Cities and Landscapes. New Orleans and Innsbruck as Multiple Landscapes

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Bericht von: Claudia Posch, Universität Innsbruck

From June 24 – 26, 2015 the Universities of Innsbruck and New Orleans held their annual symposium at Innsbruck University on *Cities and Landscapes. New Orleans and Innsbruck as Multiple Landscapes* , jointly organized by CHRISTINA ANTENHOFER (Innsbruck) and GÜNTHER BISCHOF (New Orleans). Two keynote lectures and eight panels plus a theoretical panel brought together 43 researchers exploring a multitude of perspectives on the two cities as case studies. Both cities have long multicultural histories and build their recent images on their respective historical heritage. This heritage is strongly connected to their spectacular landscapes and geographical situations. But precisely their geographical situations are challenges that these cities deal with today and in the future. Environmental and technological challenges, as well as challenges of security will have to be balanced with esthetical (cultural heritage) and ecological debates. To discuss the questions emerging from these challenges, a wide variety of disciplines convened at this conference. Furthermore, an art project was revealed that vividly expressed the interdisciplinary orientation of the conference. The conference was concluded by an evening open panel discussion.

In his introductory remarks rector TILMANN MÄRK (Innsbruck) stressed that a cohabitation between city and university is crucial for the success of both. Thus it is important to establish excellent communication, good PR and collaborative projects. Märk outlined that universities are a crucial factor in urban development and that joint projects could establish an understanding between municipality and university. The conferences' art project is a best practice example of such joint efforts. ULRICH LEITNER (Innsbruck) presented the public space art installation REAGENT

by architect STEFAN HITTALER (Bruneck), showing bodies in a test-tube indicating the close relationship between the human spirit and nature or even the life sciences and the humanities.

In the theoretical panel, two approaches to cities and landscapes were discussed, both stressing the importance of the cooperation between political actors and societies on transnational levels. According to GASTONE AVE (Ferrara), universities may have a major economical and cultural impact on small and medium sized cities. For this to take effect, a university has to be full-fledged and able to work on the long term vision of developing a „university city". Ave presented the international network *UniTown* with its aim of bringing together university cities that are willing to share experiences and develop good practices in „town-gown" relations. NIKITA DHAWAN (Innsbruck) adopts a very different theoretical approach with a political-philosophical view on spatial relations. Dhawan shows that the way Europe deals with refugees, does not only endanger people trying to enter its space and its cities, but is also a threat to the European ideals of enlightenment. According to Dhawan, Europe currently neglects its transnational responsibilities and she asks if „we have to save enlightenment from Europe".

The first keynote as well as the first thematic panel illuminated Innsbruck and New Orleans historically. BERNDT OSTENDORF (Munich) and ROBERT DUPONT (New Orleans) introduced the very special situation that shaped New Orleans. They described a very distinct layering of conflicting but also of connected histories, both shaped by and shaping the „ambiguous landscape" of the city and its surroundings. Three colonial empires form historical layers of the city: France, Spain and Anglo-America. All three brought their different types of colonial practices, such as governments, bureaucratic organization, rules of law but also three types of slavery. A sedimentation of these layers can be observed in the cultural idiosyncrasies in all elements of culture. It is those interwoven and conflicting layers that make New Orleans the northernmost Caribbean city. Another layer is the ambiguous landscape, as New Orleans is „sur-

rounded by a wet world which is not quite land". This also affects social and cultural life in different ways: concepts of landowner-ship are influenced significantly and this led to a socio-economic separation along eleva-tion: the poorer – the closer to the river. New Orleans has often attempted to overcome the ambiguity of the land but it has also always limited human attempts to alternate nature and to live safely on this land.

In Innsbruck, the ambiguous landscape also shaped the city, but in different ways as JULIA HÖRMANN (Innsbruck) pointed out. Sandwiched between ranges of high mountains that delimit direct passage from south to north and vice versa, Innsbruck is the geographical junction through which all traffic flows. Innsbruck's geography thus contributed to its development from a rela-tively insignificant medieval city to a princely court. In 1420, Frederic IV transferred the princely court and civil authority to Innsbruck which attracted civil servants and craftsmen, who added new layers to its history. Build-ings and monuments were erected to sig-nify the omnipresence of the city's rulers and in this way its role as city of government has shaped Innsbruck. The different layer-ing of cities also play a role when considering cities as material realities and placing focus on very tangible spatial patterns. RICHARD CAMPANELLA (New Orleans) described the „architectural geography" of New Orleans' French Quarter and thus provides another perspective on the historical and social lay-ering of the city. Historical facts are „burnt into brick" – architecture in New Orleans is not a mix of styles but rather mirrors the complex economics and politics of the city. Quite similarly, Innsbruck's architectural geography mirrors its economics and poli-tics as ARNOLD KLOTZ and WOLFGANG MEIXNER (both Innsbruck) showed. By look-ing at a more recent example, the infrastruc-ture built for the Winter Olympics (1964 and 1976), it was demonstrated that such big events have a lasting and visible influence on a city's geography.

The very close connection between cities and their environment was an important is-sue in different panels. How can a city define itself between natural and human? CRAIG E. COLTEN (New Orleans) argued that the city not only is „at work" within its bound-aries but also has a severe influence on the re-gions beyond. This was shown by the exam-ple of flood protection measures in New Or-leans which are in conflict with the people liv-ing outside the city. Protection measures af-fect oyster farming and trigger migration of the oyster farmers. This has led to the ero-sion of the well-established social fabric and traditional cultures in the peripheral parishes. Closely connected to this example was an-other historical approach by RENEÉ BOUR-GOGNE (New Orleans). Bourgogne looked at the historical development of oyster farms in the now affected parishes. She showed how Croatian immigrants gradually made a success out of Oyster cultivation and fish-ing from the 1830s on. The immigrants held up a highly functioning network of business partnership between the city and the Bayou, which was often based on kinship and shared immigration experiences.

For Innsbruck, WOLFGANG AN-DEXLINGER (Innsbruck) showed how yet another force, the processes of sub-urbanization, has disarranged traditional settlement structures. He views the whole Inn-valley as on its way to becoming a „linear city" because of the expansion of businesses and industrial parks, which eat up more and more green areas. The driving forces behind this are not higher-level political decisions but rather capitalism. As countermeasure he suggests using the remaining open spaces as dividing zones between settlements and fo-cus on the „green landscape". STEFANO DE MARTINO and GERALD HASELWANTER (Innsbruck) share a comparable approach and apply it to post-Katrina New Orleans. It is asked what to do with now vacant and even contaminated properties? The two architects propose using the „space in between" urban areas as urban instruments to create parks, agricultural zones and the like.

BART LOOTSMA's (Innsbruck) architec-tural perspective on Innsbruck revealed an equally interesting architectural geography. Innsbruck is shaped by the mountains but also by human-made infrastructure on these mountains which provides for numerous leisure activities. Even if people identify

mountains with nature, there are many human interventions: the landscape is architectonically shaped by a very difficult mix between cultural decisions and landscaping. Interestingly, those leisure activities previously carried out in the nature around the city, are now coming back into the city and have an impact on its architectural geography, too. PHILIP WEGERER and FLORIAN TIMMERMANN (Innsbruck) exemplified another instrument of reclaiming space in Innsbruck. They asked how the bicycle transforms the city and looked at the construction of space by planning and the usage of space by the cyclists. They show how space for cycling is always a social construction ruled by the opposition of dominance and (re-)appropriation.

In his keynote, JÜRGEN HASSE (Frankfurt) proposes to not just think scientifically about urbanity, because this mindset leads to a misunderstanding of social problems. It is important to be able to describe the moods, the atmospheres, sounds and smells of cities to arrive at a fuller picture. Hasse stresses the emotional dimension of cities. A post-political idea of urbanity that does not rule out specific features of city-life is proposed to investigate the question: „what is the specific mood of urban life"?

The ethnological panel questioned how certain city images and moods are created and often used to turn cities into consumable commodities. It was also asked what the consequences of such a commodification are. There are a few similar and a few divergent consequences in New Orleans and Innsbruck. BERNHARD BAUER (Vienna) stressed that in New Orleans there are advantageous consequences, such as an adequate remuneration or better working conditions if the money remains with the local actors in a cultural community. But besides that, cultural actors do not feel compensated and rather exploited, as they bring the tourists in but the money stays with the city and the tourism industry. The progression of commodification also leads to a distinction between the „neighborhood and the real deal", which evokes conflicts of interest for the producers of cultural commodities. This kind of conflict of interest is also apparent in Innsbruck, as SIMONE EGGER (Innsbruck) demonstrated. In tourism advertising,

Innsbruck likes to identify itself as „Capital of the Alps". This imagination of the city can be observed everywhere, for example, in the numerous outdoor-equipment shops. Cultural actors on all levels habitually construct the city's mood as „Alpine-Urban feeling", as well as a „landscape of taste". In contrast, the „shady" sides of the mountains are excluded: the need for snowmakers because of the lack of snow in recent years, or the uncontrolled growth of holiday homes which led to an increase of real estate prices.

Hidden or „shady" sides of cities and landscapes were important themes in the panel *Cities as Social and Semantic Spaces*. ALECIA P. LONG (New Orleans) talked about the systematic „legal harassment" of gays in New Orleans in the 1960s when an administrative committee on „sex deviates" was formed. Long shows how anti-homosexual resentments really originated within the city, which is quite unusual, as cities often are believed to be more open and tolerant. The example of Clay Shaw demonstrates how this space of „legal harassment" turned the life-story of a successful, well-respected man. MARIA HEIDEGGER (Innsbruck) presented how the metropolitan idea of mental illness created „landscapes of regulation" in the form of asylums in the 19th century. A strict distinction between „curable and incurable lunatics" lead to normed spaces in which they had to remain, also to not be visible in the cities. A similar approach was taken up in child welfare as well. In Tyrol, such „correctional spaces" were rather controlling instances than supporting the incarcerated children, as FLAVIA GUERRINI (Innsbruck) highlighted.

Yet another focus was given to the microlandscapes that make up city life. JOCHEN BONZ (Innsbruck) at the interactions between fandom or Ultra-Culture and cities. He defines Ultra-culture as a symbolic subscape of the city. The behavior of such groups is intended to give them a presence within the vast field of other subscapes in the city. RENIA EHRENFEUCHT (New Orleans) investigated New Orleans festival culture. Festivals could not exist without the subscapes of street vendors operating within and around them. They form „informal landscapes" which are made up of layered activities. There is an

unsolvable tension between dwelling in public and regulatory states. Regulating states form restrictions on simply acting in public, but they also offer opportunity and authority, as the example of food trucks shows. DOMINIK UNTERTHINER, STEPHANIE BAUR and ALEXANDER TOPF (Innsbruck) completed the discussion by introducing the new methodological instrument of „photospheres" into the concept of „linguistic landscapes", which also may prove to be useful for other approaches to the different layers of social life in the cities.

Conference Overview:

Introductory Panel

Tilmann Märk (University of Innsbruck), Interaction between Universities and Cities: Univercities

Ulrich Leitner (University of Innsbruck), Art Project: REAGENT by Stefan Hitthaler

Theoretical Approaches to the Field

Gastone Ave (University of Ferrara), Unitown-University Town Network

Nikita Dhawan (University of Innsbruck), Space, Power, Transgression: Decolonizing Spatial Relations in the Age of Postcolonial Globality

Keynote I
Berndt Ostendorf (University of Munich), The Mysteries of New Orleans: Culture Formation and the Layering of History

Panel 1: The Historical Reading of Cities

Robert L Dupont (University of New Orleans), Between Land and Water: The Ambiguous Landscape of New Orleans

Julia Hörmann-Thurn und Taxis (University of Innsbruck), Innsbruck as Historical City

Panel 2: The City as Material Reality
Richard Campanella (Tulane University), Reading the Historical Cityscape: A Spatial Analysis of New Orleans' French Quarter

Bart Lootsma (University of Innsbruck), Matchpoint Innsbruck
Wolfgang Meixner; Arnold Klotz (University of Innsbruck), The Olympic Games in Innsbruck: Planning, Infrastructure and Landscape Transformations

Panel 3: Cities as Micro-Landscapes

Jochen Bonz (University of Innsbruck), Ultra. Ethnographic Encounters in the Micro-Landscape of Soccer Fans

Renia Ehrenfeucht (University of New Orleans), Restructuring Landscapes of Informality in Gentrifying New Orleans

Panel 4: City and Environment

Craig Colten (Lousiana State University), Rerouting Risk: Flood Protection and Conflicts on the Lower Mississippi River

Wolfgang Andexlinger (University of Innsbruck), Land Consumption, Agricultural Land and the Meaning of 'Productive Parks' in the Case of the River Inn-Valley North Tyrol, Austria

Stefano de Martino, Gerald Haselwanter (University of Innsbruck), Coastline / Terraforming. The Loss of Land and How a New Infrastructured Landscape Influences the Human Habitat

Keynote II
Jürgen Hasse (University of Frankfurt), The (felt) Body of the City – Feeling Urban Spaces

Panel 5: City Landscapes as Images of the City

Bernhard Bauer (University of Vienna), Culture Is Big Business: An Anthropological Case Study about the Commodification of Culture in New Orleans

Simone Egger (University of Innsbruck), Innsbruck: „The Capital of the Alps". Mountains as the City's Landscape of Taste

Panel 6: „In-Between-Towns" – The Hidden Sides of the City

Reneé Bourgogne (University of New Orleans), From the Bayou to the Table: The Role of the Croatian American Community in Louisiana's Seafood Industry

Panel 7: Cities as Social and Semantic Spaces

Alecia P Long (Louisiana State University), Saving the City from Sex Deviates: Preservationists, Homosexuals, and Reformers in the

French Quarter, 1950 – 1962

Maria Heidegger (University of Innsbruck), Psychiatric and Pastoral Landscapes in Tyrol in the 19th Century (with a Comparative View on Louisiana)

Panel 8: Poster Session

Flavia Guerrini (University of Innsbruck), Dangerous and Endangering Spaces: Images of Innsbruck in the Records of the Youth Welfare Service

Philipp K. Wegerer; Florian Timmerman (University of Innsbruck), Collective Mobilities and the Production of Smooth Space: Reclaiming Space for Bicycling in Innsbruck

Dominik Unterthiner; Stephanie Baur; Alexander Topf (University of Innsbruck), schaug – shifting perspectives on linguistic landscapes

Open Panel Discussion
Robert Dupont (University of New Orleans); Gerhard Fritz (city council member); Bart Lootsma (University of Innsbruck); Mark Romig (New Orleans tourism marketing commission)

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