Transtopia and Transversal Urbanism
–
Altered Challenges for Social Justice

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Transtopia and Transversal Urbanism

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The Urban?
- Approaches and Discourses
‘The Urban’? or ‘Urbanity’?

Approaches and discourses

Newly Developed ‘Urbanities’

Revitalized Urban Areas

Production of “The Urban”
‘The Urban’? or ‘Urbanity’?

Approaches and discourses

- Newly Developed ‘Urbanities’
- Revitalized Urban Areas

Production of “The Urban”

‘Right to the City’ – Crisis of the Cities

- Criticism of an urban planning which follows a neo-liberal economic global governance architecture.
- Inclusion in a structurally unequal and exploitive system, democratizing cities and their decision making processes (Fainstein 2010, Schmid 2012).
- Is not homogeneous.
- Exists only if people appropriate it.
Social Justice and the Urban

Approaches and discourses

Newly Developed ‘Urbanities’

Reinvigorated Urban Areas

‘Right to the City’ – Crisis of the Cities

Production of ‘The Urban’

Social Justice – where?

Social Justice – today?

Formerly progressive city planners’ focus on material well-being and equity (e.g. equal distribution of housing).

Today combination with considerations of diversity and democracy, just participation to foster quality of urban life within the context of a global capitalist political economy.

(Fainstein 2010, Uitermark 2012, etc.)
Transtopia and Transversal Urbanism – Altered Challenges for Social Justice

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‘The Urban’? or ‘Urbanity’?

Approaches and discourses

- Newly Developed ‘Urbanities’
- Revitalized Urban Areas
- Production of “The Urban”
- ‘Right to the City’ – Crisis of the Cities
- Criticism of an urban planning which follows a neo-liberal economic global governance architecture

Globalization and migration are changing the diversity and the constructions of belonging in cities of the 21st century: politics and urban development between creativity, conformity, integration, inclusion, social cohesion, spatial segregation, multiculturalism, interculturality, diversity, transculturality, transethnicity...

Transversal/Transgressive Identities
- Transculturality – Transethnicity – Transnationality
Discourse about “The Urban“

• several fields of tension can be identified:

  system ↔ individual
  global ↔ local
  order ↔ disorder

  → concepts of society, moral concepts, basic value orientations
Migration/Integration
- Moments of the Discourse
These challenges are discussed starting from a fundamental analysis of the evolution of the migration discourse in Europe – from a German perspective.
Models of Integration

Conformity
The migrants live according to the rules and practices of their host country.

Melting Pot
Host and immigrating groups merge with their characteristics. A new homogeneous society with new social patterns and cultural codes is formed.

Cultural Pluralism
The migrants conserve and practice some of their cultural codes, but adopt the major part of the culture from the host society.

Structural Pluralism
Migrants renounce their cultural codes, but still a strong social coherence persists in between the members of the migrant group.

Source: West, C. 2012
“We“ and the „Others“

Conformity

Melting Pot

Majority Society

(Ethnically) sorted
(cultural) “Vielfalt“(diversity)

“We“ and the „Others“

Structural Pluralism

Cultural Pluralism

NIP 2007

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Source: West 2013, 2014b
These challenges are discussed starting from a fundamental analysis of the evolution of the migration discourse in Europe – from a German perspective.

Source: West 2014b
Impulses or „Moments“ of the Migration Discourse

By systematically distinguishing modern and postmodern elements of this discourse, four basic impulses or “moments” are identified which imply different, partially contradictory or juxtaposed, challenges for social justice and recognition.

Source: West 2014b
„The silent revolution of the individual against the “Leitdifferenz“

- Transgressive identity constructions evolve due to contingencies of everyday life.
- Reflected resistance against attributions which form due to constructions along a fixed inflexible “Leitdifferenz”.
- Not „either … or“ but „as well … as“!
Aishe, 22 years old, describes in an interview that as adolescent she always was wrong. For the Turkish children of the neighborhood she always was German as she went to a high school outside of the neighborhood, and for the classmates she always was Turkish:

“With what right always somebody decides whether I am Turkish or German? Why should I decide? I am both!”

Own interview 2011 (own translation) in the frame of the project “Transkulturalität, Transnationalität, Transethnizität und soziale Lokalität in Europa“, names have been changed.
Moments and Concepts of the Migration Discourse

Observer of Modernism

Observer Perspective

Observer of Postmodernism

Source: West 2014b
Value Orientations
- Questioning „Classical“ Differentiations
U-Topias – Heterotopias

U-topias
Gedachter Raum
conceived space
(conceptualized, imagined)

Polis

(fraid.) Urban Planning, Development, Architecture, Investors, Developers

City, Town, Collective
Gebauter Raum
perceived space
constructed

Heterotopias
“the other spaces“
counter-spaces

Urbs, Public
Gelebter Raum
lived space

Source: West 2007, 2014a

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### Concepts of Power – Spinoza (1632-1677)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potestas</th>
<th>↔</th>
<th>Potentia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>unlimited power and control</td>
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<td>power as potential</td>
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<tr>
<td>(near violence)</td>
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<td>enabling potential of power: brings people together, not necessarily target-driven, but creative</td>
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<tr>
<td>(linked to institutions, persons)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(restrictive)</td>
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“... when words and deeds appear inextricably linked ... to establish and consolidate new relations and thus create new ties.”
Hannah Arendt 1960: 193f: Vita activa oder Vom tätigen Leben, own translation

“Power corresponds to the human ability not only to act or do something but also to align oneself with others and to act by mutual consent.”
Hannah Arendt 1970: Macht und Gewalt, own translation
Value Orientations – model-free considerations

Based on:
Karl Raimund Popper 1957/2003: 
*Die offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde - The open society and its enemies*

- Novel Theory: closed and open society
- Novel Method: model-free multivariate analysis

Source: West 2007, 2014a
Urbanity and Value Dimensions

Prestige and privacy, suppressing disorder and disturbances

long-term orientated conformists, socially embedded

creative, die “Gestörten” (the “disturbed”), urban pioneers (early gentrifier), polycontexturality, spontaneous/abstract orders

performative, multiple ties
Transtopias

and

Transversal Urbanism/Urbanity

- Altered Challenges for Social Justice
Transtopia and Transversal Urbanism

Transversal, Transgressive Identities and Values: Challenging “Social Justice and the Urban” to expand a new (critical) urban theory, methods, practices
Yet, critical urban theory assuming prior existence of a “society”, whose membership is at least in a formal sense, not sufficiently questioned.

- **Postmodern: value orientations and class** (theory, methods, practices)
- abstract, improvisation, contingency, abstract planning
  - randonnees, ephemeral places, fuzzy spaces and borders
- urban interventions, participation as autonomous politics
  - grey spaces (Grauzonen), governance gaps
- monolingual habitus
  1. antagonism (articulation outside the leading value system),
  2. agonism (articulation of difference in the leading value system),
  3. refuse;
  - subject/object? (ability to act)
  - memory building? (post-migrants)
Transtopia and Transversal Urbanism

Transversal, Transgressive Identities and Values: Challenging “Social Justice and the Urban” to expand a new (critical) urban theory, methods, practices
Yet, critical urban theory assuming prior existence of a “society”, whose membership is at least in a formal sense, not sufficiently questioned.

- “Brutus” or the revolution devours its children from movement to organization, institutionalism (MSO – diversity and multiculturalism)
- social justice and multilocality (adults, children, households)
- off-borders (no borders, open borders, …)
References

Vielen Dank!

Thank You!

¡Muchas Gracias!

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