

## Leaving the Western Paradigm

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(UNESCO), Beijing, 2013.

### **The value of the (often forgotten) context**

The savage and obscene greed cannot be the way to run the Planet. The world is devoured by entropy, increasingly impoverished, violent, poisonous and ugly. Western paradigm ends in a debacle. It is leaving behind the world worse than it ever was. How shall we go on? I believe the world is in the need of the innate multi-centred leadership of the best.

The wisdom of ruling the world is not in fighting others, - be them cultures, societies, systems, civilisations. It is the art of managing the forces of change in a cybernetic manner: opposing them, adapting to them or correcting them. The needs, not wants would lead towards the solutions that command the maximum benefit of humans and of nature. Humanist and social disciplines of reflection are the conscience of the science. The balance will lead to the advantageous cooperation of the forces of change and the forces of correction and adaptation. Mankind does not need endless conquest as a mind-set: once the limits are reached the collapse and degradation are the only option. Public memory institutions (out of which museums are best known) are exactly about the continuation of quality and harmonious development. Diversity (in culture and nature and the culture of peace are the only riches we have.

Since the beginning of modern science our priority has become to see still further into the infinity of the micro and macro worlds, but forgetting to fathom the only infinity given to us, - that of human existence. This may sound naïve and utopian, but understanding this brings quality to anybody's life or may change the ways we earn our living.

**The wise powers of the future will encourage the only conquest that makes sense: that of ourselves. Knowing ourselves is far greater adventure and more important objective than microscoping and telescoping into the unattainable infinities.** The sustainable development has been turned into the hypocritical cynicism. We need to protect ourselves from dangerous foolishness by which our final destiny is to colonize another planet just because we have ruined ours.

The concept of neoliberal economy is a failure. The invisible hand did not create “free market economy”. It gave over the public wealth to a few and created staged democracy. Poverty is not any more a social vice they claim, but the personal failure. Instead of Era of Great Prosperity we live in the era of Great Greed.

Warnings of Huxley and Orwell cannot be our vision of the future. Humankind invented its professions to assure continuation of quality and improvement of human condition. A crowd cannot rule, let alone the mob. Until our institutions regain responsible knowledge and draw wisdom from it we will be the object of manipulation: what was propaganda in Nazism, agitation in Bolshevism that is manufacture of consent in the economy of greed. We cannot forget our culture and heritage to allow post-fact, post truth, post-democratic society in post-humanist or transhumanist era. **We need labour, culture, science and politics back again, to work for the only ideal worthy of the human kind: that of common good in the welfare state, building the social contract that will sustain both, - us and the nature, in all our inherited richness.** All practical wisdom by which we can run any modern society is defined in the rights of humans and nature.

- **Arts were born in the cities.**
- **Calling cities to creativity should be like tampering fish to swim.**
- **Uncreative cities are former cities.**

## **General claims about creativity of the cities:**

1. Cities do not exist without context (political, economic, cultural), be it of the home nation or of the world. The bigger the city the more dependent it becomes upon the world.
2. The mastership of design or any other cultural industry is the means, not the essence of creativity. Craft is like knowledge, - itself only the basis of wisdom which is creativity.
3. The future will start and largely happen in the cities. So the above assumptions about knowing the context not only leads to the vision, but should be taken as the basis for the future of the cities and their home nations.
4. Identity and attractiveness of countries and regions depend largely upon cities.
5. Some cities exhibit larger impact than their economic strength enables them. Their strength is a mixture of new actions and innovative institutions and strategies.
6. Most powerful cities would not have their economic and political influence without culture and arts.
7. Mass tourism is an economic illusion: it is too expensive. Cultural tourism is better and the congress tourism is 5 times more profitable than the „ordinary“ one.
8. Cities increasingly face dilemma either of mere participation in globalisation or exercising global impact by their specific contribution.
9. Cities that choose to imitate and follow, risk to perish: uncreative cities are former cities.
10. Culture and art can create core events and activities that shape the cities' future, making them important for their own inhabitants, for the national scene as well as for the global one.
11. The solutions lie with understanding of city potentials, knowing the needs of their community and the world around, and in understanding the wisdom of public memory domain. To succeed, they have to be very unusual and simple solution to the usual problems.

## **The true list of solutions would stem from a proper study of these factors, in any city individually, but here are some opportunities for their future:**

- Global Heritage Forum (an attempted action, tested and well worth the attention)
- Ad Hoc Museum (an alternative museum or a network of museum like actions; it would be a consequence of the new understanding of the role of public memory in the quality living of the cities)
- Global Love Museum (a place or, rather, a network; great potential in uniting heritage and cultural tourism; excellent for place marketing)
- T & T, Trends and tendencies in Contemporary Art (a prestigious, necessary, quite timely innovation)

- World Association of Private Heritage Property (an initiative aiming at re-uniting private and public)
- „The Best in Heritage“ **independent** extensions on: public memory, products, tourism, new projects (the starting conference: [www.TheBestInHeritage.com](http://www.TheBestInHeritage.com) successfully exists 19 years)
- Realising the concept of the 3rd generation of national museums as orientation and communication centres on integral identity of the country; (e.g.: „This is China“)
- Decennial national exhibitions (communication of changing value systems)
- Program of grand national exhibitions treating integral wholes of certain dominating phenomena or features of national/regional identity
- Museum of Museums
- „The 3 – C“ - International Annual Conference on Public Memory (The 3C institutions, the starting conference for building a new profession)
- „The 8th Art“ – Annual Conference on Art of Memory Communication
- National heritage media fair
- The Best in Tourism (existing experience of a similar project in heritage domain; existing project often discussed/offered internationally in several variants since 2000)

Some of these ideas have been tested, some partly realised, all are elaborated as project proposals, all have been protected as intellectual property of European Heritage Association or Tomislav S. Sola:

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### **The uncalculated addition**

In October 2020 I was invited to contribute to a similar conference, again by an international organizer (from UK): HUMANIZING CITIES IN 21 CENTURY, held in Chengdu, China, in 2020. I have sent the organizers the same text, warned them of the previous conference, of my intention and announced that I would change or add only a few sentences in the descriptive, textual part to

make my “lists” more obvious. I am a prolific author, so why did I do that? As I have expected, UNESCO would have never invited me after making the contribution that I made in 2013, so that did not matter. But, what bothered me was that Chinese hosts seemingly never reacted to it, nor have (seemingly) taken my advice. So, I thought it was a good idea to retain the text as it was, not changing its title nor content, - without hindsight. What made the new occasion specific, in a way easier was the lockdown, turning the conference digital so I had the opportunity to update my thinking and record my live contribution, thus giving these ideas some new potential; the video recording is available at this same site and under the title: **Humanizing cities**.

In the meantime, I have not only witnessed the destiny of some listed projects but also published quite much upon subjects that were only mentioned or superficially treated in this brief contribution to the two conferences.