifestation of power, urban space gains an essential role in the process of Europeanization, as the Union can represent itself on a European stage through the city legitimated by the award. The local symbolic reconfigurations focus mainly on public spaces, as they are more exposed than other places, with their distinctive physiognomy and historical memory. In the cities that receive the awards, these concepts develop specific ways of spatial symbolism according to their sources of financial support, conceptual design, and local habits. Within the cities themselves, a mapping of the various projects and events reveals, at first sight, the cultural infrastructure of a city. A closer look, however, also shows conflicts, divisions, as well as the dimensions that are marginalized as a consequence of the ECOC program. Therefore, a case-study of how the program unfolds on the ground allows insights into the self image and projection from above. But it also reveals the responses and views of all involved in the activities at the local level and unveils the sides of the urban topography that were not represented in the activities because they did not fit these self-images. In this context, the 'European dimension' postulated by the European Union in ECOC concepts met local needs and dynamics, leading to a specific interpretation and symbolic representation. As examples from cities that have received awards show, the various views do not always need to be congruent but can differ significantly.¹

When Sibiu was nominated together with Luxemburg to host the European Capital in 2007, Romanian membership was not yet decided on, and therefore the nomination marks an outstanding measure. As mentioned above, the program of the European Capital of Culture can be seen as a

¹ The evaluation report of the 2006 candidate, Patras, expresses these different expectations: "From the evidence presented, the Panel was unable to discern a cultural ambition of European scale and significance for the event. The Panel was not convinced that there was a coherent artistic vision in place, and believed that this lack may call into question the European and international credibility of the programme in cultural terms" (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/pdf/doc772_en; 14.12.2010).

symbolic occupation of urban spaces, subordinating the participating cities to processes of Europeanization. In the case of Sibiu, the dominating western European strategies and accesses to cultural heritage and authenticity clashed with local conditions and expectations.

Case study: Sibiu

Sibiu is a perfect example of what Reinhard Johler called a ‘European Place’, mainly for two reasons (Johler 2003). Firstly, Sibiu’s history can be considered to be a truly European history concerning questions of migration, interethnic coexistence, changing national belongings and ideological systems that find their expression in the ‘Eigenlogik’ of the city.² Secondly, Sibiu and the special conditions of being a European Capital of Culture in the first year of Romania’s EU membership allow a focus on spaces and places where the ‘New Europe’ constructed itself and where its symbolisms and materializations can be studied. In a European context, cities play a double role, as they are agents as well as goals of Europeanization. In this context, the simultaneousness of globalization and localization becomes visible and merges in the highly cited concept of ‘glocalization’, combining de- and reterritorialization.³

The city of Sibiu is located in the Romanian region of Transylvania. With a population of around 155,000, it is one of the most important cities in the region, although it ranks only 15th in population on a national level. Until World War II, the city was one of the major cultural and religious centers of the Transylvanian Saxons and their influence on the city’s development is still noteworthy. The mayor, Klaus Johannis, belongs to this small German minority with about 2,000 members. He was re-elected in 2004 and 2008 with 87 percent of the vote. On a regional level, the city competes with Braşov and Sighişoara for the most profitable branding of their medieval, urban ensembles in order to attract tourists, investments, and media attention. In this inner-Transylvanian competition, especially concerning traffic connections, Sibiu has fallen behind other cities in recent years. It does, however, have the most modern airport in Southeastern Europe, reopened in 2007. Moreover, the ‘Autostrada Transilvania’, one of the biggest infrastructure projects in EU-Europe, passes 60 kilometers north of Sibiu. Whereas Sighişoara has already been listed by the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site and Braşov has been functioning as a winter sports destination since 1906, Sibiu had to find and define its role as an interesting place in the rivalry for national and international recognition. Reaching its peak in the cultural capital year, this development led to a rush of urban marketing and heavy investments in prestigious infrastructure projects such as the airport and especially the renovation of the inner city center. On a national level, these three municipalities try to establish themselves as a region of tourism in contrast to the Romanian capital Bucharest and the Black Sea Coast area around Constanţa. Within this ongoing process of Sibiu’s branding, Marco Venturi’s (2004) approach of a ‘post-European city’ is useful. According to Venturi, the ongoing changes in the continent’s cities stem more from the debate over the cities’ pasts than over their futures, and lead to a transformation of the role of the state and especially its

² The concept of the city’s own logic focuses on urban processes from a perspective of spatial sociology and claims a specific way of developing for every city due to its own biography (e.g. Berking/Löw 2008).

³ For the concept of glocalization and its role in the European city, see Grainger/Cutler (2000: 14): “Cities are at present going through historical transformation, fuelled by an opposition between globalization on the one hand and socio-cultural identity on the other. The paradigm is characterized by new forms of space, expanded by economic and technological flows. In this new space the declining power of national government is being taken up by local and regional government, strengthening citizen representation. Although regions are debased at a national level, they are real at a local level. In other words, cities and territorial states are being re-territorialized.”

architectural expression. Although the restoration of Sibiu's inner center meant an improvement in housing conditions and in tourist and economic attractiveness, a transformation of the symbolic value of the city is observable in the places of interest for the citizens on the outskirts, to places with a high rate of fluctuation and consumption such as the new shopping malls and industrial parks on the city's periphery. This development can be seen as a sign of Europe's changing role from an exporter to an importer of urban patterns.

Even in the center itself, former places of symbolic value compete with the representatives of the socio-economic change such as the four Romanian mobile telephone companies and the numerous bank branches in Sibiu's Bălcescu Street. In the case of the restoration and renovation that Sibiu underwent in preparation for the ECOC year, the two major actors besides the city administration itself were the Romanian state in the form of the local representative of the Romanian Ministry of Culture and the GTZ, the German 'Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit', which organized technical cooperation for sustainable development. The efforts of the Romanian state can be seen as a city decoration in a Potemkin way, as they concentrate to the city center and only on the visible fronts of the buildings. The concepts of the GTZ went further and provoked a much higher interference in local urban policy. Since September 1999, the GTZ has focused on restoring historic buildings and public spaces in order to protect and conserve them in sense of the (German) 'Denkmalschutz'. Aiming to improve housing conditions and the city's cultural heritage, the concept involved local enterprises and sought an overall sustainable form of development. Based on the principle of helping people help themselves, the concrete projects did not try to reconstruct complete buildings but rather concentrated on the whole inner city as a space to be protected. Support was only given to single projects if the owners were able to finance 40 to 65 percent of the total sum on their own. The reconstruction of the inner city was implemented as a preservationist urban regeneration with a participative and integrative approach, as all groups in the city were addressed.

Postsocialist modernism and postmodern Europeanism

In the case of the renovation and restoration of urban space in the city center, attention must be drawn to the role of the GTZ and the approaches of their projects as the dilemma the different actors find themselves in becomes obvious. Equipped with a total amount of 1.5 million euros, this German agency provided support for the owners and tenants of the Sibiu historic center for rehabilitation work on their buildings. The officials stated that in several cases the support must be considered a symbolic donation for cosmetic rather than deep improvements. In addition, the projects aimed to raise public awareness of the importance of maintaining their vivid cultural heritage. For this reason, in 2002 a 'Rehabilitation Award' was invented, in an attempt to 'offer recognition to those private owners who did correct rehabilitation works on historic buildings' (GTZ 2007: 13). The small term 'correct' gives a first idea of the problems inherent to the program, as the understanding of 'correct' differs between the agency and the citizens. The GTZ linked the donation of the financial support to what they considered a 'correct' use of materials, styles and renovation approaches.⁴ The agency wanted the citizens to use the 'traditional' materials and colors shown on various flyers, leaflets, and brochures and tried to spread its idea of a traditional, well-

⁴ Not all costs for the necessary measures were covered; the citizens applying for support had to contribute between 35 percent and 65 percent of the amount. Several cases are documented where citizens had to sell parts of their household and furniture to gather the money they needed to benefit from the GTZ aid.

renovated medieval city center. In their eyes, it was more appropriate to use wood instead of plastic; of regional, warm colors instead of lurid ones; and old roof tiles with patina instead of new ones. Many citizens of Sibiu, however, preferred new, 'modern' materials and styles, and draped their buildings with plastic windows and doors. Also, they often used 'non-traditional' colors when renovating their houses. As an answer to this 'misuse' of the city's cultural heritage, the GTZ invented the 'No plastic in the historic center' campaign in 2006. Besides an exhibition in the local chamber of architects providing photos taken in Sibiu of inappropriate windows in opposition to 'correct' rehabilitated or new windows, a competition for the inhabitants of the historic center was launched. People were asked to mark their windows with a special sticker to take part in a lottery drawing for the restoration of their windows. The stickers distinguished between 'Aşa da' and 'Aşa nu'⁵, marking the houses as 'correct' or 'incorrect' according to GTZ understanding and visible to everyone. The 'incorrectly' renovated houses were not only marked with a sticker showing a red, crossed out 'Nu' but also documented and shown in the publications of the agency, commented on with expressions like 'sad' or 'badly renovated'.

In a small town like Sibiu this sort of denunciation provoked a climate of tension among the citizens. By pointing out misused courtyards and wrong letter boxes, the GTZ did not reduce its engagement to the visible public parts of the buildings but interfered in citizens' private space. This conflict over cultural property appears as a conflict between the community and the individual, between the right of every individual to build his house the way he or she wants and the 'correct' form of collective expression and identity. The agency's understanding of the neighborhood as local, traditional, and valuing heritage produced a static and stable context, resistant to changes. The inhabitants' own approach towards their property was only accepted when they stuck to the GTZ's picture of the city, otherwise it was openly criticized and denounced. Where the agency's architects and town planners see ugliness and bad taste, the house owners see triumph over the past, progress, and improvement. The German agency thus seriously impeded the production and reproduction of locality in the way local inhabitants cherished it.

All in all, the GTZ's position appears as a form of postmodern Europeanism, as the ideals of preserving and retaining according to the guidelines of the conservation of ancient monuments did not consider the role and requirements of the local population. The agency's reasoning, demanding a well-kept background for the 2007 event, appears as a new form of mainly western cultural imperialism that marginalizes Eastern European developments and can be found in various political fields: 'In contrast, the East – the putatively 'new' Europe – is clearly ascribed to almost no political competence, social substance, or cultural resources – or at least not any that ultimately have to be preserved and integrated in the European center' (Kaschuba 2007: 9).⁶

⁵ "This way yes" and "This way no" (editors' note).

⁶ The appearance of home improvement stores such as "Praktiker," "Bricostore" or "Mobexpert," with their vast proposals of new materials and modern designs, played an important role in the creation of new desires and ways for private restorations. Accompanied by a great marketing offensive, they advertise their products and way of life. The growth and development of these companies in all of the countries of eastern Europe shows the hunger for something that is considered postsocialist, as it documents the availability and freedom (or even pain) of choice, and modern, as the use of the products documents a development in the personal environment. Quite a few researchers have researched this hunger for normality, and they all show that the consumption of western goods is a representation of what the inhabitants imagine to be "normal" and that this concept of "normality" orients itself toward the idea of a western way of normal life (e.g. Rausing 2002, Fujii 2005, Maksin-Mićić 2007, Nagy/Pleadite 2007).

Cultural tourism and symbolic capital

The approach of both the Romanian state and the GTZ, as well as the work carried out by the municipality of Sibiu, focused mainly on the medieval image of the city, which had to be emphasized in order to attract cultural tourists. This development into a Cultural Capital is not a process specific to Sibiu but can be found in various other cities participating in the program (e.g. Linz 2009, Pecs 2010, Tallinn 2011). The classification of the tourist's world no longer depends on physical, cultural, or political settings but on social and media constructs. Therefore, the role of tourism, especially for the location of cities on a global cognition map, cannot be doubted. Tourism established a spatial framework including images, (hi)stories, buildings, and people, so that the space can be labeled and merchandised. This process of redefining urban space and its celebration, even included the danger of losing immanent conditions and representations as they stepped behind the events that were easier to consume. As cities offered themselves to tourism in a process of self-inventing, their urban space turned into a space of possibilities presenting 'citytainment' (Selle 2004: 131) for both inhabitants and visitors. The EU, with the ECOC concept, as well as the evaluation report of Palmer and Rae 2004, underlined over and over again the important role of cultural tourism in the creation of a European identity, and therefore asked the participating cities to develop sustainable instruments and attractive offers for a 'European society':

Attractiveness, from local to European level, is one of the main objectives for a Capital of Culture: how can it attract not only the local and national population but also foreign tourists? In the case of a city located in the Baltic countries, for example, the question could be formulated as follows: how could the event be of interest to a Spanish, Greek or Swedish tourist? This is the type of issue with which the candidate cities will be confronted. Any type of strictly local event should therefore be avoided. The promotion of tourism at the European level is also one of the challenges of the event (Guide 2007: 13).

Within the concept of tourism as an economy of difference, cultural city tourism plays an important role in the construction and culturalization of urban space. The other and the unknown have to be presented as local in terms of space and former in terms of time. The specific local atmosphere has to be transformed into consumable, culture-labeled forms that the foreign visitor as well as the local citizen can experience. In general, this happens through the artificial production of authenticity, representing symbolic capital that cannot be purchased but that arises from the city's historic background. Therefore, it is even more set in place, e.g. by labeling old buildings whose exact history is not as important as the atmosphere they create. For the case of Sibiu, this development became visible in the overwhelming indication of around 180 buildings as 'historic monuments' through small signs in the inner city. It might make sense to flag such places if some information is given. But in numerous cases these signs just gave the simple explanation 'house', in at least four languages to underline both the multiethnic past and the international future of Sibiu.

This artificial attribution of authenticity seems to go even further than the 'search for authenticity' described by Regina Bendix for the field of folklore studies: 'it is not the object,

though, but the desire, the process of searching itself, that yields existential meaning' (Bendix 1997: 17). Furthermore, authenticity consists of two basic dimensions. On one hand, it is based on the level of belief and authority (independent of the tangible world), and on the other hand it is based on material and substance. As an attribute, authenticity exists both on the side of signification and interpretation as well as on the side of the tangible artifact. In order to attract both cultural tourists and local citizens in Sibiu, the buildings classified as historic monuments stood in their very own microcosms as examples of the ongoing production of symbolic capital by means of 'heritage-ification'. Following Scott Lash and John Urry,

the aestheticization of material objects can take place either in the production or in the circulation and consumption of products. In production the design component compromises an increasing component of the value of goods. (...) Further, goods take on the properties of sign value through the process of 'branding,' in which marketers and advertisers attach images to goods (1994: 15).

These houses hold their own stories and ideas, and they reveal the difficulties of handling local history in its very own environment and the preferences of the different interest groups trying to prepare heritage for future generations at a European level. Both the story and the material are ruled and changed by time, but they themselves constitute the historical site. Against this backdrop, Sibiu seems to undergo a process similar to Disneyfication. Taking a closer look at some of the renovated buildings and the strategies of the GTZ and the Rumanian Ministry of Culture, the impression of a Potemkin village comes to mind, as many buildings were just set into place to fit the requirements that these agencies themselves have of a European Capital of Culture, but they lacked sustainable renovation. A perfect but rather sad example was the building of the 'Universitatea de Arhitectura și Urbanism "Ion Mincu"' at the so-called 'Small Square'. Its outside façade was renovated in 2006 in a very attractive manner. But if one opened the door to the courtyard, one was confronted by a disastrous interior, looking rather more like a waste disposal site than a university institute. Moreover, pillars and support columns supported the beautiful façade like a set construction for a movie. Ironically or even cynically, this building hosts the section of restoration.

The festivalization and culturalization of urban space

The increase in urban events and festivals such as the ECOC or various other city labeling programs can be seen in the wider context of urban transformation processes, making festivalization a critical term for the contemporary trend of strengthening a city's image and reputation through popular events (Häussermann/Siebel 2004; Mattissek 2008). This development is marked both by a campaign for mobilizing social, economic, administrative, and media resources as well as by a spatial, temporal, and topical concentration of city policy measures and energies focused on big events. Of course, celebrating public events in urban space can be found throughout the centuries and can almost be considered an anthropological constant. But under the influence of global structural changes, new problems of orientation, governance, and legitimacy arise for the local stakeholders. In this situation, festivalization offers new solutions and possibilities through public celebrations in order to attract visitors and locals into city spaces and "brand" a city.

Therefore, the ECOC concept and its festivalization of the urban space (as public events play an enormous role), includes a new type of city politics. These events, such as open-air concerts, markets, and exhibitions, do not encourage city development but rather demonstrate the city's political and cultural ambitions and attractiveness on a local, regional, national, and European level. Through the performance and instrumentalization of common sense and civic engagement, accordance and identification with the city was evoked on both sides. The character of the events was seen to be compensatory, as the city's real problems were not solved but camouflaged. Furthermore, the term festivalization cannot be reduced to the context of city development but includes other different aspects of life, finding expression in an orientation toward pleasure and feeling in thinking and lifestyle. This orientation is accompanied by event institutions, producing places and times of events almost at an industrial level. Their formats can vary within the context of event consumption and therefore find their culmination in the rising number of shopping malls and also in the Cultural Capital Event. The participation in and consumption of the events offers a new kind of urban identity, proposed by the conglomerate of various organizers. The acceptance of this offer is left to the visitor, both local and foreign (Eder 2009).

The program for Sibiu 2007 and the ensuing evaluation report included 867 projects carried out during the year. The mapping of these events demonstrated the exclusive rather than inclusive character of the program in spatial terms, as the vast majority of the agenda took place at already established cultural locales such as museums, churches, and theaters in the city center. The suburbs around the medieval city center appeared not to be suitable for the Cultural Capital Event, as they did not seem attractive to tourists. Because of their lack of symbolic capital, they were deemed neither to be presentable nor open to the strategies of culturalization. This perception of tourists' interests translated into a rather conservative image of cultural tourism based on the assumption that 'culture' can only be found in established and aesthetic places sticking to a historic 'truth'. As more performative-postmodern forms of tourism were excluded by denying them space and attention, the overall conception of Sibiu 2007 limited the culturalization of the city to already established ones. In other words, Sibiu's past became its future.

Following Andreas Reckwitz's model of the self-culturalization of the city in terms of a culture-oriented form of governance, special attention has to be drawn to the local creative industries, as they played an important role in the symbol-producing urban economy (Reckwitz 2009).⁷ In the case of Sibiu, these industries could find support from city authorities and the citizenry, as both cooperated in organizing the 2007 events. Whereas in Patras 2006 the responsibility for the projects had been solely in the hands of the organizing committee, many local groups and non-profit associations participated in Sibiu quite independently during the ECOC events, even if they did not receive serious financial support. The title Cultural Capital of Europe was meant to work as a sort of social glue. As Ben Anderson and Adam Holden (2008) show for the case of Liverpool 2008, these mechanisms of common sense were not limited to the year in question but rather started as an 'event of hope' with the appointment several years before. As in a paternalistic factory, the citizens were motivated to play an active role in the development of the city by the evocation of corporate feeling and pride. In Sibiu 2007 this strategy occurred,

creative city model. As a normative goal, it affects residents, political and economic institutions, and the media representation of the city, which understands itself more and more as a cultural phenomenon. Beside its symbolic character, the self-culturalization gains a material one, evoking transformations in both residential and consumption areas.

for example, in the various free concerts of bands and actors such as *Eros Ramazotti*, *The Prodigy*, *Scorpions*, and *Europe*. These events provoked a camaraderie among the spectators that was transported and reproduced through modern forms of grassroots communication such as youtube or various blogs. To some extent, this dimension of Sibiu's ECOC edition counterbalanced the new tension that Europeanization also unleashed, as exemplified by the fight over the 'correct' use of windows.

Toward a concept of cultural governance

Authors from all disciplines as well as the emergent but heterogeneous intellectual scene discussing European integration process have identified and sometimes also bemoaned the absence of a close relationship between the EU and its citizens. So long as the engagement of the supranational, multi-level governance organization had been reduced to its economic and technical aspects, the invention of this new political system could take place without a profound, additional connection to the European citizens. The disillusioning results of the *Eurobarometer* surveys in the 1980s, the low voter turnout at the European elections in 1984, and the scenario of a technocratic union without a soul turned 'culture' as a sort of multi-purpose-tool of fostering Europeaness. Since the mid-1990s, therefore, culture has served as a strategy of legitimation for the EU and ennobling its more prosaic economic and legal dimensions (Beck/Grande 2004). Special emphasis was given to the 'agents of European consciousness' (Shore 2000: 26) such as a flag, an anthem, a currency etc., that already served in the nation-building processes throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Furthermore, this task of self-invention was democratized by establishing cultural programs such as Kaleidoskop, Ariane, Raphael, Erasmus, Sokrates, Leonardo da Vinci, Gruntvig, and Comenius starting in the mid-1990s, aiming for direct participation by European citizens.⁸ Together with the MEDIA-programs focusing on the production and distribution of European audiovisual works (MEDIA I, II, PLUS, and 2007), the main cultural programs such as CULTURE 2000 and CULTURE 2007-2013 represent a concept that also covers popular culture, mass-produced culture, and everyday culture. By providing financial resources, these programs target actions that 'should be substantial in scale and scope, strike a significant chord with the peoples of Europe and help to increase their sense of belonging to the same community' (EU 2006).

According to studies inspired by Foucault's work on governmentality and its interconnections with the concept of governance, the cultural policy of the Union aims to give responsibility to European citizens by motivating them to play an active role in the constitution of a 'European dimension'. As the majority of the member states demand their cultural and educational autonomy, the EU is confronted with an almost insuperable national barrier to the process of self-invention that can only be overcome by encouraging grassroots movements and political activism acting on European terms. In this vast field of cultural governance, the concept of the European Capitals of Culture plays an important role. Not only are citizens and various forms of group constellations affected, but the city as a whole becomes responsible for working on the construction of a European space. Knowledge production about the topics represented is based on the city's sovereignty of interpretation. But due to the motto of diversity, almost every

⁸ The pre-accession instruments financed by the European Union to assist the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe in their preparations for joining the European Union from 1989 onwards, such as PHARE, EEF, ALA, and MEDA, also emphasize the integrating aspects of cultural policy.

expression and staging can be interpreted in the Union's sense and serves the basic inclusive idea. The program itself developed from its rather undefined beginnings to an increasingly regulated political tool, reaching its current peak in 'The guide for applying cities'. In addition, the former extensive independence of the organizing city is increasingly subject to European Union restrictions as evaluation mechanisms were implemented starting with Sibiu and Luxemburg in 2007.⁹ Establishing itself both as the instance of initiation and evaluation, the Union gets a cumulative influence over the cultural capitals that have to develop and finally present themselves according to the abstract European dimension for at least six years.

In the case of Sibiu, the argument 'Capitala Culturala europeana' turned into a dominating master narrative operating in numerous contexts that shaped the economic and administrative focus of the city and the actors responsible for it. As shown above, the resulting strategy of argumentation was not only applied to public urban spaces but also interfered with citizens' privacy and led to strategies of self-regulation on all sides. The city submitted itself to a process of self-culturalization of selected quarters and held its citizens accountable for the construction of a European Cultural Capital. These dynamics are in line with Andrew Barry's characterization of the EU's techniques of governance, which possess

a whole range of regulations and devices, governing and monitoring everything from the cleanliness of beaches to the design of electrical equipment and the safety of toys. The European Union has surprisingly few bureaucrats, no teachers, no prisons, and no doctors. It has few human representatives with which it is possible to identify. But it does possess an array of procedures, regulations, and standards that govern the behaviour of human and nonhuman devices throughout its territory and, indeed, beyond (Barry 2002: 143).

Examples from Spain, hosting the Capital in 2016, show the dynamics of these governance structures and the mechanisms of self-regulation. In 2002, Cordoba, a candidate city, announced its 'Cordoba Manifesto' for the further development of the city and the internal logics of the attribution of responsibility become evident:

In the constant battle between tradition and innovation, played out on the individual, social, local and global arenas, culture is nowadays considered to be a creative umbrella covering not only all kinds of attitudes, behaviours and values but also the right conditions for environmentally friendly sustainable development, job creation, gender equality and social cohesion. (...) In order to attain this goal, we will have to make good use of all our hard work and creative skills so that this initiative becomes a future project, that is to say, a sign of identity for Córdoba in the Third Millennium.¹⁰

The untold stories...

⁹ The "Ex-post Evaluation of 2007 & 2008" can be found online: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc2488_en.htm.

¹⁰ The manifesto is available online: <http://www.cordoba2016.es/en/candidatura/manifiesto-de-cordoba>.

On one hand, the concept of the European Capital of Culture can be analyzed according to its role in the process of self-invention and self-establishment of the Union by means of cultural governance. Therefore, the definition and realization of the ambiguous European dimension is delegated to the hosting cities but the EU exerts more and more influence over the implementation.¹¹

On the other hand, the specific European qualities can liberate access to a particular city, as the greater number of urban collective memories become more visible. For the case of Sibiu and from a spatial perspective, the great accentuation of the medieval city center can be contrasted with the general disregard of the surrounding quarters. Concerning times and periods, Sibiu's past seems to consist only of the city's prosperity up to the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. The following transformation processes, the conflicts between different ethnic groups, the role of the Saxons during World War II and the city's role in communist times does not seem to fit with the parameters of public memory and so do not find their way into the program. Talking about social groups involved or mentioned in the agenda, a rather homogenous picture is drawn, including the Romanian population and the small group of Saxons. The former Hungarian and Jewish community and above all the Roma population seem to be ignored and only have a place as folkloric decoration.

The restored, well-kept center, with its constructional manifestations of the city's glorious past and its self-production as a medieval town through terms of self-culturalization, serves as an image that is reproduced after the cultural year, too. This development can be seen as a reliable answer to the uncertainty of the 20th century with its totalitarian political systems and their forced modernizations (Assmann 2009). The global reaction has been positive, for example, when Forbes magazine published a ranking of 'Europe's Most Idyllic Places To Live' in November 2008. The 'experts' listed well-known cities such as Copenhagen or Ljubljana and distinct touristy places like Kefalonia or Mallorca. But number eight on the list was Sibiu, a 'bucolic, an idyllic place. 'It's probably the most esoteric location on our list, but there is absolutely no noise or light pollution, and farmers ride round on their horses and carts. It's a gorgeous, preserved way of life' (Beckett 2008).

Literature:

Anderson, Ben, Adam Holden 2008: Affective Urbanism and the Event of Hope. In: Space and Culture 11, 142-159.

Assmann, Aleida 2009: Geschichte findet Stadt. In: Moritz Csásky, Christoph Leitgeb (ed.): Kommunikation - Gedächtnis - Raum. Kulturwissenschaften nach dem Spatial Turn. Bielefeld, 13-28.

Barry, Andrew 2002: In the Middle of the Network. In: John Law, Annemarie Mol (eds.): Complexities. Social Studies of Knowledge. London, 142-165.

¹¹ From 2010 on, the financial support of the Union is no longer given in advance but will be conferred in the form of the Melina-Mercouri-Prize after the Cultural Capital year. "The cities holding the title in 2010 will be the first to be allocated a prize rather than a subsidy. This prize will be awarded to the Capitals of Culture in honor of Melina Mercouri no later than three months before the start of the event, provided that they have met the commitments made during the selection phase and followed the recommendations of the panel, particularly as regards the European dimension to the event. The allocation for this prize will constitute the Community co-financing of the event and therefore will replace the aforementioned subsidy; it will amount to 1.5 million Euros" (Guide 2007).

- Beck, Ulrich, Edgar Grande** 2004: Das kosmopolitische Europa. Gesellschaft und Politik in der Zweiten Moderne. Frankfurt: Beck.
- Beckett, Edward; Parmy Olson** 2008: Europe's Most Idyllic Places To Live. In: Forbes-Magazine 18.11.2008. Online: http://www.forbes.com/2008/11/18/europe-homes-dollar-forbeslife-cx_po_1118realestate.html
- Bendix, Regina** 1997: In search of authenticity: the formation of folklore studies. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press.
- Berking, Helmuth, Martina Löw (ed.)** 2008: Die Eigenlogik der Städte. Neue Wege für die Stadtforschung. Frankfurt: Campus.
- Delanty, Gerard, Chris Rumford** 2005: Rethinking Europe: social theory and the implications of Europeanization. New York.
- Eder, Klaus** 2009: A Theory of Collective Identity Making Sense of the Debate on a „European Identity“. In: European Journal of Social Theory 12, 427-447.
- EU-KOM** 2006: Beschluss Nr. 1855/2006/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. Dezember 2006 über das Programm Kultur (2007-2013). Amtsblatt L 372 vom 27.12.2006, 1–11.
- EU-KOM** 1996: 1st Report on the Consideration of Cultural Aspects in European Community Action. Com 96/160 final, Brüssel.
- Fujii, Gen** 2005: Ruins, Decay and New Constructions: Materializing Family in Postsocialist Housing in Gjirokaster, Southern Albania. In: Ethnologica Balcanica 9, 185-200.
- Gellner, Ernst** 1983: Nations and Nationalism. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Grainger, Heidi, Rachel Cutler** 2000: The European City: A Space for Post-National Citizenship. In: Yearbook of European Studies 14, 239-259.
- GTZ** 2007: Sibiu Historic City Center Rehabilitation Project. Electronic document: http://www.gtz.sibiu.ro/pdf/docs/02_02_01_en.pdf (12.6.2011).
- Guide** 2007: Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture, Electronic document: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/ecocs/pdf_word/guide_to_candidates_en.pdf (11.5.2011).
- Häußermann, Hartmut, Walter Siebel** 2002: Stadtsoziologie. Eine Einführung. Frankfurt: Campus.
- Hroch, Miroslav** 2005: Das Europa der Nationen. Die moderne Nationsbildung im europäischen Vergleich (= Synthesen. Probleme europäischer Geschichte 2). Göttingen.
- Johler, Reinhard** 2003: Europäische Orte. Territorialisierungsprozesse im „neuen Europa“. In: Binder, Beate et al. (ed.): Ort. Arbeit. Körper. Ethnographie Europäischer Modernen. 34. Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde (=Schriftenreihe Museum Europäischer Kulturen 3). Berlin, 33-44.
- Kaschuba, Wolfgang** 2008: Europäisierung als kulturalistisches Projekt? Ethnologische Betrachtungen. In: Joas, Hans; Friedrich Jaeger (eds.): Europa im Spiegel der Kulturwissenschaften. (= Denkart Europa. Schriften zur europäischen Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur 7). Baden-Baden, 204-225.
- Lash, Scott, John Urry** 2007: Economies of Sign and Space, London: Sage Publications, 1994.
- Maksin-Mičić, Marija** 2007: Peripheral Zones of Serbian Towns: Spatial Development and Way of Life. In: Ethnologica Balcanica 10, 35-58.
- Mattisek, Annika** 2008: Die neoliberale Stadt. Diskursive Repräsentationen im Stadtmarketing deutscher Großstädte. Bielefeld: transcript.

- Palmer/Rae Associates** 2004: European Cities and Capitals of Culture. Study Prepared for the European Commission. Brüssel, http://ec.europa.eu/culture/pdf/doc654_en.pdf (12.1.2011).
- Rausing**, Sigrid 2002: Re-constructing the “Normal”: Identity and the Consumption of Western Goods in Estonia. In: Ruth Mandel and Caroline Humphrey (eds.), Markets and Morality: Ethnographies of Post-Socialism, Oxford: Berg Publishers, 127-142.
- Reckwitz**, Andreas 2009: Die Selbstkulturalisierung der Stadt. Zur Transformation moderner Urbanität in der „creative city“. In: Mittelweg 36/2, 2-34.
- Schulze**, Gerhard 1992: Die Erlebnisgesellschaft. Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.
- Selle**, Klaus 2004: Öffentliche Räume in der europäischen Stadt – Verfall und Ende oder Wandel und Belebung? Reden und Gegenreden. In: Walter Siebel (ed.): Die europäische Stadt. Frankfurt, 131-145.
- Shore**, Chris 2000: Building Europe. The Cultural Politics of European Integration. London: Routledge.
- Shore**, Chris 2006: „In uno plures?“ EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe. In: Cultural Analysis 5, 7-26.
- Venturi**, Marco 2004: Die posteuropäische Stadt in Europa. In: Siebel, Walter (ed.): Die europäische Stadt. Frankfurt, 105-111.

Dr. Daniel Habit

Institut für Volkskunde/Europäische Ethnologie

Ludwig-Maximilians Universität, München

E-адрес: D.Habit@vkde.fak12.uni-muenchen.de