English Abstracts

Cities and Religion. Religion and Urbanity

WOLFGANG GRÜNBERG

City is one of the oldest and most successful inventions of mankind. Its story is verifiable since 10 Millennium BC in European Asia Minor cultural space, for example in Jericho (Gaza). More than half of the seven billion world population live in cities. Urban history is religious history as well, because temples as sacred places for communication with the gods were equally important as were markets for trading goods. The city forms its own protected interior (intra muros) within the city walls and forms a typical urban lifestyle. This can be called urbaneness. The gods are changing, the religious diversity is transforming, but still outliving the so called secularization. The occidental city (Max Weber) implies a diversity which can be understood as a productive struggle by political, economic and religious-cultural powers and energies. This thesis is based on a variety of meanings as will be illustrated by looking at exemplary religious places and prominent churches such as the Rome Pantheon, Cologne Cathedral, St. Nikolai church in Leipzig, Frauenkirche in Dresden.

Urbanity and Mission

JENS WIESCHORKE

The paper deals with the relationship between religion and the big city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with regard to the spatial practices of a mission. In the view of the actors of social protestantism and social gospel, the modern city was a „dark continent“ which had to be developed and colonized. The institutions of Inner Mission formed an urban „topography of salvation“ which shows central aspects of the protestant imagination of the city. This „evangelical city“ materialized in a specific architecture and significant spatial figure. Nowadays, this historical structure has radically changed, analogously to the role of religion in society. Nevertheless, some patterns of missionary action are still present in the discourse about cities and social welfare. From this point of view, „mission“ turns out to be a fundamental issue of modern urban history.
From presence to articulation: Islamic communities in Hamburg and Berlin from an urban research perspective

ALEXA FÄRBER, RIEM SPIELHAUS, BEATE BINDER

On the basis of a contrasting comparison of the mosque landscapes in two German cities, Berlin and Hamburg, this paper suggests an analysis of Islam as an urban phenomenon. Muslims, according to the hypothesis, live in different historically grown city spaces, which they reflect and shape, to which they adapt and react. Taking latest concepts in urban research for the study of the specificity of the city into consideration we plead for an understanding of Muslim’s presence in European cities that is not exclusively the result of migration. Islamic life is a situative articulation that is product of negotiations about the legitimate translation of presence in society. We therefore suggest a typology of mosques that reflects the reach and complexity of negotiations connected to planning, realization and the everyday life of the communities: the neighborhood mosque, the district mosque and the city mosque. Against that background the field „Islam“ in a city may be understood as both urban and specific.

Post-secular Bucharest? The Politics of Space in the Case of the ‘Cathedral of National Redemption’

SERGIU NOVAC

The aim of this article is to critically engage with the recent debate on the notion of ‘post-secular cities’, which will be applied in the context of the project for a patriarchal cathedral in Bucharest. It will be argued that the cathedral project in Bucharest, and ultimately the city’s ‘post-secularity’, is the product of a shifting configuration of political alliances between the self-proclaimed ‘national’ Orthodox Church and the Romanian state. This re-emerging constellation of power affects in a direct manner the production of urban space, by imposing an official narrative which refuses other actors’ claims towards urban diversity in the public sphere.
„Muslim Gypsies“: Established and Outsiders in a Multi-Cultural Inner-City Neighbourhood – The Example of Migrants of Turkish Origin, Migrants of Western Thrace Origin and of Turkish-Speaking Roma

RAUF CEYLAN

The recent development of multi-cultural neighbourhoods in Germany has been accompanied by two processes.

One process involves religious imprinting, primarily by Islamic institutions which have been influencing social live in these neighborhoods in several different ways. The other process relates to the influx of new Muslim and Turkish-speaking Eastern European immigrant groups, which are trying to integrate into existing religious and cultural structures established by previous migrants of Turkish Muslim origin. Based on interviews and participant observations in Duisburg Hochfeld, the article outlines the relationships between the youngest immigrant group, namely Turkish-speaking Muslims from Bulgaria, and other ‘long-established’ Muslim and Turkish-speaking groups. The figuration of the established and the outsiders is used for the analysis and explication of these complex group relations.

Smart Cities or: How intelligent is smart?

HEINZ FASSMANN, YVONNE FRANZ

The concept of smart cities is currently a very popular and debated topic. The European Union’s present financing of a broad variety of projects and research activity related to smart cities is also on the increase. The consensus is that the future viability of cities will depend predominantly on the implementation of smart information and communication technology, resource-efficient technologies within smart grids and broad attempts at implementing smart e-governance.

But how smart is the term smart and what does this vague concept really mean? It still lacks a comprehensive definition, and the inflationary and often arbitrary employment thereof is of little help too. Yet the discourse on smart cities isn’t as recent as it would appear. In the past, there were many discussions of intelligent and innovative strategies for the future of cities and regions in the context of smart growth and an innovative society. The latest restriction of the term to connote solely technocratic planning understanding is definitely too short-sighted. The self-congratulatory intention inherent in all things smart cannot go unreflected, as the industrial interests related to the concept of smart cities seem all too obvious.
This article is a critical reflection of the terminology and the concept of smart cities in order to illustrate the complexity of the concept and to stimulate a more differentiated consideration of this term.

Reurbanisation as a new era of urban development? An analysis of demographic and employment developments in Germany from 1999 to 2009

FRANK OSTERHAGE, STEFAN KAUP

For some years now there has been an intensive discussion in Germany about a trend reversal to reurbanisation. In fact some empirical studies show that this trend is visible. Despite this, reviews of the findings differ from speaking of a new chapter of urban development to having a selective, instable and temporal phenomenon. Against this background this article shows a quantitative-analytical research study that gives a general idea of German trends in the past decade. The output shows that concerning population development there is a notable change from decentralization to centralization in German city regions. At the same time the overall picture shows some less clear facets. But paying attention to these limitations it is possible to speak of a trend reversal in the intraregional population development in the course of the last years.

Monitoring systems of social urban development – Current state and future challenges

JAN DOHNKE

The observation of small-scale urban development by means of an integrated monitoring system permits the identification of local need for action as well as the deduction of corresponding local policy measures on an empirical basis. Many cities have developed strong capacities in this field by now, linking distinct topics of urban developments and thus granting a base for data based urban policies.

In the course of an urban cooperation project eight existing monitoring systems have been examined and systematically analysed. In their entirety they offer an over view of the scope of up to date standards of integrated coverage and analysis and permit the discussion of current prospects and limitations of the methodology applied and the indicators used.