



ifa-Edition Kultur und Außenpolitik

**Agents of Change – Die Rolle von  
Künstlern und Kulturschaffenden in  
Krisen- und Konfliktregionen**

**/ Agents of Change — The Role of  
Artists and Cultural Actors in Regions  
of Conflict and Crisis**



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# VORWORT

Was kann Kulturarbeit in Krisen- und Konfliktgebieten bewirken? Welchen Beitrag können Künstler und Kulturschaffende in „gefährdeten“ Gesellschaften, in Postkonfliktsituationen, in Ländern unter hohem Transformationsdruck leisten? Wo liegen die Chancen und Herausforderungen, aber auch die Risiken und Grenzen des kulturellen Engagements? Was bedeutet kulturelle Aufbauarbeit in Bürgerkriegssituationen? Wie kann ein nachhaltiger Beitrag zum Aufbau bzw. Wiederaufbau kultureller Infrastrukturen und zum Schutz des kulturellen Erbes geleistet werden? Wie können Krisen und Konflikte in multireligiösen und multiethnischen Gesellschaften bearbeitet werden? Welche Erkenntnisse können auf die Gesellschaften der Geberländer übertragen werden?

Dies sind die Fragen, mit denen sich die elf AutorInnen des Sammelbandes beschäftigen. Die Beiträge stammen aus höchst unterschiedlichen Perspektiven und gehen – von Afghanistan bis Simbabwe – auf ebenso unterschiedliche Krisen- und Konfliktregionen der Welt ein. Der Erziehungswissenschaftler Sami Adwan aus Bethlehem und der Kölner Sozialwissenschaftler Josef Freise befassen sich mit einem Hochschulkooperationsprojekt in den palästinensischen Autonomiegebieten. Die Journalistin Amanda Fortier analysiert die Situation einer ethnischen Minderheit im Senegal, die seit Jahren für ihre kulturellen Rechte kämpft. Die japanische Politologin Akiko Fukushima hat sich mit Programmen und Projekten der japanischen und deutschen Auswärtigen Kulturpolitik auseinandergesetzt. Felencia Oktaria Hutabarat, die für eine Entwicklungsagentur in Jakarta arbeitet, geht auf die Schwierigkeiten einer multikulturellen und multireligiösen Gesellschaft wie Indonesien ein. Chris Kabwato, Direktor einer Journalistenschule in Südafrika, porträtiert das künstlerische Werk eines Musikers, der sich als „Löwe von Simbabwe“ mit seinen Freiheitsliedern einen Namen gemacht hat.

Georgi Mamedow, Co-Kurator des zentralasiatischen Pavillons auf der diesjährigen Biennale von Venedig, geht auf aktuelle Kulturaustausch-Initiativen in den Ländern Zentralasiens ein. Tom Odhiambo, Literaturdozent an der Universität Nairobi, zeichnet ein Bild von der Lage der Medien in Kenia. Der in Deutschland lebende Informatiker Nazir Peroz resümiert den zögerlichen akademischen Wiederaufbau seines Heimatlandes Afghanistan. Yuliya Sorokina reflektiert mit ihrem Künstlerkollegen Gamal Bokonbajew die Suche zeitgenössischer Künstler in Kirgistan und Kasachstan nach Modernisierung bei gleichzeitiger Wahrung ihrer kulturellen Eigenständigkeit.

Der Sammelband ist im Rahmen des Forschungsprogramms „Kultur und Außenpolitik“ des Instituts für Auslandsbeziehungen entstanden und begleitet die Aktivitäten der Arbeitsgruppe „Kultur und Entwicklung“, die das ifa ins Leben gerufen hat. Die Arbeitsgruppe, der auch das Goethe-Institut, die Deutsche Welle, der DAAD und die GIZ angehören, veranstaltet in diesem Jahr eine Konferenz mit dem Titel „Kunst.Kultur.Konflikt“, die sich mit den gleichen Fragen wie dieser Band befasst. Mein Dank gilt Daniel Gad, der als Stipendiat des Forschungsprogramms nicht nur seinen eigenen Fachbeitrag zur Rolle von Künstlern und Kulturvermittlern in diesem Kontext geleistet, sondern auch die inhaltliche Konzeption und redaktionelle Betreuung dieses Sammelbandes sowie die Koordination der Arbeitsgruppe übernommen hat. Ich danke aber auch allen mitwirkenden AutorInnen sowie den beteiligten Organisationen für ihre Expertise und ihr Engagement und wünsche ihnen, dass die zahlreichen Handlungsempfehlungen Anregungen für die Praxis geben.

**Sebastian Körber,**  
 Stellvertretender Generalsekretär des  
 Instituts für Auslandsbeziehungen e. V.

# AGENTS OF CHANGE



# Die Rolle von Kunst- und Kulturschaffenden in Krisen- und Konfliktregionen

von Daniel Gad

**Das Bewusstsein dafür wächst, dass Kunst und Kultur einen wichtigen Beitrag für die Entwicklung von Individuen und von Gesellschaften leisten. So hat die UNESCO auf ihrer Weltkonferenz zur Kulturellen Bildung in Seoul 2010 die soziale Dimension von kultureller Bildung und Kulturvermittlung hervorgehoben und seit 2005 in einem entsprechenden Übereinkommen eine völkerrechtliche Grundlage für kulturpolitisches Handeln geschaffen, die sich ausdrücklich auch auf die internationalen Beziehungen bezieht. Wie aber lässt sich der Zusammenhang von ‚Kultur und Entwicklung‘ noch genauer fassen und im entwicklungspolitischen Diskurs verankern?**

Welche Rolle können Kunst und Kultur in der Entwicklungspolitik spielen, vor allem da, wo sich die Entwicklungspolitik vor besondere Herausforderungen gestellt sieht, etwa in Krisen und Konflikten? Dieser Frage widmet sich die Arbeitsgruppe „Kultur und Entwicklung“, die das Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen e. V. (ifa) 2005 gegründet hat. Beteiligt sind neben dem ifa der Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD), die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), die Deutsche Welle und das Goethe-Institut. Aufgabe der Arbeitsgruppe ist es, Potenziale für eine verbesserte Zusammenarbeit zwischen Auswärtiger Kultur- und Bildungspolitik (AKBP) und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit zu erschließen und Vorschläge für eine strategische Verankerung der Zusammenarbeit zu entwerfen. Der Informationsaustausch soll gefördert, Möglichkeiten der Kooperation sollen erschlossen und erweitert sowie die Effektivität der Arbeit erhöht werden. Seit 2009 wird dazu eine Konferenz-Reihe in Bonn ausgetragen. Die bisherigen Themen waren: Die Union für das Mittelmeer – Kultur und Entwicklung von Rabat bis Helsinki? (2009), Kultur und globale Entwicklung (2010) und Kunst.Kultur.Konflikt (2011).

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## Kultur und Entwicklung

Der Zusammenhang zwischen Auswärtiger Kultur- und Bildungspolitik und Entwicklungspolitik ist ein Thema, das seit Jahrzehnten diskutiert wird. Doch während der außenkulturpolitische Diskurs gezeigt hat, wie durch kulturpolitische Maßnahmen entwicklungspolitisch gehandelt werden kann, klammert der entwicklungspolitische Diskurs kulturpolitisches Handeln für gewöhnlich weitgehend aus und scheint der Kultur insgesamt wenig Relevanz für die eigene Thematik beizumessen.

Kulturpolitik als sogenannte ‚Softpower‘ wird es wohl immer schwer haben, sich im Kampf um begrenzte Ressourcen durchzusetzen, gerade weil ihre Wirkungen meist nicht linear bemessen werden können.

Für beide Lager ist dabei klar, dass Entwicklung nicht allein auf wirtschaftliche Faktoren reduziert werden kann. Hier hat auch die Entwicklungspolitik einen Paradigmenwechsel vollzogen: Galt zunächst über viele Jahre das Paradigma

der nachholenden industriellen Entwicklung als Königsweg, so sind es mittlerweile auch gesellschaftliche Prozesse, die gefördert werden sollen, um dem Partnerland die Wahl individueller, lokal verankerter Strategien für die eigene Entwicklung zuzugestehen.

Lange Zeit stand dabei die Zusammenarbeit mit staatlichen Institutionen in den Partnerländern im Fokus. Doch in vielen Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern stellen Korruption und Amtsmissbrauch ein Problem dar, wenn es gilt, Veränderungen für breitere Bevölkerungsschichten zu erreichen. So wurden einerseits Instrumente für ‚Gute Regierungsführung‘ entworfen und etabliert, andererseits wurde der Rolle der Zivilgesellschaft in gesellschaftlichen Entwicklungsprozessen zunehmend Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. Dennoch kursiert weiterhin die – berechnete – Sorge, dass von der entwicklungspolitischen Unterstützung nur wenig bei den eigentlichen Zielgruppen ankommt.

Ein Grund dafür, dass die Ergebnisse von mehreren Dekaden Entwicklungspolitik nicht den ursprünglichen Erwartungen entsprechen, sehen Beobachter wie der Kenianer James Shikwati darin, dass man es versäumt hat, die Eigeninitiative der Menschen entschieden zu fördern. Umstritten ist, ob eher staatliche Strukturen geschaffen werden müssen, um langfristige gesellschaftliche Prozesse abzusichern, oder ob zivilgesellschaftliche Kräfte die eigentlichen Motoren von Entwicklung darstellen, die es deshalb besonders zu fördern und zu schützen gilt. In diesem Zuge sind heute partizipative Elemente, die ‚Ownership‘ und ‚Empowerment‘ der Menschen in den Partnerländern fördern – so die etablierten Fachbegriffe, für die eine deutliche Formulierung weiter aussteht –, zentral für entwicklungspolitisches Handeln.

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## Mensch im Mittelpunkt

Fraglos sind ein funktionierendes Handelssystem und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung wichtige Grundlagen auch für gesellschaftliche Entwicklung. Doch zeigt die Erfahrung der Industrieländer, dass wirtschaftliches Wachstum allein nicht ausreicht, um soziale Missstände zu beheben und alle Teile der Gesellschaft von der Entwicklung profitieren zu lassen. Deshalb wurde der Mensch – als Individuum wie als Teil einer Gesellschaft – in den vergangenen Jahren wieder stärker in den Mittelpunkt des Entwicklungsbegriffs gestellt.

Die Vorstellung von einer gelungenen Entwicklung ist dabei an einem bestimmten Verständnis von universellen Menschenrechten orientiert. Hierzu gehören insbesondere individuelle Freiheitsrechte, etwa das Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung. Dazu zählen aber auch weiterführende soziale, politische und kulturelle Rechte, darunter das Recht auf Teilhabe am kulturellen Leben oder das Recht auf Bildung. So haben die Vereinten Nationen über die Jahrzehnte verschiedene internationale Abkommen formuliert, die auch von der überwiegenden Mehrheit der Regierungen ratifiziert wurden. Doch auch hier klaffen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit auseinander. Vieles von dem, was die Regierungen zusagen, wird in der Praxis nicht umgesetzt. Staatliches Handeln allein reicht nicht aus, um gesellschaftliche Entwicklung zu fördern und auf Dauer zu gewährleisten. Hier kommt der Zivilgesellschaft eine entscheidende Rolle zu.

Für das freie Agieren von zivilgesellschaftlichen Akteuren bedarf es einerseits institutionalisierter Menschenrechte, andererseits formiert sich ‚Protestgesellschaft‘ häufig gerade da, wo diese Rechte fehlen. Dadurch fungiert sie auch als Kontrollinstanz eines Staates. Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NRO) als organisierte Form zivilgesellschaftlichen Engagements sind in diesem Sinne Teil

eines demokratischen Transformationsprozesses:

*NRO nehmen die Funktion von Frühwarnsystemen wahr, stellen gesellschaftsweite, empfindliche Sensoren dar und bringen lebensweltliche, manchmal utopische, oft sachbezogen-realistische und von ihrem Anspruch her gemeinwohlorientierte Argumentationen und Sichtweisen in den Politikprozess ein. Sie stellen politische Öffentlichkeit und Transparenz her und tragen so zur Kontrolle der politischen Macht bei, setzen diese unter politischen Stress und Legitimationsdruck und erhöhen zugleich die Legitimation politischer Entscheidungen, die die Filter der NRO-Welt durchlaufen haben. NRO greifen vernachlässigte Themen auf, bilden oft flexiblere und offenere Organisationsstrukturen als Parteien und traditionelle Verbände heraus und tragen dazu bei, die Politik in die Gesellschaft zurückzuholen.<sup>1</sup>*

Dirk Messner formuliert hier einen klaren Auftrag für entwicklungspolitisches Handeln. Sollen gesellschaftliche Entwicklungsprozesse in den Partnerländern gefördert werden, müssen gerade auch zivilgesellschaftliche Kräfte unterstützt werden.

## Ungenutzte Potenziale

Während die Rolle der Zivilgesellschaft im entwicklungspolitischen Diskurs mittlerweile erkannt wird, fragt sich, warum das Potenzial der Kulturschaffenden in der Entwicklungspolitik und der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit bisher so wenig genutzt wird. Zwar hat die UNESCO durch das seit 2005 vorliegende „Übereinkommen zum Schutz und zur Förderung der Vielfalt kultureller Ausdrucksformen“ eine völkerrechtliche Grundlage dafür geschaffen. Auch haben inzwischen etwa 125 Staaten dieses Übereinkommen ratifiziert

<sup>1</sup> Dirk Messner (2004): Keimzellen der Demokratie. Historische und aktuelle Betrachtungen zum Thema „Zivilgesellschaft und Entwicklung“. In: VENRO: Zivilgesellschaft & Entwicklung 2004. Bonn, S. 5–8.

und sich damit zur Umsetzung verpflichtet. Doch müssen die UNESCO und ihre Mitstreiter weiterhin dafür kämpfen, Teil der entwicklungspolitischen Prioritätenagenda zu sein.

Immerhin, in den vergangenen Jahren wurden mit Unterstützung aus den Geberländern, parallel zu staatlichen Instanzen und zu multilateralen Abkommen, einige zivilgesellschaftliche Netzwerke von Kulturschaffenden verschiedener Entwicklungsländer gegründet. Zwei dieser Netzwerke sind das „Red Latinoamericana de Arte para la Transformación Social“ und das afrikanische „Arterial Network“. Beide sind aus lokaler Initiative heraus entstanden, weil die Regierungen ihrer Region kulturpolitisch weiterhin inaktiv oder zu wenig engagiert sind.

Es gilt also, das Potenzial von Kunst und Kultur für die Entwicklungspolitik deutlicher herauszuarbeiten, auch oder gerade dann, wenn sie sich nicht ausschließlich mit im engeren Sinne entwicklungspolitisch relevanten Themen beschäftigen. Dazu sollen im Folgenden einige Grundthesen auf den Prüfstand gestellt werden, die den Diskurs um Kunst und Kultur implizit oder explizit prägen:

## Wert und Vision

Was ist Kunst wert? Orientiert an den auf Effizienz ausgerichteten Beurteilungskriterien der Entwicklungspolitik sind die Auswirkungen von Kunst und Kultur oft nicht konkret fassbar. Dennoch lässt sich zumindest der wirtschaftliche Wert von Kunst berechnen. In Ländern wie Brasilien oder Mali macht die Kreativwirtschaft bis zu sechs Prozent des Bruttoinlandsprodukts und damit einen bedeutenden Anteil am Staatshaushalt aus.<sup>2</sup> Doch Kunst, die gesellschaftlich relevant ist, kann, muss aber nicht unbedingt wirtschaftlich erfolgreich sein.

<sup>2</sup> Patricio Jeretic (2009): Culture as a Factor of Economic and Social Development. Brüssel.

Das macht die Dinge aus Sicht der Entwicklungspolitik nicht unbedingt leichter. Denn die gesellschaftliche Wirkung von Kunst ist nach wie vor schwer zu planen und zu berechnen. Entwicklungszusammenarbeit aber muss sich für die Verwendung ihrer Gelder rechtfertigen und ist somit darauf bedacht, klar erreichbare Ziele festzulegen. Insofern verwundert es nicht, dass es unter den klassischen Entwicklungsagenturen zwar verbreitet ist, beispielsweise ein mit pädagogischen Elementen zugespitztes Theaterspiel (Theatre for Development) zur Kommunikation über HIV/Aids zu unterstützen, die allgemeine freie Theaterszene hingegen nicht für eine Förderung in Betracht zu ziehen – auch dann nicht, wenn sie sich künstlerisch mit gesellschaftlich relevanten Themen auseinandersetzt.

Die Erfahrung der Kulturinstitutionen im Umfeld der UNESCO zeigt, dass Kunst auch in politisch repressiven Situationen Phantasie und Utopie artikulieren, Kritik üben und gesellschaftliche Situationen hinterfragen kann (allerdings werden Kulturschaffende aus eben diesen Gründen ebenso häufig daran gehindert, sich künstlerisch zu betätigen). Kunst kann Perspektiven für die Gesellschaft aufzeigen und ist in diesem Sinne Teil eines gesellschaftlichen Diskurses, der nach Lösungen für gesellschaftliche Missstände sucht. So hob die Bundestags-Enquete-Kommission „Kultur in Deutschland“ in ihrem Abschlussbericht 2007 die Bedeutung von Kunst und Kultur für Individuum und Gesellschaft hervor:

*In der Sphäre der Kultur findet die ständige Selbstreflexion der Gesellschaft über ihre Werte und Standards statt. Deswegen ist es nicht nur für die Individuen und ihre Lebensqualität, sondern auch für die Entwicklung der Gesellschaft wichtig, dass möglichst viele Menschen in jenen kulturellen Diskurs einbezogen werden, der mit dem Medium der Künste stattfindet.*<sup>3</sup>

Auch Joost Smiers verweist darauf, dass Kunst und Kultur wesentliche Bestandteile von Demokratie sind:

*Why are the arts important in any society, and why should they be connected with a particular society rather than reflecting the influence of cultural and economic forces operating at the global level? The answer is democracy. A characteristic of democracy is that many different voices can be heard and many different opinions expressed. The public domain in any democratic society is the mental and physical space in which the exchange of ideas and an open debate about all sorts of questions can take place without interference from whose only purpose is to sell as much as they can.*<sup>4</sup>

Aber bei allem Lob des kreativen, subversiven und schöpferischen Potenzials von Kunst wäre es doch eine naive Verkürzung, Kunst per se als demokratie- und entwicklungsfördernd zu verstehen. Um deutlicher herauszuarbeiten, wo und wie Kunst in den Dienst der Entwicklung treten kann, müssen gängige Vorurteile kritisch hinterfragt und muss neben der demokratiefördernden zunächst auch die ‚andere Seite‘ der Kunst in den Blick genommen werden.

### **Nicht nur subversiv**

Eine gängige, meist unhinterfragt geäußerte Annahme besagt, Kunst sei der Ausdruck der Freiheit des Künstlers: Er wähle ihre Inhalte unabhängig von den äußeren Rahmenbedingungen und gehorche nur den Regeln der Kunst. Darin liege ihr subversives Potenzial. Dabei wird übersehen, dass diese Vorstellung vom Künstler und der Kunst keineswegs universelle Gültigkeit besitzt, sondern in einem bestimmten historischen und kulturellen Kontext entstanden ist: Sie führt zurück in die westeuropäische Genieästhetik des 18. Jahrhunderts, als der Künstler zum Gegenmodell einer

3 Deutscher Bundestag (2007): Schlussbericht der Enquete-Kommission „Kultur in Deutschland“. Berlin.

4 Joost Smiers (2005): *Arts under Pressure*. New York, S. vii.

nach der Ständeordnung gegliederten höfischen Gesellschaft entworfen und zur rebellischen Instanz erklärt wurde, die die eigene Ordnung gegen die des Monarchen stellt.

Regeln der Moral wie der Gesetzgebung, so die mit diesem Modell verknüpfte Vorstellung, haben für das Genie keine Gültigkeit. Es schöpft aus sich selbst und ist nur sich selbst verpflichtet. Eine Verallgemeinerung dieses Modells von Kunst und Künstlertum für alle Zeiten und Epochen greift jedoch zu kurz. Sie übersieht nicht nur, dass es für viele außereuropäische Kulturkreise keine Gültigkeit besitzt, sondern auch, dass der Künstler in der abendländischen Kultur über viele Jahrhunderte hinweg keinesfalls frei war, seine eigenen Gedanken auszudrücken: Er handelte im Dienst seines Auftraggebers oder Mäzens.

Ein weiteres häufig unhinterfragt tradiertes Vorurteil besagt, Kunst sei grundsätzlich kritisch oder subversiv. Dabei wird übersehen, dass Kunst genauso häufig in den Dienst der Stabilisierung bestehender Systeme oder der Verherrlichung von Herrschern tritt. Kunst kann nicht nur subversiv, sondern genauso gut konservativ sein, restaurativ oder reaktionär. Kunst ist und war also keineswegs immer schon per se der – positiven – Entwicklung von Gesellschaften dienlich. Im Gegenteil: Kunst ist ein ebenso geeignetes Medium, um Stereotypen zu kreieren und zu tradieren, Feindbilder ins Leben zu rufen, die Gräben zwischen der eigenen Bezugsgruppe und den Anderen zu vertiefen oder gar erst zu ziehen. Damit ist sie nicht von vornherein ein Instrument der Krisenintervention. Sie kann vielmehr Konflikte bewusst schüren und Gewalt zum Ausbruch verhelfen.

Kunst ist so vielfältig und ambivalent wie jedes andere Zeichen- und Kommunikationssystem, sie kann positiv oder destruktiv wirken, sie arbeitet mit Emotion oder Ratio, sie spricht verschiedene Ebenen im Subjekt an und nutzt ihr Potenzial, um den Rezipienten zu lenken – in die eine oder andere Richtung.

## Vermitteln und verändern

Wenn wir über die Rolle von Kunst und Kultur für gesellschaftliche Entwicklungsprozesse sprechen, dann müssen wir neben den Künstlern auch diejenigen in den Blick nehmen, deren Aufgabe es ist, die Kunst und den Künstler in Kontakt mit dem Publikum zu bringen – die Kulturvermittler. Um die Bandbreite der künstlerischen Aussagen zu zeigen, um ihre kreative oder destruktive Potenz überhaupt erst sichtbar werden zu lassen, benötigt es in der Regel der Vermittlung von Zugängen. Dies ist insbesondere dann interessant, wenn Kunst als Teil der gesellschaftlichen Kommunikation verstanden wird, in dem die drängenden gesellschaftspolitischen Fragen behandelt werden.

Zu den Aufgaben des Kulturvermittlers, der selbst Künstler sein kann, es aber nicht sein muss, gehört es auch, die Kommunikation und den Kulturaustausch zwischen den Menschen unterschiedlichen gesellschaftlichen Hintergrunds zu fördern, sei es innerhalb einer Stadt oder weltweit.

Als „Seismografen einer Gesellschaft“<sup>5</sup> bezeichnet Hans-Dieter Lehmann, Präsident des Goethe-Instituts, Künstler und Kulturschaffende: Sie beobachten, analysieren und beurteilen den Zustand einer Gesellschaft. Sie können Warnsignale aussenden und sind Teil eines Beobachtungssystems, das die Richtung, in die eine Gesellschaft sich bewegt, frühzeitig ausmacht, aber auch beeinflusst. In diesem Sinne stellt Hilmar Hoffmann, einer der Vorgänger Lehmanns als Goethe-Institut-Präsident, fest:

*Zunächst denken wir beim „Seismografen“ an das Bild eines passiven Anzeigeapparates (...) Wenn wir das Bild vom Seismografen auf die künstlerische und kulturelle Sphäre übertragen, dann geht es dabei um plurikausale*

5 Klaus-Dieter Lehmann (2006): Die Kulturinitiative des Goethe-Instituts. München, <http://www.goethe.de/ges/prj/kue/ini/de3740637.htm>.

*Prozesse und um Interpretationen, statt um das einfache Anzeigen von Veränderungen. (...) Der Seismograf wird Subjekt, er darf und muss selber auswählen, was ihm wichtig erscheint und was er anzeigen will. Nur so können sich die Akteure der Künste untereinander verständigen: In subjektiver Verantwortung und eigener Kompetenz interpretieren und werten sie, was sie vorfinden und beobachten. Von niemandem dürfen sie sich vorschreiben lassen, was sie als wichtige Veränderung einschätzen und worauf sie warum reagieren wollen. Sie präsentieren ihre eigenen, eigenwilligen Vorstellungen der kulturellen Öffentlichkeit. Wie diese darauf reagiert, ist eine andere Frage. (...) Unveräußerliche Charakteristika künstlerischer Arbeit als Seismografen der Veränderung bestehen darin, aus der Erfahrung des sich wandelnden Lebens symbolische Formen der deutenden, wertenden und erkennenden Aneignung von Welt zu generieren. Indem die Künste kulturspezifisch Möglichkeiten der Interpretation von Welt und Mensch durchspielen und vorleben, öffnen sie innerhalb einer Gesellschaft Chancen des Wandels und der Entwicklung. Sie erschließen „Möglichkeitenräume“ für die Überwindung von Denkblockaden und gesellschaftspolitischen Sackgassen.<sup>6</sup>*

Die Fähigkeit des Kulturschaffenden, Wandel zu schaffen, macht ihn zum ‚Change Agent‘. Zwar kann nicht ein einzelner Künstler oder ein einmaliges künstlerisches Werk eine Gesellschaft grundlegend auf einen neuen Kurs bringen. Erst die Summe der künstlerischen Aussagen, seien sie gewollt oder eher experimentierend in den Raum gestellt, und die Vielfalt an kreativen Ausdrucksformen sorgen für die künstlerische Wirkung. Dazu gehört auch die Vielfalt an teilweise gegensätzlichen Meinungen, die in Kunst und Kultur zum Ausdruck kommen, so dass Lösungen durch Kunst und Kultur für gesellschaftliche Probleme

gewiss nicht auf einen Schlag, sondern Schritt für Schritt gefunden werden können.

### **Ich-Stärke und „Eigen-Sinn“**

Doch nicht nur die Künstler und Kulturschaffenden als Produzenten sollten bei der Frage nach der Rolle von Kunst und Kultur in Entwicklungszusammenhängen berücksichtigt werden. Unter dem Schlagwort ‚kulturelle Bildung‘ widmet sich der internationale kulturpolitische Diskurs dem Empfänger, an den sich Kunst und Kultur wenden. Ein zentrales Dokument ist die sogenannte „Roadmap for Arts Education“, die nach der ersten UNESCO-Weltkonferenz für Kulturelle Bildung formuliert wurde:

*Kultur und Kunst sind unerlässliche Bestandteile einer umfassenden Bildung, die es jedem Einzelnen ermöglicht, sich voll zu entfalten. Kulturelle Bildung ist dabei ein grundlegendes Menschenrecht, das für alle Lernenden gilt, einschließlich für die oft von Bildung ausgeschlossenen. (...) Kulturelle Bildung ermöglicht es auch einem Staat die Humanressourcen hervorzubringen, die zum Erschließen seines wertvollen kulturellen Kapitals notwendig sind.<sup>7</sup>*

Und schon 1979 schrieb Hilmar Hoffmann im Zuge seines Konzeptes „Kultur für alle“:

*Theater als gesellschaftlicher Seismograph setzt den urteilsfähigen, politisch bewussten Zuschauer voraus, der selber denkt und nicht das Theater für sich denken lässt.<sup>8</sup>*

6 Hilmar Hoffmann (2002): Seismografen der Veränderung: Vom Nutzen künstlerischer Arbeit für die Gesellschaft. Bad Homburg, <http://www.herbert-quandt-stiftung.de>.

7 Deutsche UNESCO Kommission (2007): Leitfaden für kulturelle Bildung. Schaffung kreativer Kapazitäten für das 21. Jahrhundert. Bonn, S. 17, 20.

8 Hilmar Hoffmann (1979): Kultur für alle. Perspektiven und Modelle. Frankfurt a. M., S. 46.

Auch Oliver Scheytt bezieht sich auf die Funktion der Kunst, Gesellschaft zu bilden:

*Bilder, Theater- und Opernaufführungen, Kompositionen, Tanzperformances, Filme oder Fotografien stellen uns, unsere Erfahrungen und Voreingenommenheiten infrage. Wir werden von bildenden Künstlern und Autoren, Regisseuren und Schauspielern, den Musikern und Tänzern dazu gebracht, einen eigenen Standpunkt zu suchen zu dem, was wir hören, sehen, erleben und erfahren. So bewegen wir uns aus der künstlerischen Verunsicherung zu einer eigenen Haltung: zu „Eigen-Sinn“ (Oskar Negt): Eigene Sinne entfalten, sich wehren gegen die Ent-Eignung der Sinne, beharren auf eigener Wahrnehmungs- und Urteilsfähigkeit: das ist Eigen-Sinn. In dieser Ich-Stärkung, in dieser Förderung des Eigen-Sinns liegt die Orientierungsmacht der Kunst. (...) Das ästhetische Erleben und Erfahren fördert zudem die ebenso spielerische wie kritische Auseinandersetzung mit Fremdbild und Selbstbild. Ästhetische Erfahrung führt zu Sinn und Sinnlichkeit, stärkt den Eigen-Sinn, die Wahrnehmungs- und Kritikfähigkeit. (...) ‚Ent-Haltung‘ entsteht vor allem dann, wenn wir uns nicht einlassen auf die Kunst, der wir begegnen. Deshalb ist es so wichtig, auf der Grundlage eines ganzheitlichen Bildungsbegriffs für Vermittlung, für Verständnis, für Zugang zu den Künsten sorgen zu helfen. (...) Bildung ist insofern nicht nur auf theoretisches Wissen und beruflich unmittelbar verwertbare Bildung, sondern auch auf ästhetische Erfahrung und Kompetenz sowie auf ethische Reflexion und Wertevermittlung auszurichten. Genau darauf zielt die kulturelle Bildung. Erst als Bestandteil allgemeiner Bildung werden Kunst und Kultur zu konstitutiven Elementen unserer Gesellschaft.<sup>9</sup>*

Kultur schafft Ich-Stärke und ‚Eigen-Sinn‘, und sie schult die Kritikfähigkeit. Ästhetisch gebildete Individuen werden Teil einer lebendigen Gesellschaft, die bereit ist, sich mit sich selbst auseinander zu

setzen, langfristige Lösungen für Missstände zu finden und deshalb im Sinne des gesellschaftlichen Wandels Verhalten und Strukturen zu verändern.

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## Aufgaben für die Politik

Die Politik und namentlich die Kulturpolitik müssen der Rolle von Kunst und Kultur in gesellschaftlichen Entwicklungsprozessen Rechnung tragen und die Aktivitäten flankieren.

Der Auftrag lautet, die Rahmenbedingungen für das Werken und Wirken von Kulturschaffenden zu stützen und zu fördern. Dabei beschränkt sich kulturpolitisches Handeln nur zum Teil auf finanzielle Förderung. Ebenso wichtig ist es, Freiheiten zu gewährleisten, die die Bedingung für einen künstlerisch-gesellschaftlichen Diskurs darstellen. Gerade in Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern haben Kulturschaffende mit gewaltigen Problemen zu kämpfen. Die jeweiligen Haushalte sind in der Regel für kulturpolitische Belange zu knapp bestückt, auch lokale private Unternehmen zeigen sich zurückhaltend in der Kulturfinanzierung. Zugleich wird entweder die Rolle der Kulturschaffenden nicht ausreichend ernst genommen, oder aber die Regierungen wittern umgekehrt – gerade weil sie die Rolle der Kunst ernst nehmen – eine unliebsame Opposition mit unkontrollierbarem gesellschaftlichem Einflusspotenzial.

Seit Jahren wird auf multilateraler, insbesondere auf UNESCO-Ebene, und von den Kulturschaffenden selbst nach neuen Wegen gesucht, um die Situation nachhaltig zu verbessern. Doch ist die stetig wachsende Zahl an internationalen, interregionalen und nationalen Abkommen und Handlungsleitfäden die Lösung? Das mag man mit den Kulturschaffenden, die 2009 auf Einladung der Europäischen Union aus allen Teilen der Welt zu einem gemeinsamen Kolloquium in Brüssel mit dem Titel „Culture et création – facteurs de

<sup>9</sup> Oliver Scheytt (2003): Künste und kulturelle Bildung als Kraftfelder der Kulturpolitik. In: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte 12/ 2003, Berlin, S. 6-14.

développement“ zusammengekommen waren, füglich bezweifeln.<sup>10</sup> Bekanntlich ist es nicht schwierig, aus einer Sammlung guter Ideen gute Konzepte zu formulieren. In der Praxis kommt dann aber oft nichts zustande, weil Widerstände zu groß sind, Strukturen und Handeln entsprechend zu ändern, oder weil die Konzepte nicht ausgereift sind.

## Worte ohne Taten

Eine Erläuterung des „World Observatory of the social Status of the Artist“ der UNESCO von 2003 ergänzt dazu:

*Creative artists are the bedrock of cultural diversity which is as vital to humankind as biodiversity is to living beings. By viewing artistic activities as essential contributions to society rather than simply as works of mind, we can better understand the invitation addressed to the Member States of UNESCO.<sup>11</sup>*

Der Status des Künstlers definiert sich zum einen nach seiner gesellschaftlichen Verantwortung und zum anderen nach seinen von Regierungen gewährten und geschützten Rechten, sich in Freiräumen bewegen zu können. Regierungen seien folglich dazu verpflichtet, ein Klima zu schaffen,

*welches die Freiheit des künstlerischen Ausdrucks und ebenso die materiellen Bedingungen zur Erleichterung der Veröffentlichung dieses kreativen Talentes<sup>12</sup>*

gewährleistet.

1997 tagte auf Einladung der UNESCO in Paris der „World Congress on the Implementation of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist“. Ziel des Kongresses war, die Rolle von Kulturschaffenden zu stärken und Wege der Förderung und Absicherung zu diskutieren. Die Teilnehmer plädierten dafür, Kulturschaffende an der Gestaltung und Umsetzung von Kulturpolitik zu beteiligen, wozu die Möglichkeit gegeben sein müsste, unabhängige Berufsverbände zu gründen. Zudem stehe die bedeutende Rolle, die Kulturschaffenden für die gesellschaftliche Entwicklung zugesprochen wird, im Widerspruch zu den Möglichkeiten, ihrer künstlerischen Tätigkeit im Alltag nachzukommen.

Das beziehe sich etwa auf die vielfach eingeschränkten Freiheiten, sich auszudrücken, auf Urheberrechtsverletzungen und oder auf die mangelnde soziale Absicherung, die umso schwächer ausfalle, je unabhängiger die Kulturschaffenden arbeiten.<sup>13</sup> Nicht selten werde das Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung von den Regierungen mit Verweis auf andere politische und gesellschaftliche Verantwortungen massiv beschnitten. Doch auch ohne Zensur gebe es häufig nur rein theoretisch künstlerische Freiheit, denn oft fehlten eine öffentliche Finanzierung und die Schaffung von Rahmenstrukturen zur Entwicklung dieser Freiheit.<sup>14</sup> Somit sei es von zentraler Bedeutung, die nationale und internationale Kulturpolitik zur Förderung von künstlerischem Schaffen zu bewegen, und dafür zu sorgen, dass diese Politik

10 Europäische Kommission (2009): Brussels Declaration. Brüssel.

11 UNESCO (2003): World Observatory of the social status of the artist, [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=8092&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=8092&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

12 Vgl. UNESCO (1980): Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist, [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13138&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13138&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

13 UNESCO (1979b): Final declaration. World Congress on the Implementation of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001090/109018e.pdf>.

14 Vgl. UNESCO (1979a): Conclusions of the World Congress on the Implementation of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist, <http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/14127/10938576383congresconclue.pdf/congresconclue.pdf>.



von Künstlern und deren Verbänden mitgestaltet wird.<sup>15</sup>

Und so wird im UNESCO-Weltbericht „Unsere kreative Vielfalt“ gefordert, „dem besonderen Status des Künstlers dadurch Rechnung zu tragen, dass entsprechende soziale, rechtliche, finanzielle und institutionelle Rahmenbedingungen geschaffen“ sowie „die fachübergreifende Fortbildung von Kulturmanagern“<sup>16</sup> stärker gefördert werden. Ferner wird gemahnt, „Beiträge von Künstlern für die kritische Auseinandersetzung mit politischen Problemen positiv aufzunehmen und zu fördern.“<sup>17</sup>

Auch im Aktionsplan „The Power of Culture“ der Deutschen UNESCO Kommission heißt es:

*Im Rahmen der Kulturpolitik sollte dem unverzichtbaren Beitrag von Kulturschaffenden zur Verbesserung der Lebensqualität, zur Identitätsfindung und zur kulturellen Entwicklung der Gesellschaft besondere Anerkennung zukommen. (...) Vorrangig (geht es darum), den Aufbau eines Netzwerks auf nationaler, regionaler und internationaler Ebene zu betreiben, bei dem Künstler und Verwalter kultureller Projekte und Einrichtungen mit dem Ziel einbezogen werden, den Zugang zur Kultur sowohl in quantitativer als auch in qualitativer Hinsicht zu verbessern.<sup>18</sup>*

Darüber hinaus muss auch der Entwicklung des Kultursektors genügend Raum zur Entfaltung gegeben werden, die auf die spezifischen Eigenheiten von Kunst und Kultur ausgerichtet ist:

*Within broader programmes, the distinction between support based on artistic criteria and support based on instrumental „human development“ criteria is still necessary, in order to maintain a balance between the development of a professional, qualified cultural sector, and the broader goal of human development. The cultural sector will never bloom and eventually benefit broader human and social ends unless it is allowed to build its own infrastructure (support systems of education, production, distribution, communication, etc.), and there is sufficient room in which independent artists can operate.<sup>19</sup>*

Die zentrale Rolle von Kulturschaffenden als Bestandteil des gesellschaftlichen Entwicklungsprozesses ist nicht mehr zu übersehen, auch dann, wenn die Effekte von Kunst generell wenig vorherbestimmbar sind. Einer der wichtigsten Aspekte wird weiterhin sein, diese Rolle in der entwicklungspolitischen Agenda fest zu verankern. Dafür müssen geeignete Wege gefunden werden.

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15 Vgl. UNESCO (1997a): Conclusions of the World Congress on the Implementation of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist, <http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/14127/10938576383congresconclue.pdf/congresconclue.pdf>.

16 Deutsche UNESCO Kommission (1997): Unsere kreative Vielfalt. Bonn.

17 Ebd.

18 Deutsche UNESCO Kommission (1998): The Power of Culture. Aktionsplan über Kulturpolitik für Entwicklung. Stockholm, <http://www.unesco.de/458.html?&L=0>.

19 Olaf Gerlach Hansen (2006): Co-operation for Development: Building cultural capacity, In: Nina Obuljen & Joost Smiers(Hg.) (2006): UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions: Making it Work. Zagreb, S. 111-123.

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## Über den Autor

Daniel Gad (geboren 1977 in Lemgo, Deutschland) hat Kulturwissenschaften und ästhetische Praxis studiert und promoviert derzeit im Bereich „Kultur und Entwicklung“ an der Universität Hildesheim. Seit 2007 koordiniert er die Arbeitsgruppe „Kultur und Entwicklung“ der deutschen Mittler- und Durchführungsorganisationen. Gad ist Mitbegründer des europäischen NRO-Netzwerks Vienna Group on Culture and Development und WIKA-Mitglied des ifa.

Palästinensische Autonomiegebiete

# Überwindung von Stereotypen und Feindbildern: Deutsch-palästinensischer Studentenaustausch

von Josef Freise

**Kaum irgendwo bestimmen Stereotypen und Vorurteile so stark den Diskurs wie im Verhältnis zwischen Israelis und Palästinensern. Mit gravierenden Folgen. Beim Versuch, Klischees im Nahen Osten abzubauen, können studentische Austauschprogramme, auch mit Dritten, ein wirksames Mittel sein. Ein Beispiel: die Hochschulpartnerschaft zwischen der Universität Bethlehem und der Katholischen Hochschule in Köln.**

## Monolithische Identitäten

Stereotypen und Feindbildorientierungen prägen nicht nur die persönliche Identität Einzelner, sie bestimmen die kollektiven Identitätsmuster ganzer Gesellschaften. Krisen- und Kriegssituationen befördern solche Denkmuster oft noch. Welche Folgen das haben kann, hat der im Jahr 2008 verstorbene israelische Psychologe Dan Bar-On am Beispiel Israels und Palästinas gezeigt.<sup>20</sup> Beide Gruppen sind durch traumatische Erfahrungen hindurch gegangen und sehen sich als Opfer; Fragen nach eigener Täterschaft werden oft ausgeblendet. Bar-On spricht in diesem Zusammenhang von „monolithischen Identitätsstrukturen“: Das individuelle und das kollektive Selbst sehen im ‚Anderen‘ das absolut Böse, mit dem man in Feindschaft lebt und dabei um Anerkennung und

Existenzberechtigung ringt.<sup>21</sup> Diesem Schwarz-Weiß-Denken liegt ein Mechanismus zu Grunde, den Sigmund Freud „Projektion“ genannt hat. Das Schwierige, Problematische und Dunkle wird vom eigenen Leben und dem favorisierten Gesellschaftsmodell abgekoppelt und auf einen Gegner projiziert.

## Ausprägungen

Im Kalten Kriegs bezeichneten sich die westliche und die kommunistische Welt gegenseitig als Feinde und als das absolut Böse. Dan Bar-On merkt an, dass es vielen Amerikanern nach dem Fall der Berliner Mauer schwer fiel, auf ein Feindbild zu verzichten.<sup>22</sup> In der Rezession der 1990 Jahre sah es eine Zeitlang so aus, als sollten die Japaner, insbesondere die japanische Automobilindustrie, diese Lücke füllen. Nach dem 11. September 2001 wurde der Islam zum neuen Feindbild. Parallel zur Islamophobie in den westlichen Industrienationen

<sup>20</sup> Dan Bar-On (2001): Die „Anderen“ in uns. Dialog als Modell der interkulturellen Konfliktbewältigung. Sozialpsychologische Analysen zur kollektiven israelischen Identität. Hamburg; ders. (2004): Erzähl dein Leben. Meine Wege zur Dialogarbeit und politischen Verständigung. Hamburg.

<sup>21</sup> Ebd., S. 30.

<sup>22</sup> Ebd., S. 22.

bildete sich in einzelnen mehrheitlich muslimischen Gesellschaften das Feindbild einer dekadenten westlichen Gesellschaft ohne Wertorientierung heraus. Das Christentum wird – dazu hat der ehemalige amerikanische Präsident George W. Bush stark beigetragen – als imperialistische Kraft gesehen, gegen die es sich zur Wehr zu setzen gilt.

Das Feindbild-Denken und die monolithische Identitätsstruktur prägen indes nicht nur Individuen und Gesellschaften, sondern auch die gesellschaftlichen Institutionen und Organisationen. In der Wissenschaft etwa können sozialwissenschaftliche Diskurse zu Themen wie Armut und Reichtum, Exklusion und Inklusion oder nachhaltiger ökologischer Entwicklung zu reiner Propaganda verkommen, wenn sie von Menschen mit monolithischer Identitätsstruktur geführt werden. Der grundlegende Anspruch der Wissenschaft, auf Dialektik, auf These, Antithese und Synthese zu setzen und die eigenen Vorannahmen kritisch zu hinterfragen, wird dabei aufgegeben. Ein monolithisches Denken in Schwarz-Weiß-Kategorien ist mit einem wissenschaftlichen Ethos des Erforschens und Entdeckens neuer Zusammenhänge nicht zu vereinbaren. Mit diesen negativen Folgen des monolithischen Denkens auf die Wissenschaft und ihre Institutionen werden Dozenten und Studenten in Begegnungen zwischen Hochschulen aus westlichen und aus arabischen Staaten immer wieder konfrontiert: Stereotypen, Vorurteile und im schlimmsten Falle Feindbilder prägen die wechselseitige Wahrnehmung.

## Perspektivenwechsel

Dan Bar-On und der Bethlehemer Erziehungswissenschaftler Sami Adwan (siehe „Bottom-up versus top-down: a PRIME experience“ ab S. 24) haben

mit ihrem Friedensforschungsinstitut PRIME<sup>23</sup> Initiativen entwickelt, um Begegnungen zu ermöglichen und einen Perspektivenwechsel einzuüben. Sie brachten jüdische Kibbuzim – zum Teil Holocaustüberlebende aus Osteuropa – mit Palästinensern zusammen, die 1948 aus der Region, in der die Kibbuzim heute leben, vertrieben wurden. Beide Seiten erzählten sich gegenseitig ihre Lebens- und Leidensgeschichten. Die Bedeutung solcher Begegnungen machen beide anhand ihrer persönlichen Lebensgeschichten deutlich: Dan Bar-On beschreibt in seinem Buch „Die ‚Anderen‘ in uns“, wie er in seiner monolithischen israelischen Identität erschüttert wurde, als er in Deutschland Begegnungen israelischer Kinder von Holocaustopfern mit Kindern von Nazitätern organisierte.<sup>24</sup> Die Interviews mit den Nachkommen der Nazis, die mit dem Bild ihrer Väter rangen, führten dazu, dass er sie nicht mehr einfach als Täter sehen konnte. Diesen Perspektivenwechsel empfand er als eine Art Angriff auf sein jüdisches Selbst, der ihn unter emotionalen Stress setzte. Er erkannte,

*„dass ich lange vor mir selbst zu verbergen versucht hatte, wie unvereinbar die Art, in der ich mich sah und mich Anderen gegenüber beschrieb (positiv natürlich), mit dem war, was ich tatsächlich vorfand.“*<sup>25</sup>

Sami Adwan erzählt, dass er noch als Doktorand in den USA die Einstellung der meisten Palästinenser gegenüber den Israelis geteilt habe: „Sie sind der Grund für meine ganze Misere, für all mein Leiden“.<sup>26</sup> Er vermied den Besuch von Vorlesungen

23 Sami Adwan beschreibt in seinem Artikel „Bottom-up versus top-down: a PRIME experience“ ab S. 24 in diesem Sammelband ausführlich die Arbeit von PRIME und erläutert weitere von PRIME durchgeführte Projekte.

24 Dan Bar-On (2001): Die „Anderen“ in uns; ders.: Erzähl dein Leben.

25 Dan Bar-On (2001): Die „Anderen“ in uns, S. 34.

26 Arnfried Schenk (2009): Die Geschichte der anderen. In einem gemeinsam erarbeiteten Schulbuch versuchen Israelis und Palästinenser, ihre 60 Jahre alte Feindschaft zu verstehen. In: Die ZEIT Nr. 25 - 10. Juni 2009, <http://www.zeit.de/2009/25/C-Schulbuch>.

und Seminaren, in denen er auf jüdische Kommilitonen hätte treffen können. Später wurde er Professor in Hebron und als Mitglied der Fatah, die damals noch als terroristische Vereinigung galt, von den Israelis verhaftet. Er erfuhr in der ersten Woche seiner Haft nicht den Grund für seine Festnahme. Doch dann erlebte er, wie ein israelischer Soldat sich für ihn einsetzte, als er einen hebräischen Text unterschreiben sollte, den er nicht verstand. Ein anderer israelischer Soldat brachte den palästinensischen Häftlingen Wasser, obwohl das verboten war. Adwan musste erfahren, dass nicht alle Israelis Feinde und Täter waren. Seitdem engagiert er sich für die Aussöhnung zwischen Israelis und Palästinensern.

## Gedächtnis, Gender, Glaube

Begegnungen zwischen israelischen und palästinensischen Hochschulen sind aufgrund eines palästinensischen Boykottbeschlusses derzeit fast unmöglich. Die palästinensische Regierung lehnt solche Kontakte ab, weil sie fürchtet, dadurch von einer israelischen Normalisierungsstrategie vereinnahmt zu werden, wonach man in ‚geordneten‘ Verhältnissen lebe und die Besatzung akzeptiere. Sami Adwan teilt mit seiner Regierung die Sichtweise, dass solche Initiativen politisch instrumentalisiert werden könnten, will aber dennoch die Chance friedensfördernder Begegnungen nutzen. Dazu gehören auch Begegnungen mit Dritten. Im Rahmen einer schon seit zehn Jahren bestehenden Hochschulpartnerschaft zwischen der Universität Bethlehem und der Katholischen Hochschule in Köln entstanden – unter Mitwirkung von Sami Adwan auf Bethlehemener Seite – studentische Austausch- und Forschungsprojekte, die neben den wissenschaftlichen Lehr- und Forschungszielen den Abbau von Stereotypen und Vorurteilen anstreben – auf deutscher wie auf palästinensischer Seite.

Im Mittelpunkt dieser Austausch- und Forschungsprojekte standen in den vergangenen Jahren u.a. folgende Themen: Gewaltbearbeitung als Aufgabe der Sozialarbeit, Jugendarbeit in Deutschland und Palästina, interreligiöser Dialog, geschlechterspezifische Fragestellungen (Genderfragen) in der Sozialarbeit, Werteorientierungen Jugendlicher in Deutschland und Palästina, die Bedeutung von Religion im Alltag christlicher und muslimischer Jugendlicher in Deutschland und Palästina, Partizipation, soziale Gerechtigkeit und Versöhnung sowie kritisches Denken in der Sozialarbeit. An diesen Begegnungen, die abwechselnd in Bethlehem und in Köln stattfinden, nehmen jeweils etwa 15 deutsche und 15 palästinensische Studenten und mehrere Dozenten beider Hochschulen teil. Im Rahmen der Begegnungen werden Seminare zum jeweiligen Themenschwerpunkt durchgeführt; Besuche und Hospitationen in Einrichtungen der Sozialarbeit zeigen die Realität vor Ort. Besuche in Familien der gastgebenden Gruppe fördern emotionale und persönliche Bindungen. Die Begegnungen enden jeweils mit einem mehrtägigen Workshop, in dem die gesammelten Erfahrungen durch Prozesse erfahrungsbezogenen Lernens reflektiert werden. Es hat sich gezeigt, dass sich drei Themen besonders eignen, um ein monolithisches und vorurteilsbesetztes Schwarz-Weiß-Denken zu überwinden und einen Perspektivenwechsel einzuüben: Politik, Religion und Genderfragen. Dazu einige Beispiele:

### Politik: Das kollektive Gedächtnis

Es sind ganz unterschiedliche Ereignisse, die für das kollektive Gedächtnis unterschiedlicher Länder bedeutsam sind. Eine der Übungen, die dazu dienen soll, die Teilnehmer miteinander ins Gespräch zu bringen, hat diese kollektive Erinnerung zum Inhalt. Jeder der Teilnehmer wird dazu aufgefordert, ein Datum mit demjenigen

politischen Ereignis aufzuschreiben, das für sein Leben oder das Leben der eigenen Familie prägend war. Der Reihe nach werden dann die einzelnen Zettel auf eine Zeitschiene gelegt und erläutert.

Für viele Palästinenser ist mehr als ein politisches Datum einschneidend: Genannt werden die Vertreibung der Großeltern nach 1948, traumatische Erfahrungen während der ersten Intifada ab Dezember 1987 (Tod, Gefängnisaufenthalt eines Familienmitglieds) oder die Belastungen durch die zweite (Al Aksa-) Intifada seit September 2000 (Ausgangssperren, Studienunterbrechung).

Demgegenüber hat die Politik im Bewusstsein vieler junger deutscher Teilnehmer das Leben nur am Rande geprägt. Einige nennen das Datum 1945, weil ihre Großeltern damals aus Ostpreußen oder Schlesien vertrieben wurden; hier ergeben sich dann Ansatzpunkte, um über das Thema Vertreibung zu sprechen. Einige der älteren Studenten erinnern sich an den Mai 1986, weil sie als Kinder nach dem Atomreaktorunfall in Tschernobyl keine Milch trinken und nicht mehr im Sandkasten spielen durften. Und natürlich war für die aus der früheren DDR stammenden Studierenden der Fall der Berliner Mauer 1989 von existenzieller Bedeutung.

Aufschlussreich ist der Austausch darüber, wie unterschiedlich einzelne Ereignisse von beiden Seiten wahrgenommen wurden: etwa der Golfkrieg 1990 oder die Ereignisse des 11. September 2001.

#### **Perspektivwechsel:**

Anhand dieser Beispiele können die Studenten den Perspektivenwechsel einüben: Wie würde ich denken, wenn ich in Deutschland statt in Palästina aufgewachsen wäre und umgekehrt? Palästinenser erleben und erleiden Politik hautnah, wenn sie an den Checkpoints von israelischen Soldaten daran gehindert werden, zur Universität zu gehen, und wenn insbesondere muslimische Studentinnen aufgrund ihrer Kopftücher von jungen israelischen Soldaten grob behandelt und gedemütigt werden.

Dabei ist es wichtig, einander wirklich zuzuhören und Vertrauen zu schaffen. Ohne dieses vertrauensbildende Zuhören kann es zu Reaktionen wie im Rahmen einer der ersten Begegnungen in Köln kommen: An einem der ersten Austauschstage war vorgesehen, das „El-De-Haus“ zu besuchen, in dem während des Dritten Reichs Juden und politische Dissidenten gefangen gehalten und gefoltert wurden. Einige aus der palästinensischen Gruppe weigerten sich, dorthin zu gehen. So lautete die Reaktion einer Palästinenserin: „Solange uns die Juden so viel Unrecht antun, bin ich nicht bereit, mir das Leid der Juden anzuschauen.“ Später öffnete sich gerade diese Studentin in den Gesprächen sehr, und hinter ihrer Ablehnung wurde eine andere Botschaft deutlich: „Bevor ihr Deutschen euch nicht mit dem heutigen Leid von uns Palästinensern auseinandergesetzt habt, braucht ihr uns nicht mit dem Leid der Juden zu kommen, das sie in der Vergangenheit bei euch erlitten haben.“ Hier wird deutlich, dass emotional besetzte Lernprozesse besondere psychische Voraussetzungen haben. Trauma-Therapeuten wissen, dass traumatisierte Menschen selber spüren müssen, wann sie sich öffnen und neuen Erfahrungen stellen wollen, die sie verunsichern könnten.

Doch als man dann das El-De-Haus wieder verließ, äußerte sich ein palästinensischer Student sehr verständnisvoll: „Ich kann nachempfinden, wie hier Juden und andere Gefangenen gelitten haben, denn ich war selbst lange in kleinen Zellen mit anderen auf engstem Raum inhaftiert und wurde geschlagen und gefoltert. Folter ist immer unmenschlich und nie zu rechtfertigen.“

Als vierzehnjähriger Junge hatte er in der ersten Intifada einen Molotowcocktail geworfen und damit einen israelischen Soldaten schwer verletzt. Vier Jahre lang war er in einem israelischen Erwachsenengefängnis inhaftiert.

Bei den deutschen Teilnehmern lösten sich Stereotype und Vorurteile auf, als ein palästinensischer Student in einer kleinen Gruppe erzählte, er habe

bei den letzten Wahlen die Hamas gewählt, weil er der „korrupten Fatah“ einen Denkkzettel verpassen wollte und gehofft habe, alles würde mit den stark sozialpolitisch engagierten Hamas-Leuten besser werden. „Dass ich da falsch lag, habe ich inzwischen eingesehen“, kommentierte er. Es kostete den Studenten Mut, sich so offen zu äußern, weil er wusste, dass die Hamas bei den deutschen Kommilitonen als Terrororganisation angesehen wurde. Seine Erzählung löste Nachdenken und Nachfragen aus.

### Religion: Gretchenfrage

In einem studentischen Forschungsprojekt interviewten deutsche und palästinensische Studierende christliche und muslimische Jugendliche in Köln und in Bethlehem zu der Frage, welche Bedeutung die Religion für ihren Alltag habe. Bei der Analyse und Auswertung kam es zu lebhaften Gesprächen. Dabei ging es um das Gebet und das Fasten, um den Verzicht auf Sexualität vor der Ehe und um die Bedeutung von Religion als Halt und Orientierung für das eigene Leben.

Erregte Diskussionen kamen beim Thema christlich-muslimische Ehen auf. Sie werden in der traditionellen palästinensischen Gesellschaft nicht akzeptiert, worunter viele palästinensische Studentinnen und Studenten leiden, wenn sie sich zum Beispiel an der Universität in einen Partner einer anderen religiösen Konfession verlieben. Theologisch lässt sich argumentieren, dass der Glaube an denselben Gott eine Basis für eine Partnerschaft darstellen kann und dass die Vorbehalte eher kulturell als religiös begründet sind. Demgegenüber betonten Palästinenser dann aber auch, dass sich das europäische Partnerschaftsmodell, das ausschließlich auf der emotionalen Beziehung zwischen den Partnern basiert, angesichts der hohen Scheidungszahlen in Europa als nicht nachahmenswert erwiesen habe. Eine Partnerschaft brauche Stützen wie die Zustimmung und Hilfe

der Großfamilien, und sie brauche eben auch eine gemeinsame Wertebasis, wie sie der gemeinsame Glaube darstelle.

### Perspektivwechsel:

Für die palästinensischen Studenten – Christen wie Muslime – war ein expliziter Atheismus undenkbar. Sie lernten jedoch, dass auch nicht-religiöse Menschen nach verbindlichen Werten leben und dass einzelne Nichtgläubige ihr Verhalten möglicherweise strenger an einer Ethik orientieren als ausgesprochen religiöse Menschen. Deutsche Studierende lernten emanzipierte, feministisch eingestellte Kopftuchträgerinnen kennen und mussten ihre Vorurteile aufgeben, wonach muslimische Frauen grundsätzlich unterdrückt und von ihren Männern gezwungen werden, das Kopftuch zu tragen.

### Gender

Als besonders nachhaltig für die Bearbeitung von Gender-Fragen haben sich geschlechtshomogene Männer- und Frauenseminargruppen erwiesen, die bewusst informell – ohne Teilnahme der Dozenten – organisiert werden. Wenn in Männergruppen mit palästinensischen und deutschen Männern oder in entsprechenden Frauengruppen persönliche Erfahrungen ausgetauscht und reflektiert werden, stehen folgende Fragen im Vordergrund: Wann hast du deinen ersten Freund/deine erste Freundin? Sind sexuelle Beziehungen vor der Ehe für dich denkbar? Oder: Willst du heiraten? Wie soll Familienarbeit zwischen deinem Partner und dir aufgeteilt werden? Diese Gesprächsabende finden oft gegen Ende eines Austauschaufenthalts statt. Unter den beteiligten Studenten wird Vertraulichkeit vereinbart.

### Perspektivwechsel:

Besonders hier wird der Perspektivenwechsel existenziell eingeübt; Studierende berichten

immer wieder, wie sehr sich ihre Einstellungen im Anschluss verändert haben. Dan Bar-On macht deutlich, dass die Überwindung eines monolithischen Selbst auch intime Fragen der Sexualität berühren kann. Ein Beispiel mag das verdeutlichen: Eine palästinensische Studentin hatte Probleme mit ihren Kontaktlinsen; eine deutsche Studentin kannte einen Apotheker, mit dem sie befreundet war. Dieser versorgte sie mit Medikamenten und half ihr beim Einsetzen der Linsen. Die palästinensische Studentin fand den Apotheker sympathisch und sprach ihre deutsche Kommilitonin lachend an: „Wenn ich du wäre: Das ist doch ein Mann zum Heiraten...“ Die Antwort: „Das geht nicht – er ist schwul.“ Die palästinensische Studentin hatte wie die meisten ihrer Kommilitoninnen noch nie einen Menschen mit offen homosexueller Orientierung kennen gelernt. Solche Begegnungen können nachhaltige Einstellungsänderungen einleiten.

*Feuchtigkeit und Wärme bedingten chemischen Prozessen, die zu Rissen führen und sie gegebenenfalls bersten lassen.<sup>28</sup>*

Akademische Austauschmaßnahmen können einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Beseitigung von vorurteilsbesetzten Identitätsstrukturen leisten und in Krisen- und Kriegssituationen Versöhnung vorbereiten. Allerdings hat sich auch gezeigt,

*dass Versöhnung ein generationenübergreifender Prozess ist, der sich, zumindest bei schweren Konflikten, nicht in der Lebensspanne einer Generation abschließen lässt.<sup>29</sup>*

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## Fazit

Der Wandel von einer monolithischen zu einer selbstreflexiven Persönlichkeitsstruktur führt dazu, dass die Teilnehmer im Alltag wie im wissenschaftlichen Denken

*mit Ambivalenzen besser umgehen können, die Widersprüche und gegensätzlichen Werte in sich aufnehmen können, ohne zu versuchen, sie zu verleugnen oder abzuweisen.<sup>27</sup>*

Dan Bar-On ist der Auffassung, dass

*die Lebensspanne der monolithischen Phase der Identität begrenzt ist, genauso wie in der Natur: Felsen unterliegen den Einflüssen von Hitze und Kälte oder den durch*

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27 Dan Bar-On (2001): Die „Anderen“ in uns. Dialog als Modell der interkulturellen Konfliktbewältigung. Sozialpsychologische Analysen zur kollektiven israelischen Identität. Hamburg, S. 17.

28 Ebd., S. 65.

29 Ebd., S. 235.



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## Über den Autor

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## Palestinian Territories

# Bottom-up versus top-down: a PRIME experience

by Sami Adwan

**After World War I, the British Army's military commander in Palestine, General Allenby, built a bridge which still connects Jordan with the West Bank. The Israelis call it the Allenby Bridge. In Jordan it is called King Hussein Bridge. Palestinians call it Al-Karamah Bridge. Three names for one bridge. This reflects three different historical narratives concerning just one bridge in a troubled part of the world. And so to the problems faced by the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) in trying to bring about peace between Israelis and Palestinians.**

The signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 between Israel and the PLO led to the setting up of many joint peace-building, people-to-people and grassroots projects involving thousands of Palestinians and Israelis. That's why the period between 1993 and 2000 is called the Peace Era. Joint Palestine and Israeli NGOs such as The Friend of Mother Earth, Israeli Palestinian Center for Research and Information (IPCRI), Palestinian and Israeli Environmental Secretariat (PIES), The Bereaved Parents (Parents Circle/Forum) and the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) were established. But with renewed conflict around the year 2000 most of the joint projects were stopped and only a few joint NGOs, such as IPCRI, Parent Forum and PRIME remained. This engendered disappointment and frustration among peace builders on both sides. The bottom-up approach (peace building) is much more advanced than the top-down approach (peace-making). But unfortunately both movements do not realise the importance of synchronising their efforts. They continue to address different agendas and speak different languages.

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## Conciliation or reconciliation

Palestinian Jews, Muslims and Christians coexisted with each other until the late nineteenth century. The wars of 1948, 1967 and the Israeli occupation led to a shift from coexistence to war and conflict. People started seeing each other as enemies. Israelis and Palestinians continued to have relationships but it is now about relations between the 'Occupied' and the 'Occupiers', between 'prisoners' and 'jailers'. In the Palestinian consciousness Israelis became settlers, occupiers, jailers, land confiscators, killers and colonisers. There are no humane images left in the Palestinian mind because of the Israeli occupation and polices which result in a continuation of the Palestinian Catastrophe. In the Israeli mind Palestinians are seen as terrorists, uncivilised, peasants, unorganised, as people who do not even exist.

The Oslo Agreement, with all its pluses and minuses, created a new chance and new opportunities for Palestinians and Israelis to meet, talk, dine and to engage in different activities and projects. These projects were an attempt to rediscover the human side of the other and to reconcile.

Funds were made available and meetings became possible both inside and outside the region.

The Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) was born in this atmosphere as a joint Israeli-Palestinian NGO. It was established in 1998 by a group of Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals. The Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt (PRIF) supported the setting up of PRIME with advice and seed funding.

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## From personal to formal relationships

In 1997, I attended a meeting in Annecy, France. Fifteen Israelis and fifteen Palestinians were invited to try to find common interests and to set up joint projects. In a breaking-the-ice exercise we were asked to stand up according to how many children we had—one, two, three and so on up to six. The only two people with six children were Professor Dan Bar-On and me. From that moment on we became friends and, later, with other colleagues we established PRIME together. We co-directed PRIME and shouldered the responsibilities in good and bad times from 1998 until Dan Bar-On passed away in September 2008.

Here's another similar story. In the late 1970s, Eugene Holst, the-late Foreign Minister of Norway, was the head of UN peace keeping forces in South Lebanon. He became a personal friend of both the-late Yasser Arafat (the head of the PLO) and Yitzhak Rabin, who was a commander of the Israeli Army. Later on, this personal friendship was considered to have been the seed from which sprouted the secret talks between Palestinian and Israeli delegates in a small Norwegian town called Sarpsborg in early 1990s. These talks led to the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 in Washington.

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## My story and the story of PRIME

I was 13 years old when the Israeli occupation began in 1967. The occupation meant the end of my adolescence or what remained of my childhood. We lived under the harsh conditions of sieges, curfews, the closures of schools, harassment in school or on the way from home to school and back, beatings and interrogations. We lost our human dignity and our human rights were violated daily.

Palestinians are still under occupation and Israelis are their occupiers. Israel was established in 1948, while Palestinians are still in the first stages of building their nation, with limited freedom of movement. They have no control of their borders or natural resources, their lands are continually being confiscated and their houses are being demolished. They do not have the same standard of living; an Israeli income is five times that of a Palestinian income; unemployment among Palestinians is far higher than among Israelis.

I continued to hear stories from my parents about how Israelis/Jews had taken parts of our land in 1948 and how about one-third of my town was made up of refugees. I used to avoid meeting any Jews or even taking classes with Jewish teachers during my schooling in the USA. The image I had of Jews all over the world was the same: they are our enemies, they hate us, they took our land, violated our human rights and destroyed our national identity and aspirations. I was jailed by the Israeli authorities in 1991 without a conviction or even a trial, under what is called Administrative Detention.

The Israelis inherited this system from the British and it allows for detention of any Palestinian without trial. I was held for six months in an Israeli jail known by the Palestinians as Ansar 3 and by the Israelis as Ketsiout. My sentence was handed down a week after my detention and the details

were in Hebrew, a language that I could not read but was forced to sign by soldiers after a heated argument. I was denied family visits—my fifth son was only three days old when I was jailed.

Jail gave me plenty of time to think, to review historically the Palestinian and Israeli conflict and how the conflict could be resolved.

Two years after the signing of the Oslo Accords, I was invited by the Palestinian Consultancy Group, an NGO located in Jerusalem, to a meeting. I was surprised to find that Israelis were invited to the meeting as well. I was looking around the table but in my mind the images were of having to sit across a table from an Israeli secret service officer during an interrogation session. The pictures became blurred. During a break, I was approached by an Israeli woman who started asking me questions, just like my interrogators. How was I to differentiate the two? She introduced herself as Professor Ruth Firer, a teacher at the Hebrew University. I then told her my name and that I teach at Bethlehem University.

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## Agreement on a project

After a long and difficult discussion we decided to analyse Israeli and Palestinian school books to see how the conflict was presented in both of them. At that time Jordanian and Egyptian school books were used in Palestinian schools located in the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively. We established a connection with the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) in Braunschweig. It is a German institute started in the 1960s that focuses on German, French and Polish school books. We received all the necessary scientific, technical and financial support to do our analysis. We learned a lot from the references in its library as well as from the experiences of GEI's staff. We met in Braunschweig at least once a year.

A book jointly-authored by Professor Firer and myself was published in 2004 by GEI titled "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in History and Civic and Textbooks of Both Nations." The results reflect completely opposing stories about the past, the conflict and stereotypes of each other. We are 'right' they are 'wrong', our 'heroes' are their 'terrorists' and vice versa. Our presence on the land is legitimate but theirs is not and vice versa; we are the 'victims' and they are the 'victimizers' and vice versa. Our 'revolution and resistance' becomes for them 'riots and violence' and vice versa; our cities and towns are present on maps but theirs are not. And finally, the land is called the Promised Land by them and Palestine by us.

Maps do not show the other side as a political entity. Both sets of school books focus on the conflicts, wars and struggles between the two sides but intentionally do not include any examples of the peaceful coexistence between them. This is called missing or omitted text. Each side very much presented history in a monolithic way. Only our side of the story exists.

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## Recommendations on school books

The joint research concluded with recommendations. Some recommendations were general but others were specifically related to the language and content of school books and pedagogical material.

The **general recommendations** were:

- to revise existing schoolbooks to uproot the explicit and implicit animosity as reflected by narratives and stereotypes
- to integrate the stories of the other in one's own school books and to stress the common heritage of the other

- to use language free of stereotypes, animosity, hatred and not to glorify one's self at the expenses of the other
- to use names of place and persons acceptable to both sides or at least to present the differences of the contested names of place and persons
- to include maps that show the 1967 borders, the green line and each other's entities and major cities
- to include the shared origins of the two Semitic languages (Arabic and Hebrew)

In relation to the **content** of the school books the recommendations included:

- describing periods of peaceful coexistence to balance with the periods of clashes and developing an orientation towards a peaceful solution
- describing the suffering and the plight of both sides by examining the Holocaust and 'the catastrophe'
- including more information about the other side's history and culture

In relation to the **pedagogical devices**:

- the school books should include more primary resources
- more exercises with practical skills for peaceful conflict mediation
- more maps and photos
- open questions to encourage critical thinking
- more audio-visual devices
- teachers should be allowed to use texts written by NGOs and or individuals as supplementary material
- teachers should be trained or re-trained both on how to teach multi-historical narratives and how to move away from a monolithic teaching approach

Since the publication of this book more research has been done on Palestinian and Israeli school books. The topic is now discussed by politicians and by officials at international meetings. It has been an attractive topic for local and international media.

The big and challenging questions remain: Can both sides change their school books before any political solutions have been signed and a process of reconciliation has been started? Would it be easier for Israel to change its school books, since Israel has existed for more than 60 years and feels more secure and stable than Palestinians who live under Israeli occupation? In the meantime, what is the role of NGOs and individuals on both sides? What is the role of the international community? Here is not the place to answer these questions.

However, regarding who should make the first move towards peace, I am inspired by a short poem, "No Wall High Enough" written in 2006 by Professor Budd L. Hall, from which I would like to quote a few verses:

*Don't you get it?  
 Don't you understand?  
 There are no walls high enough  
 No doors thick enough  
 No guns big enough  
 No tanks strong enough  
 No bombs that can kill enough  
 No means to kill all the enemies  
 Forever  
 Or even for now*

*How does it start?  
 One person puts down their gun  
 An other puts down theirs  
 Four and then 40 put down theirs  
 An they do not wait for the bombers to do the same  
 Like the non-violent movements of the many centuries*

### **Someone has to start**

*They create community choirs, healing circles, study each others pains and dreams*

*They think of the future for all the children of the world as Raffi says*

*They write poems together late into the night ... a universal Mushaira for life*

*They bake bread together in ovens that they have built*

*Their children marry each other*

*They respect all traditions of peace, no matter the origin, the theologies or the languages*

*They lay in the road in front of tanks and on runways and generally become a non-violent nuisance in their communities*

*They become raging Grannies*

*They become Veterans for Peace*

*They turn war museums into peace museums*

*They never stop*

*They demand the public monies are used to create National Departments of Peace*

*They sing*

*Oh how they sing*

Why should an idealist not seize this opportunity and take the first step by modifying school books and start a culture of peace? How long do Palestinians and Israelis have to wait for their Gandhis or Mandelas?

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## **PRIME: the beginnings**

PRIME is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation established in 1998 by Palestinian and Israeli researchers with the help of the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt (PRIF), Germany. Its purpose is to pursue coexistence and peace-building through joint research and outreach activities. PRIME was established in what is called the Peace Era between Palestinians and Israelis from 1993 to 2000.

It was decided that the location of PRIME should be in a place that is easily accessible to both sides without any prior arrangements or any security clearances or does not require a special permit. Therefore, PRIME's offices were rented from the Talitha Kumi school which is located in Beit Jala. Talitha Kumi school is a Palestinian school run and administered by the German Lutheran Church. Part of the school is located in area (A) and the other part is located in area (C). According to the Oslo Accords the Palestinian Occupied areas from the 1967 war were divided into three areas: Area A is under Palestinian security and administrative control; Area B is under Palestinian administrative control and under Israeli security control; and area C is under Israeli security and administrative control. Ever since the beginning of the second Intifada in 2000 both sides have had free access to the offices of PRIME.

PRIME is managed by a joint and equal general assembly, a joint executive committee and joint directors (one Palestinian and one Israeli). PRIME strives to create symmetry in its structure, to alleviate the asymmetric situation in reality between Palestinians and Israelis at all levels: political, economic, social and cultural.

The organisation was established on the premise that there are two formulas for resolving the Palestinian and Israeli conflict:

The **Top-Down formula** is the responsibility of politicians and decision makers. This works through negotiation and peace talks between leaders to reach a political agreement that resolves and ends the conflict. Sometimes this formula is called Track 1 or Peace Making.

The **Bottom-Up formula** is the responsibility of the people, NGOs, institutes and community based societies on both sides. This is done through meetings, projects, research initiatives, gatherings of

people on profession-related issues, and so on. The aim of the Bottom-Up formula is to create a space for humanisation of both sides, to get rid of animosity and fears, and develop a shared agenda. This formula is needed to prepare and support any peace negotiations, and sustain the peace afterwards. Sometimes this formula is called Peace Building or People to People or Track II.

Of course for both formulas to succeed in their mission they have to recognise each other's agenda, synchronise and support each other's efforts. PRIME was established as a Palestinian-Israeli NGO on this premise. PRIME follows the Bottom-Up formula of peace building through its activities and projects.

Unfortunately, these formulas were unable to support each other or synchronise their efforts. While between 1993 and 2000 the Bottom-Up approach continued, almost no progress was made during this time in the Top-Down agenda. This caused so much frustration when the negotiations at Camp David II failed in August 2000, and were followed by the Aqsa Intifada. The relationship between both sides was shifted, once again, to a basis of conflict, fear and clashes. The majority of peace building projects and most peace building NGOs ceased to exist. Organising meetings between both sides became impossible.

PRIME was one of the very few joint Israeli-Palestinian NGOs that decided to continue its activities after 2000, although the organisation had to modify its work and orientation to adjust to the new reality. PRIME remains committed to:

- reducing existing asymmetries and inequalities between Israelis and Palestinians
- parity, symmetry and equality between the two sides within the Institute
- promoting human rights and full academic freedom
- independence from political interests on either side

- demonstrating practical solidarity when its principles are threatened or violated
- striving for scholarly excellence

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### **PRIME's objectives are to:**

- build an intellectual infrastructure of peace
- influence the public agenda in Israel and Palestine
- offer ideas and proposals for overcoming obstacles in peace-building
- develop positions on long-term regional issues
- train a new generation of leaders, committed to peaceful coexistence and cooperation
- contribute to the strengthening of civil society
- serve as a reference centre for cooperative activities
- encourage joint academic activities among PRIME's members

To achieve its objectives, PRIME has organised conferences, workshops and meetings. It is engaged in many research projects and has published a few books. PRIME has worked closely with international centres and institutes like the aforementioned Georg Eckert Institute, the American University in Washington, Monmouth University in New Jersey and the Ford Foundation. Now there is a cooperation agreement between PRIME and Kungalv Municipality in Sweden to implement PRIME's dual narrative book in Palestinian, Israeli and Swedish schools. The agreement is for two years and includes exchange visits by pupils and educators, meetings, workshops in Sweden and in the region, and the creation of various publications. The project aims at creating a platform for pupils (aged 16-18) and educators from the three countries to engage in a process-oriented approach focusing on different historical narratives.

PRIME has focused on two main projects:

- **Oral history of Palestinian Refugees and Jewish immigrants to Palestine.** This project includes interviews with about 200 Palestinian refugees and about the same number of Jewish immigrants. Three videos were produced as a result: “Haifa in the Memory,” “The Unspoken History of Haifa” and “From Biet Jibreel to Kibbutz Ravadin: Palestinians and Israelis Talking with Each Other.”
- **Historical narratives of Palestinian and Israelis in the twentieth century.** Three booklets were published for teenage students, and in 2008, these booklets were integrated into one book and are available now in Arabic and Hebrew. The English edition will be published by New Press in 2011. A 45-minute video that documents the process and the experiences of Palestinian and Israeli teachers working together was produced. Unfortunately, both Palestinian and Israeli Ministries of Education refused to use the book in their schools for different reasons, even though part one of the booklet is available in Hebrew and Arabic, and has been translated into Italian, French, Spanish, German and Catalan and is being used in some schools in these countries.

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## The dual narratives project

Narrative is what people remember from the past especially those parts that help form and support ideologies and identities. It is the interpretation of the past that shapes the present and helps in forming the orientation of the future.

If pupils (the future generations) continue to accept only one side of the story, to believe in it as the only legitimate story and to not even know of the existence of other narratives, this is an act of indoctrination and of denying young people of the

right to know more. Differences become a source of fear and pupils develop barriers between themselves and others. These barriers can only create hate, insecurity and disrespect in relation to others, especially those who have an opposing narrative. Peace cannot be achieved so long as each side does not recognise the other and their narratives.

Of course, this does not mean legitimising the other side’s narrative or to start deconstructing one’s own narrative. But would the education system allow pupils to learn the other side’s narratives? Would the education systems allow their own pupils to critique their own narrative? I think one of the main reasons that Palestinians and Israelis still cannot achieve peace is because they are not ready to recognise each other’s historical narratives.

Therefore, our dual narratives project was born in late 1998 and is still running. It is simply aimed at introducing Palestinian and Israeli historical narratives to each other’s pupils through publishing booklets that include both narratives. There was no intention for these booklets to substitute existing history textbooks in schools. They are meant to be used as supplementary material.

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## Two education systems

It is worth mentioning here that Palestinians only started using their own school books in 2001. Before this time, Jordanian and Egyptian school books were used in the West Bank and Gaza Strips respectively. Israeli school books were first used in 1925.

The Palestinian Ministry of Education is in charge of developing guidelines for publishing school books, commissioning authors, supervising their work and then printing the copies and distributing them to all schools at the beginning of the school year. It is a centralised system.



There is a big difference in the availability of resources and funds between Palestinian and Israeli schools. Also, differences exist in teaching approaches, ways of evaluating pupils, and the role of the teachers. But the majority of Palestinian and Israeli teachers are well trained and qualified to teach their own historical narratives.

On the Israeli side, the Ministry of Education publishes guidelines for the authoring of school books. Authors produce and submit their school books to a special committee in the ministry. The committee can approve the use of the proposed school book and put it on a list from which the school can choose. Schools are free to choose only from the books listed. This is a semi-centralised system.

In both cases, teachers are only to use approved school books. But teachers in both systems can use extra-curricular material to enrich school books.

There was serious discussion at PRIME on whether to write one narrative that represents both sides of history, whether to write a bridging narrative that mixes parts of each narrative or whether to write each narrative side by side with equal space. The later option was adapted and decided upon.

The production of joint school books on history is new. Even in Europe, the discussion of joint school books only started around 20 years after War World II. What also needs to be kept in mind is that narratives can change according to historical moments.

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## Description of the project

The project started with 12 school teachers, six Palestinian and six Israeli. They worked in mixed groups in bi-national and national meetings. It was decided through discussion and negotiation to start writing historical narratives of the twentieth

century. They started with the Balfour Declaration, the 1948 war and the 1987 first Palestinian Intifada. The first booklet was published in 2003 to include these narratives. Then teachers worked on the narratives of the 1920s, 1930s and the 1967 war, which later formed the second booklet in 2005. The third booklet (2007) included the narratives of the 1950s, 1970s and 1990s. All booklets are available in Arabic and Hebrew but the first booklet was translated into many languages.

As already explained, in 2008 the three booklets were integrated into one book, establishing an historical order from 1900 to 2000. The book does not claim to include THE Israeli and THE Palestinian narratives in full. It may represent around 60 % of either side's narratives.

New groups of Palestinian and Israeli teachers joined the project. They were trained by the first group of teachers. The working language in the bi-national meetings was English. Each group presented their narrative to the other group—interruptions or denials or comments were not allowed—and afterwards a discussion followed. Suggestions and recommendations were accepted as far as the group agreed to them. The processes were not free from conflict and disagreement. Emotions were often aroused. Project leaders and teachers engaged in mediation to resolve conflicts.

Some teachers were not able to continue with the project for various reasons, be they personal, family-related or political. One Palestinian teacher, for example, arrived late to a meeting and explained:

*I am coming here to work with Israelis and make peace but on my way here I was stopped at an Israeli check point. I was beaten and humiliated and forced to stand in the sun for two hours. I do not know who I am anymore.*

He left the project. An Israeli teacher announced once: "My family is concerned for my safety."

He left the project as well. We find that younger teachers are more willing to continue with the project more than older ones.

Soon, PRIME will work on writing both narratives for the period 2000-2010. PRIME is also involved in training more teachers on how to use the books in their schools. A teacher's guide, based on teachers' experiences, is being prepared.

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## Implementation in classrooms

Palestinian and Israeli teachers have been able to introduce PRIME materials as supplementary material in their lessons. They initiate role plays, discussion groups, court trials, field research and drawings. Some teachers first taught their own narratives and then those of the other side.

French, Spanish, Italian and German teachers say they use the booklets because they find it good that material on the same issue is approved by both sides and they do not want to be seen to be taking sides.

Spanish teachers reported that after they finished teaching parts of the first booklet using role plays and discussion groups, and then returned to traditional teaching methods, the pupils challenged them: "Why do we not continue teaching our own history in the same way?"

The responses of Palestinian and Israeli pupils to the material vary. Some reject the enemy narrative and only accept their own narrative as legitimate. Others question the sincerity of their teachers and ask why they are teaching the other side's narratives. Others ask their teachers whether they believe in the narratives. Some doubt whether the other side's teachers are teaching counter narratives to their own pupils. Other reactions are very positive. Some pupils want to know more about the other side and show much interest in meeting them. Other pupils say that they now know

why the other side is behaving the way they do and now realise why the conflict is taking so long to be resolved. Some parents protested about the teaching of the material to their children; others remained ambivalent or were in favour.

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## Peace-building projects under fire

Carrying out peace building projects or initiatives under fire or in open conflict is not an easy process. It is not a linear process. One day you may move forward two or three steps; the next day you retreat five steps. It requires patience, dedication and resilience. It is necessary to consider your emotions and feelings and then to balance these with the work that needs to be done. Flexibility is required. Changing the agenda and the program should not create challenges. It is important to find a balance between processes and products. Everything usually takes up more time and energy than you were prepared for.

Leaders have to be charismatic in their approach; they have to empower people and then let them lead a project and make it theirs. It is important to find resources for energising participants since project results are not achieved in the short term.

You have to keep answering a particularly difficult question: Why start this project now? Why should we not wait until a peace agreement has been signed and then do the project? Another more challenging question is: What did you achieve besides meetings and publishing booklets? The reality out there is not the same!

It is hard to invite or convince more and more people to engage in peace building projects and to widen the peace initiative. Official support and endorsement is impossible to secure, so you always have to work through personal connections. The synchronising of Top-Down and Bottom-Up formulas is missing, and this makes such projects less

effective. Donors want a project completed on time and according to contract, but this is often a big challenge.

However, the experience you gain working on such projects is valuable for use in other areas of conflict and especially in post conflict situations.

The dual narratives project is considered to be one way of disarming history. It is an educational reform project that could be used in other parts of the world. It moved teaching from the idea of an inoculation of knowledge towards the idea of developing a hermeneutic ability among pupils to engage with knowledge. It moves the role of pupils from being passive learners to active participants. The teachers become facilitators rather than the main source of information.

Reforming of education systems is actually needed all over the world, not only in Palestine and Israel so as to be used as a tool for peace. Schools should prepare future generations to have open minds in order for them to lead a world free from occupation, injustice, discrimination, fear and hate.

Finally, it is important to recognise that different narratives exist in different times and places, in both the past and the present, and cannot be overlooked or neglected in trying to resolve conflict. Changing narratives should not be seen as a threat but as an asset.

I would like to end with these quotes:

*The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can change their lives by modifying their mental attitudes. William James, American psychologist and philosopher*

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. Margaret Mead, American sociologist and anthropologist*

*On reflection, these are really revolutionary observations, because they assign to humanity as a whole, but also to every single inhabitant of this planet, the responsibility and the faculty for contributing to the creation of a better future. (Our new context is) based on the emerging values of unity in diversity and of the consequent responsibility for sharing. Sergio Tripi, Italian journalist and founder of the Good News Agency*

Describing the dual narrative project a UNESCO official said:

*This is the most unique project I've ever seen.*

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### **About the author**

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## Afghanistan

# Nachhilfe zur Selbsthilfe: Akademischer Wiederaufbau

von **Nazir Peroz**

**Wenn Entwicklungsländer sich zu modernen Informationsgesellschaften wandeln, dann stellt das die internationale Gemeinschaft vor erhebliche Herausforderungen. Denn viele der Länder sind auf Unterstützung angewiesen. Ziel ist es, nachhaltige Strukturen zu schaffen, die die Länder langfristig in die Lage versetzen, sich selbst zu helfen. Der Aufbau einer funktionierenden Hochschullandschaft ist dafür ein wichtiger Schritt.**

Der Bau von Hochschulen, das Ziel, Studenten eine Ausbildung im eigenen Land zu ermöglichen – all das stand bisher nicht im Fokus von Entwicklungsländern und Ländern in Krisenregionen. Dort sehen die Regierungen ihre Aufgabe vornehmlich darin, leistungstarken Schülern, Studenten und Dozenten ein Studium in einem westeuropäischen Land zu ermöglichen. Vorrangig ist dabei der Wunsch nach der Bildung von Humankapital durch Aus- und Fortbildung hochqualifizierter Fachkräfte. Damit verknüpft ist die Erwartung, dass die Studenten nach ihrer Rückkehr als Multiplikatoren in Wirtschaft, Wissenschaft oder Verwaltung wirken. Neue Technologien und Know-How sollen sich ausbreiten und als Motor der Entwicklung dienen.

Hehre Ziele – deren Umsetzung allerdings häufig scheitert. Zum einen fehlt es den Studenten oftmals an ausreichenden Informationen über die Lage in ihrem Herkunftsland und somit darüber, wo genau Experten benötigt werden. Hinzu kommt, dass viele der Studenten in ihren Gastländern, etwa an den deutschen Hochschulen, Lehrveranstaltungen belegen, die zwar im Rahmen des Studiums gefordert sind, deren Inhalte sie in ihren Herkunftsländern jedoch nicht nutzen können, weil die notwendigen Strukturen dort fehlen.

Auch die Inhalte von Diplom- und Masterarbeiten sind nicht an die länderspezifischen Bedürfnisse angepasst.

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## An den Erfordernissen vorbei

Ein weiteres Problem besteht darin, dass aufgrund der langen Abwesenheit während des Studiums die Kontakte zum Herkunftsland verloren gehen können. Ein Praxissemester während des Studiums zuhause, das den späteren Einstieg in den Beruf erleichtern könnte, fehlt. Die Reintegration im Heimatland kann zudem durch persönliche Entwicklungsprozesse der Studenten oder durch politische Entwicklungsprozesse in den Herkunftsländern erschwert werden.

Die zurückkehrenden Hochschulabsolventen sind also in der Theorie gut ausgebildet, doch fehlt es ihnen an Praxiserfahrung, insbesondere an solcher, die für die speziellen Bedingungen in ihren Herkunftsländern taugt. Der beste Programmierer kann nicht viel bewirken, wenn es niemanden gibt, der Störungen der Hardware beheben kann, oder wenn es an einer stabilen Stromversorgung fehlt. Daher ist es dringend notwendig, dass sich die Rückkehrer auch in den Randgebieten des eigentlichen Studienschwerpunkts auskennen.

Die Studenten haben Visionen und Pläne, die sie in ihrem Herkunftsland verwirklichen möchten. Doch stoßen sie auf Hindernisse, die sie vorher nicht abschätzen konnten. Diese Situation führt zu Frustration und oder zur Abwanderung in andere Länder, in denen die Rahmenbedingungen günstiger erscheinen. So profitieren weder das Herkunftsland noch die deutsche Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft.

Zudem vermisst man an den deutschen Hochschulen entwicklungspolitische Diskussionen, die auch unabhängig vom Studienfach die Situation ausländischer Studierender hinterfragen. Grundlegend muss darüber nachgedacht werden, ob die momentane Ausrichtung der Ausbildung an deutschen Universitäten den Bedarf dieser Länder überhaupt abdecken kann und ob die notwendigen Bedingungen für eine sinnvolle Studiengestaltung und einen erfolgreichen Studienabschluss gegeben sind. Eine Prüfung und Evaluation der Studieninhalte und -abschlüsse in Sachen Relevanz und Anwendbarkeit im Herkunftsland wird meist ebenso wenig in Betracht gezogen wie die fachliche Betreuung der Studierenden während und nach ihrem Studium in Vorbereitung auf eine spätere Berufstätigkeit. Nicht zu vernachlässigen ist auch der finanzielle Aufwand, den ein Auslandsstudium sowohl für den Studierenden selbst aber auch für die beteiligten Hochschulen bedeutet.

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## Ausbildung in Deutschland...

Am Beispiel des Informatikstudiums wird das Missverhältnis besonders deutlich. Die Inhalte beziehen sich im Wesentlichen auf die Berufspraxis des Informatikers in Deutschland: die theoretischen Grundlagen, die Funktion und den Aufbau von datenverarbeitenden Maschinen, Organisation, Darstellung und Bearbeitung von Daten und schließlich deren Einsatz in Forschung, Technik,

Wirtschaft und Verwaltung. Es gibt kaum Bezüge zu Erfordernissen und notwendigen Kenntnissen für Studierende aus Entwicklungsländern. Es fehlen Lehrveranstaltungen, die einen Überblick über den Zusammenhang von technischer Entwicklung und Ressourcenverfügbarkeit geben, sowie Studieninhalte, die auf die Bedeutung von IT-Strukturen generell sowie auf die möglichen Auswirkungen ihres Fehlens aufmerksam machen. Erschwerend zu diesen Defiziten kommen für die Informatiker, die in ihr Herkunftsland zurückkehren, die fehlenden IT-Strukturen in diesen Ländern hinzu, wie am Beispiel Afghanistan deutlich wird.

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## ... und Realität in Afghanistan

Nach 23 Jahren Bürgerkrieg in Afghanistan macht der Wiederaufbau des völlig zerstörten Landes Fortschritte. Gegen Gesetzlosigkeit, Korruption, Zersplitterung, Armut, Unzufriedenheit der Bevölkerung, Preissteigerung sowie die ständige sicherheitstechnische Bedrohung aber haben die Verantwortlichen kaum eine Chance. Unruhen in Kabul und in anderen Städten, Kämpfe im Süden des Landes, Selbstmordattentate, die Entführungen von Ausländern und die damit verbundene Verunsicherung von Investoren gehören zur afghanischen Realität. Immerhin, konnte von einer mobilen Kommunikation in Afghanistan bis ins Jahr 2001 hinein keine Rede sein, so legte Ende 2001 das Telekommunikationsunternehmen Ericsson ein Not-Netz an, damit die Mitarbeiter der UNO und die Mitglieder der Übergangsregierung telefonieren konnten. Und im Jahr 2006 waren ca. 2,52 Millionen Mobiltelefone in Gebrauch, vorrangig in den großen Städten. Innerhalb von zwei Jahren, bis 2008, wuchs diese Zahl auf mehr als das Doppelte – ca. 5,4 Millionen Mobiltelefonanschlüsse – an. Parallel dazu hat auch der IT-Einsatz an den afghanischen Hochschulen stark zugenommen.

Dennoch fehlt es den afghanischen Hochschulen weiter an einer funktionierenden und sicheren IT-Infrastruktur (Stromversorgung, Gebäudetechnik, Hardware, Software und Zugang zum Internet), IT-Ausbildung und administrativen Strukturen. In Afghanistan und anderen Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern mangelt es darüber hinaus an einer stabilen Stromversorgung, an einer funktionalen Gebäudetechnik für den IT-Einsatz, an soliden Netzwerkstrukturen der einzelnen Hochschulen, an der bedarfsorientierten Einrichtung von Rechnerzentren und an PC-Pools für die Fakultäten. Der Einsatz von leistungsfähigen lokalen Rechnersystemen für Lehre, Forschung und Verwaltung sowie die Anwendung von netzbasier-ten Kommunikationsformen an den Hochschulen etwa hängt von einer stabilen Stromversorgung ab. Die bisherige Stromversorgung aber basiert auf der Nutzung von Generatoren – nur eine Notlösung.

Und weiter: Viele Gebäude und Räumlichkeiten an afghanischen Universitäten sind nicht für den IT-Einsatz geeignet. Sie bieten weder Schutz vor Staub, Kälte, Hitze noch vor Diebstahl. Daher müssen entweder neue Gebäude gebaut oder bereits bestehende modernisiert werden. Leider herrschen nicht nur in der Infrastruktur, sondern auch in der IT-Ausbildung große Defizite. Eine der Hauptursachen sind die mehr als 20 Jahre dauernden Kriege und Bürgerkriege, unter denen das Bildungssystem und die gesamte Infrastruktur stark gelitten haben. Die informations- und kommunikationstechnische Entwicklung Afghanistans, die sich auf allen Sektoren des wirtschaftlichen, privaten und öffentlichen Lebens vollzieht, erfordert also ein umfassendes Konzept für die IT-Ausbildung.

## Maßgeschneiderter Plan

Nicht nur in Afghanistan, in allen Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern wird zum Aufbau akademischer Strukturen ein IT-Strategieplan benötigt. Dieser muss die unterschiedliche personelle und technische Ausstattung der Hochschulen berücksichtigen, deren Stärken und Schwächen analysieren und dabei das zentrale Ziel einer einheitlichen und flächendeckenden IT-Versorgung nicht aus den Augen verlieren. Im Einzelnen muss ein solcher Strategieplan an folgenden Punkten ansetzen:

- **Internationale Vergleichbarkeit:** Ziel muss sein, die Universitäten als anerkannte Mitglieder der internationalen ‚Scientific Community‘ zu etablieren und ihnen die Möglichkeit zu geben, ihre Forschungs- und Entwicklungsprojekte selbstständig zu verwirklichen. Erst wenn die internationale Vergleichbarkeit hergestellt ist, ist ein erfolgreicher Austausch von Studierenden, Lehrern und Forschern möglich. Das setzt voraus, dass die Verantwortlichen den Hochschulen in ausreichendem Maße Ressourcen zur Verfügung stellen und diese in effektiver und planvoller Weise verwendet werden.
- **Vermittlung von anwendungsorientiertem Know-how:** Ein maßgeschneiderter Strategieplan für Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländer kann keine Kopie des Bildungssystems an deutschen Universitäten sein. Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe auf akademischer Ebene kann nur dann geleistet werden, wenn anwendungsorientiertes Know-how vermittelt wird. Dies bedeutet, dass die spezifischen nationalen Bedingungen zu berücksichtigen sind, die sich aus der gegenwärtigen Lage, den kulturellen und historischen Wurzeln und aus der künftigen politischen und ökonomischen

Rolle dieser Länder in der Weltgemeinschaft ergeben werden. Wie man diese Entwicklungen in die Curricula integriert und wie sich diese gleichzeitig an internationalen Standards orientieren können, muss durch neue Ausbildungsprogramme, auch in Zusammenarbeit mit deutschen Hochschulen, geklärt werden. Genau an diesem Punkt wird deutsche Hilfe zum Dialog.

- **Bedarfsorientierte Curricula:** Es gilt die Gegebenheiten der Länder zu analysieren, den Bedarf zu erkennen und bedarfsorientierte Curricula zu entwickeln. Die Angleichung der universitären Lehrpläne innerhalb der Länder und die Orientierung der angestrebten Ausbildungsziele an internationalen Standards stärken dabei die Fähigkeit zur internationalen Kooperation und können helfen, die Voraussetzungen für den alltäglichen fachlichen Austausch der Universitäten zu schaffen. Dafür ist ausländische Hilfe erforderlich: als Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe.

Die curriculare Entwicklung muss dabei zwei Ausbildungslinien verfolgen: Eine Breitenausbildung für die allgemeine technische, wirtschaftliche, soziale und kulturelle Entwicklung des Landes und eine Ausbildung auf qualitativ hoher Ebene für die Entwicklung von Wissenschaft und Forschung und für die Heranbildung des Führungsnachwuchses. Auf dieser Ebene müssen didaktische Fähigkeiten vermittelt werden, und durchgängig muss im Vordergrund der didaktischen Zielsetzungen stehen, dass die Studierenden in ihrem Fach insbesondere das selbstständige Lernen erlernen.

- **Ausbau der Masterstudiengänge und PhD-Programme:** Während es in Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern durchaus möglich ist, eine Grundbildung auf dem Niveau eines Bachelorstudiums zu gewährleisten, fehlt es an Lehrenden, die einen Master- bzw. einen PhD-Abschluss

besitzen, um die weiterführende Ausbildung leisten zu können. Um eine Nachhaltigkeit in den akademischen Strukturen zu garantieren, ist es gerade für die Entwicklungsländer wichtig, neben dem Masterprogramm ein gesondertes PhD-Programm zu schaffen. Erst dadurch wird es möglich, dass die komplette curriculare Ausbildung vom Bachelor über den Master zum PhD auch im Herkunftsland selbst erfolgen kann. Die Behebung dieses Mangels sollte die Zielsetzung entwicklungspolitischer Interventionen sein, damit diese Länder langfristig eine eigenständige Bildungsstruktur aufbauen können. Da die wenigsten Studenten aus Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern Stipendien erhalten, sind die meisten darauf angewiesen, neben ihrem Studium zu arbeiten. In diesem Zusammenhang ist es sinnvoll, über ein effektives entwicklungspolitisches Finanzierungsmodell nachzudenken, das ein Studium für diese Zielgruppe ermöglicht.

Die bisherige Ausbildung ausländischer Studierender aus Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern findet im Regelstudiengang statt. Dies führt zu Inkompatibilitäten, die die Umsetzung des Wissens im Herkunftsland verhindern. Das Konzept muss daher vollkommen umgestellt werden: Parallel zu den Regelstudiengängen an deutschen Hochschulen müssen Masterstudiengänge angeboten werden, die bedarfsorientiert für Entwicklungsländer konzipiert sind. Die Teilnehmer müssen vorab einen Bildungsauftrag erhalten. Das bedeutet, dass sie eine finanzielle Unterstützung nur dann bekommen, wenn sie in ihr Herkunftsland zurückkehren und ihr Know-how in den Aufbau dortiger akademischer Strukturen einfließen lassen.

- **Bezüge zum Herkunftsland herstellen:** Ein wichtiger Aspekt während des Masterstudienganges in Deutschland ist, den Bezug zum Herkunftsland nicht zu verlieren. Das kann durch



anwendungsorientierte Projekte erreicht werden, die im Rahmen eines einsemestrigen Aufenthalts an den jeweiligen Heimatuniversitäten durchgeführt werden. Darunter sind Projekte zu verstehen, deren Ziel es ist, IT-Strukturen an den Heimatuniversitäten oder Behörden im Herkunftsland einzurichten. Die Projekte sollen unter Berücksichtigung der jeweiligen nationalen IT-Strategie umgesetzt werden. Die Themen und Arbeitspläne sollen in Absprache mit den zuständigen Ministerien im Herkunftsland festgelegt werden. Dabei ist es sinnvoll, speziell die wirtschaftlichen, gesellschaftlichen und sozialen Auswirkungen zu berücksichtigen. Auf diese Weise tragen die Masterstudenten zur Umsetzung der IT-Strategie ihres Landes bei und geben gleichzeitig wichtige Impulse und Anregungen für die zukünftige Strategie.

Eine weitere Möglichkeit, den Bezug zum Herkunftsland herzustellen, sind Masterarbeiten, die im Themengebiet der Projekte liegen, die die Masterstudenten während des Studiums durchgeführt haben. Derartige Konzepte können jedoch nicht umgesetzt werden, ohne dass eine intensive fachspezifische Betreuung an den deutschen Hochschulen stattfindet.

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## Über den Autor

Nazir Peroz (geboren 1955 in Kabul, Afghanistan) studierte und promovierte an der TU Berlin im Fachbereich Informatik. Er ist Sprecher der Fachgruppe „Informatik und Dritte Welt“ der Gesellschaft für Informatik und Leiter des Zentrums für Internationale und interkulturelle Kommunikation der Fakultät für Elektrotechnik und Informatik der TU Berlin. Peroz unterstützt den Aufbau akademischer Strukturen in Afghanistan und Irak.

## Zentralasien

# Kunst von der Aktion zur Interaktion

von Georgi Mamedow

**In Zentralasien wird Kunst durch die Regierungen instrumentalisiert. Die Regimes in Kasachstan, Kirgistan, Tadschikistan, Turkmenistan und Usbekistan setzen Kunst im Interesse eigener Belange ein und schwanken dabei zwischen Nationalismus und Lokalpatriotismus. Umso wichtiger sind die Initiativen internationaler Kulturorganisationen, die Austausch und Netzwerkbildung unter den zentralasiatischen Künstlern ermöglichen und zivilgesellschaftliche Prozesse fördern.**

Zwei Faktoren sorgen in den fünf zentralasiatischen Staaten derzeit für relative Stabilität und verhindern, dass der Dominoeffekt aus Nordafrika auf die autoritären Regimes in der Region übergreift: Zum einen die massiven Repressionen, mit denen die Regierungen Oppositionelle einschüchtern, zum anderen die wirtschaftliche Lage. Kasachstan, Turkmenistan und Usbekistan sind bedeutende Exporteure natürlicher Ressourcen, Tadschikistan und Kirgistan exportieren Arbeitskräfte. Nach inoffiziellen Angaben ist ein Drittel bis die Hälfte der erwerbsfähigen Bevölkerung dieser beiden Länder Arbeitsmigranten.

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## Destabilisierungsfaktoren

Doch an Faktoren, die zur Destabilisierung beitragen, fehlt es nicht. Da wäre zum einen der Nationalismus. Die patriotisch-nationalistische Staatsrhetorik bildet zusammen mit dem Alltags-Nationalismus eine entscheidende Ursache für soziale Spannungen. Spannungen, die häufig in blutige Konflikte münden, zuletzt im vergangenen Juni in Kirgistan. Die Ereignisse fanden vor dem Hintergrund einer allgemeinen Unsicherheit und politischer Turbulenzen statt, die mit dem Machtwechsel und den Wahlen zusammenhängen.

In Tadschikistan ist es eine aggressive Form des Lokalpatriotismus, die für Spannungen sorgt. Der Bürgerkrieg der 1990 Jahre entstand im Wesentlichen aus dem Widerstand von Clans und Gruppen aus den südlichen und östlichen Regionen des Landes gegen die politische Führung. Deren Versuchen, eine sogenannte nationale Idee zu schaffen, war nur mäßiger Erfolg beschieden. Dieser aggressive Lokalpatriotismus durchdringt alle Ebenen der Gesellschaft und erzeugt soziale Spannungen, die gefährlich sind, aber in öffentlichen Debatten nicht thematisiert werden.

Ein anderer Faktor, der die Lage in der Region maßgeblich beeinflusst, ist die Religion. Angesichts erfolgloser Initiativen in Tadschikistan, die Nation zu versöhnen, erscheint der Islam als effektiveres Mittel, einen großen Teil der Bevölkerung zu einen, für den religiöse Zugehörigkeit eine wesentliche Komponente des eigenen Selbstverständnisses ist. Das hat die Regierung verstanden. Sie versucht, die Religionsausübung zu kontrollieren und den Glauben zu einem Bestandteil ihrer Ideologie und Politik zu machen.

## Das Erbe der Sowjetunion

Die Prinzipien und Methoden der Steuerung von Kultur wurden, ebenso wie die gesamte kulturelle Infrastruktur, in der Sowjetunion geschaffen und dann in den Jahren der Unabhängigkeit keiner ernsthaften Revision mehr unterzogen. In allen zentralasiatischen Ländern gibt es ein Kulturministerium, unter dessen Aufsicht das gesamte kulturelle Leben steht – vom Repertoire der Oper bis zum Dienstplan des Strick-Kreises im Dorf. Die Existenz der Kulturschaffenden hängt direkt von diesem Ministerium ab. Ein großer Teil der im Kultursektor Beschäftigten arbeitet in staatlichen Theatern, Museen oder Bibliotheken und gehört Berufsgenossenschaften an, die unter dem Einfluss des Kulturministeriums stehen. Kommerzielles oder gesellschaftliches Wachstum gibt es in dieser institutionalisierten kulturellen Sphäre kaum.

Die sowjetische Kulturpolitik betrachtete Kultur als ideologisches Instrument der Repräsentation – jedes Volk, das in die große sowjetische Völkerfamilie aufgenommen wurde, hatte die Möglichkeit zur, wie man es nannte: ‚Replik mit Akzent‘, in allen Kulturbereichen von der Oper bis zum Film. Mit Beginn der 1930er Jahre, genauer mit dem Beschluss „Über die Umgestaltung literarisch-künstlerischer Organisationen“ (1932), begann in den sowjetischen Republiken die zielgerichtete Gründung ‚nationaler Schulen‘ in praktisch allen Sektoren der Kunst, die sich an folgender Formel orientieren sollte: ‚Sozialistisch im Inhalt, national in der Form‘. Mit wenigen Ausnahmen, etwa dem Verbot der Oper durch den verstorbenen Präsidenten von Turkmenistan, den Turkmenbaschi, versuchen die Regierungen der unabhängigen Staaten eben diese ‚nationalen Schulen‘ zu erhalten.

Gleichzeitig richtet der Staat seit der Zeit der Unabhängigkeit sein Augenmerk sehr stark auf die

traditionelle Nationalkultur. Dies wird als ‚nationale Wiedergeburt‘ definiert und stellt eines der Grundelemente einer nationalistisch gefärbten ideologischen Politik dar. Das Hochhalten der traditionellen Kultur ‚von Staats wegen‘ ist auch Bestandteil der Politik auf internationalem Parkett.

Ungeachtet ihres quasi-kolonialen Charakters hatten die strenge bürokratische Kontrolle und repräsentative Ausrichtung der sowjetischen Kulturpolitik in Zentralasien auch eine Reihe von positiven Aspekten. Die sowjetische Kulturpolitik war aufgrund ihres marxistischen Hintergrunds stets egalitär. Ein riesiges Netz kleinerer kultureller Einrichtungen – Klubs, Kulturhäuser, Sommerkinos, Stadtteil- und Dorfbibliotheken sowie kleine Museen – sicherte der Bevölkerung nicht nur in den großen Städten, sondern auch auf dem Lande und in kleineren Städten einen direkten Zugang zu Kunst und Kultur. Das Netzwerk kultureller Lehranstalten – Schulen für Musik, Choreographie und Kunst –, umspannte das ganze Land und diente als wichtiger Faktor der Sozialisierung und Bildung.

Wie die Sowjetunion insgesamt, so zeichnete sich auch die sowjetische Kultursphäre dadurch aus, dass ihre Träger ganz unterschiedlichen Ethnien entstammten. Dadurch erhielt sie einen internationalen Charakter – der ja auch zumindest grundsätzlich die Ideologie prägte. Eine wichtige Bedingung für das Funktionieren dieser sowjetischen Kultur war die berufliche Mobilität. Es war üblich, seine höhere kulturelle Bildung in großen Städten wie Moskau oder Leningrad zu erwerben.

## Versäumnisse der unabhängigen Staaten Zentralasiens

Leider wurden die Prinzipien und Methoden der sowjetischen Kulturpolitik in den unabhängigen Staaten Zentralasiens nicht kritisch überdacht und erneuert. Ein solches Umdenken hätte die

Kultur von ideologischen Zielsetzungen und der totalen bürokratischen Kontrolle befreien können. Gleichzeitig versäumte man es, an die lebendige kulturelle Szene anzuknüpfen, die zu Sowjetzeiten existiert hatte. Nicht nur die kulturelle Infrastruktur auf dem Land und in kleinen Städten, auch die Einrichtungen in den großen Städten befinden sich wegen fehlender finanzieller Mittel in einem beklagenswerten Zustand. Die Abwanderung der ‚nicht einheimischen Bevölkerung‘ und der durch die Politik propagierte Nationalismus haben die Begeisterung für alles Internationale gebremst und sogar ein Minimum an Kontakten zwischen Künstlern innerhalb der Region erheblich erschwert. Neben den hohen Reisekosten ist dafür auch das angespannte Verhältnis zwischen den Nachbarn verantwortlich, wie es etwa in der Visapolitik zwischen Usbekistan und Tadschikistan zum Ausdruck kommt.

## Alternativen aus dem Westen

Programme und Projekte im Kulturbereich, die von internationalen Institutionen initiiert und unterstützt werden, bilden in Zentralasien praktisch die einzige Alternative zur staatlichen Kulturpolitik. Im Folgenden soll gezeigt werden, welche außerordentliche Bedeutung solche Programme und Projekte für die zentralasiatischen Länder haben:

- **Die Verbreitung kultureller Güter:** Zentralasien ist vom internationalen Prozess der Verbreitung kultureller Güter ausgeschlossen. Die Länder der Region sind vom Verleihsystem der Filmindustrie abgekoppelt (mit Ausnahme von Kasachstan, das für die Verleihfirmen von russischen und amerikanischen Kassenschlagern interessant ist); die Gastspielpläne von Theater- und Musikensembles, die einheimischen Buchverlage und die

Buchhandelsketten arbeiten nicht mit ihren Kollegen in anderen Ländern zusammen, um Übersetzungen in lokale Sprachen zu organisieren oder Neuerscheinungen in der Region zu verbreiten. Offensichtlich lässt die nach wie vor unterentwickelte Kaufkraft jegliche Vermarktung außerhalb der eigenen Landesgrenzen unrentabel erscheinen. Deshalb sind Ereignisse wie Kulturwochen, Festivals des einheimischen Films sowie der Auftritt von Künstlern und Künstlerensembles im Rahmen von Projekten der ‚Kulturdiplomatie‘ praktisch die einzige Gelegenheit für die Bewohner der Region, Kultur außerhalb ihrer Länder kennenzulernen.

- **Die Finanzierung über Stipendien:** Stipendien, die von internationalen Institutionen vergeben werden, stellen die einzige Möglichkeit dar, unabhängige Kulturprojekte zu verwirklichen, die von einheimischen Akteuren und den wenigen unabhängigen Kulturinstitutionen ins Werk gesetzt werden. Die staatlichen Mittel kommen ausschließlich staatlichen Kultureinrichtungen zugute. Eine Praxis, unabhängige Initiativen zu unterstützen, kennt das Land nicht, ebenso wenig wie das Sponsorentum durch Mäzene und Unternehmer.
- **Alternative Ausbildung im Kulturbereich:** Die internationale kulturelle Zusammenarbeit ist zu einer wichtigen Adresse für eine professionelle Ausbildung im Kulturbereich geworden. Austauschprogramme, Stipendien für die Ausbildung an ausländischen Universitäten, die Einladung von Lektoren, praktizierenden Künstlern, Musikern und anderen Spezialisten in die Region bietet eine Alternative zur staatlichen kulturellen Ausbildung.

• **Die Entwicklung einer künstlerischen Gemeinschaft und der Zivilgesellschaft:**

Zum großen Teil haben die Aktivitäten internationaler Institute im Kulturbereich dazu beigetragen, dass sich eine künstlerische Gemeinschaft in der Region entwickeln konnte. Obwohl formal nicht miteinander verbunden, bildet das Netz von Künstlern, Kuratoren und Managern eines von wenigen Beispielen einer grenzüberschreitenden Community in der Region. Auf der einen Seite funktioniert sie wie ein berufliches Netzwerk, das es ermöglicht, regionale Kulturprojekte zu verwirklichen. Auf der anderen Seite ist sie als Teil der Zivilgesellschaft in der Lage, Kampagnen zu starten, um auf die Verletzung von Bürgerrechten aufmerksam zu machen. Ein Beispiel ist die Kampagne zur Unterstützung der Künstlerin und Fotografin Umida Achmedowa, gegen die in Usbekistan ein gerichtliches Verfahren läuft, in dem man sie der ‚Verleumdung und Beleidigung des usbekischen Volks‘ beschuldigt.

## Engagement durch Kunst

Im 21. Jahrhundert zeigen sich weltweit Tendenzen, Kunst und Kultur nicht als Selbstzweck zu betrachten. Stattdessen soll sie Missstände aufzeigen, sich einmischen und neue Wege aufzeigen. Kurz: Sie soll sozial engagiert sein. Die sozial engagierte Kunst als Übung zur Interaktion ist nicht mehr an traditionelle Einrichtungen wie Museen oder Galerien gebunden. In verschiedenen Ländern wird das Bestreben von Künstlern, eine direkte Wechselwirkung mit dem sozialen Kontext zu erzielen, vom Staat, von Stadtverwaltungen oder anderen Institutionen des gesellschaftlichen Lebens unterstützt. Das zeigt sich in verschiedenen Programmen, Stipendien oder etwa in der Einsetzung einer Kommission für Kunstprojekte im öffentlichen Raum. In diesem Zusammenhang

wird die Mobilität des Künstlers zu einem entscheidenden Faktor. Der Künstler verwandelt sich in einen Nomaden, der von einer Stadt in die andere zieht. Eines der wichtigsten Formate für ein Zusammenwirken des Künstlers mit den Institutionen ist die Künstlerresidenz geworden („Artist-in-Residency“).

Zur Wechselwirkung der Kunst mit dem sozialen Umfeld kommt es in Zentralasien eher selten. Die staatliche Kulturpolitik legt auf eine solche Wechselwirkung keinen Wert. Im Rahmen der internationalen kulturellen Zusammenarbeit finden derartige Projekte ebenfalls kaum statt. Doch das beginnt sich zu ändern, wie folgende Beispiele zeigen:

### Künstler/Künstler

- **„Teaching Residencies“:** Von 2008 bis 2010 wurden in Kirgistan und Tadschikistan sogenannte „Teaching Residencies“ von internationalen Künstlern und Musikern mit ihren einheimischen Kollegen organisiert. Die längerfristige Zusammenarbeit mit dem Künstler, der gleichzeitig Trainer ist, steht im Zentrum der Ausbildung.
- **Lehraufenthalte:** Der dreiwöchige Lehraufenthalt der amerikanischen Künstlerin und Bildhauerin Martha Jackson Jarvis in Duschanbe im Juni 2008 etwa, ein Aufenthalt, der von der US-Botschaft und dem Kulturzentrum Bactria organisiert wurde, endete mit der Präsentation der gemeinsamen bildhauerischen Komposition „Schatten“. Dem vorausgegangen war eine intensive Arbeit, an der sowohl junge Künstler – Studenten der örtlichen Kunsthochschule – als auch ihre älteren Kollegen beteiligt waren. Im Laufe dieser gemeinsamen Arbeit wurde die Kunst zu einer Methode, in ein Wechselspiel mit einer Umgebung zu treten, die für die amerikanische Künstlerin neu war und für ihre tadschikischen Kollegen vertraut, aber von diesen nun auf neue Art wahrgenommen werden konnte.

## Künstler/Gesellschaft

Zurzeit werden in Zentralasien parallel zwei Projekte realisiert, die darauf abzielen, im einheimischen kulturellen Milieu eine aktive Wechselwirkung mit dem sozialen Umfeld zu fördern. Dabei handelt es sich zum einem um das Projekt „Global Art Lab“ (GAL) der internationalen Organisation CEC ArstLink, die den künstlerischen Austausch zwischen Amerika und anderen Teilen der Welt fördert und zum anderen um ein Projekt des Kulturzentrums Bactria „Artist and/in Community“. Beide Projekte beinhalten Aufenthaltsstipendien für einheimische und internationale Künstler in zentralasiatischen Städten. Diese Aufenthalte sollen eine Wechselwirkung mit der lokalen Kulturszene wie auch mit Gruppen außerhalb der künstlerischen Community erreichen.

- **„Global Art Lab“:** 2009 wurden Aufenthalte von drei US-Künstlern in der kirgisischen Stadt Osch finanziert. Da zwei von ihnen in ihrer Heimat in einem französischen Restaurant arbeiten, schlugen sie vor, für die Zeit ihres Aufenthalts auf einem einheimischen Markt ein kleines Restaurant zu eröffnen. Das Projekt lief unter dem Namen „Borrowed Kazan“. Der Inhaber einer der vielen Kantinen, in denen die Marktarbeiter und die Einkäufer zu Mittag essen, erklärte sich damit einverstanden, seine Küche mit den Künstlern zu teilen. Im Lokal gab es nun ein Menü, das einheimische und französische Küche verband, und das Restaurant verwandelte sich in einen Raum des ständigen Austauschs von Menschen, deren Wege sich im alltäglichen Leben nur selten kreuzen: Marktarbeiter, Studenten und Künstler, einheimische Journalisten und Aktivisten. Auch inmitten der Unruhen vom Juni 2010 entwickelte sich das Projekt weiter: Künstler in den USA baten einen ihrer Freunde aus Osch, ihnen in Briefen über die Lage zu berichten. Diese wurden dann im Blog „Broken Kazan“ veröffentlicht.

- **„Artist and/in Community“:** Das Ergebnis des mehr als einen Monat langen Aufenthalts des Moskauer Künstlers Pawel Mitenko in Bischkek im Rahmen dieses Projekts war ein gemeinsames Projekt von einheimischen Künstlern und Bewohnern des einzigen besetzten Hauses von Bischkek: „Der Fall Wohnheim“. Die Menschen dort, Migrantenfamilien aus den ärmsten Regionen des Landes, leben unter deprimierenden Bedingungen – ohne Wasser und Kanalisation, in der ständigen Angst vor der Zwangsumsiedlung und unter den misstrauischen Blicken der übrigen Stadtbevölkerung. Der Vorschlag der Künstler bestand darin, im Wohnheim eine Aktion zu starten, die seine Bewohner mit denen der Nachbarhäuser, aber auch mit Menschen aus wohlhabenderen Stadtteilen zusammenbringen würde. Dieses Ereignis sollte dazu beitragen, die Beziehungen zwischen den Nachbarn zu verbessern und die negativen Stereotype über die Bewohner des Wohnheims zu überwinden. Im Wohnheim fand eine Diskussion statt, an der sich Architekten, Juristen und Aktivisten beteiligten. In den Wohnungen verteilten einige Künstler ihre Arbeiten. Zu einer Art Metapher dieses Ereignisses wurde das Projekt des Künstlers Dschoschua Mursachmetow aus Bischkek: Er fotografierte die Bewohner zusammen mit denjenigen, die das Ereignis mit ihnen auf die Beine gestellt hatten – mit Künstlern und Aktivisten aus den wohlhabenderen Stadtteilen von Bischkek. Für einen Moment kreuzten sich ihre Lebensbahnen, und diese Begegnung war der Beginn einer neuen Gemeinschaft.

Für die Zukunft sind im Rahmen des Projekts „Artist and/in Community“ ungefähr 20 Aufenthalte von Künstlern aus Zentralasien in kleinen Städten von Kirgistan und Tadschikistan geplant. Rund ein Drittel ihrer Zeit sollen die Künstler während ihres Aufenthalts der Interaktion mit den Gemeinschaften vor Ort widmen.

Die Künstler können Arbeitskreise organisieren oder sich der Arbeit lokaler Kunst-, Musik- oder allgemeinbildender Schulen anschließen. Gerade in den abgelegenen Regionen können die Aufenthalte regionaler und internationaler Künstler oder Musiker zumindest ein kleiner Ersatz für die fehlenden künstlerischen Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten sein. Im Projekt „Artist and/in Community“ ist das Vorgehen als Experiment integriert, und wenn die Ergebnisse positive Auswirkungen zeitigen, werden diese möglicherweise in Form von speziellen Programmen und Projekten weiterentwickelt.

Diese Organisationen könnten als Initiatoren von Programmen und Aufenthaltsstipendien auch an sozialen Brennpunkten auftreten. Möglicherweise muss man für solche Organisationen spezielle aufklärerische Programme erarbeiten, die das Potenzial der Kunst bei der Lösung sozialer Probleme verdeutlichen.

- **Nutzung des Potenzials der Künstler für die Ausbildung:** Es ist notwendig, Künstler in die Ausbildung zu integrieren, etwa in den Städten der Peripherie. Damit würde auch Kindern aus schwachen sozialen Schichten ein Zugang zur Bildung ermöglicht.

## Empfehlungen

- **Ausweitung der Zusammenarbeit mit dem Nichtregierungs- und bürgerlichen Sektor in der Kulturszene:** Die Unterstützung von Initiativen und Kooperationen mit lokalen unabhängigen Kulturinstituten, Gruppen und Einzelnen erscheint produktiver und gerechter als die Kooperation mit staatlichen Strukturen. Die gemeinsame Planung internationaler Austauschprojekte, aufklärerischer und bildender Programme steigert die Effektivität und die Bedeutung der einheimischen Künstlergemeinschaft.
- **Ausbau der Zusammenarbeit mit nicht kunstbezogenen Institutionen bei der Verwirklichung von Kulturprojekten:** Die unabhängige Kulturszene ist kaum institutionalisiert. Es ist aber unabdingbar, sich dafür einzusetzen, dass Kunst in ihren unterschiedlichen Erscheinungsformen als Katalysator für gesellschaftliche Veränderungen auch unter den Akteuren der nicht-künstlerischen Sphäre genutzt werden kann, indem internationale und lokale Organisationen in die Lösung sozialer Probleme einbezogen und neue Ausbildungsstätten gegründet werden.

- **Förderung der Mobilität von Kulturprojekten individueller künstlerischer Initiativen:** Besonders notwendig ist es, individuelle künstlerische Projekte zu unterstützen und anzuregen, dass die Künstler in der Region auf Tournee gehen. Ein Aufenthaltsstipendium für Künstler ist dafür besonders effektiv.

### Über den Autor

Georgi Mamedov (geboren 1984 in Dushanbe, Tadschikistan) hat Linguistik und interkulturelle Kommunikation studiert. Von 2007 bis 2009 leitete er die Kulturinitiative „Bactria Cultural Centre“ der Entwicklungshilfeorganisation ACTED in Dushanbe. Mamedov kuratiert derzeit das interdisziplinäre zentralasiatische Projekt „Artist and/in Community“ und gestaltet als Co-Kurator den Pavillion von Zentralasien bei der 54. Biennale von Venedig.

## Kirgistan/Kasachstan

# „Kirgistan 2010“: Demokratie in der Zeit der „neuen Pharaonen“

von Yuliya Sorokina

**Kunst und Kultur als Vehikel des Kampfes um Demokratisierung? Eine Reihe von Künstlern in Kasachstan und Kirgistan glaubt, dass das möglich ist. Die von Gamal Bokonbajew kuratierte Ausstellung „Kirgistan 2010“ reflektiert die Suche zeitgenössischer Künstler nach Modernisierung bei gleichzeitiger Wahrung der kulturellen Eigenständigkeit. Im Interview mit Yuliya Sorokina spricht Gamal Bokonbajew über die Rolle der Kunst in politischen und ethnischen Konflikten.**

Wenn wir über die geopolitische Lage in Kasachstan und Zentralasien diskutieren, fragen mich ausländische Kollegen oft: „Und warum kämpft ihr nicht für die Demokratie?“ Gute Frage. Ich versuche gewöhnlich darauf zu antworten, indem ich erkläre, dass die Menschen hier seit der Zeit, in der die zentralasiatischen Republiken Teil der Sowjetunion waren und sogar danach – seit der Unabhängigkeit – einfach noch keine Zeit hatten, sich von all den Kämpfen zu erholen. Revolutionen, Kriege, stalinistische Lager, der Kampf gegen den Hunger, das Entstehen der jungen Staaten, wieder Revolutionen – die Menschen kämpfen hier die ganze Zeit um irgendetwas; und jedes Mal schlägt ‚die Macht des Volkes‘ um in eine Form asiatischer Tyrannei. Die Menschen haben einfach keine Zeit, demokratische Mechanismen zu entwickeln, aber Kämpfe gibt es mehr als genug.

## Demokratisierung durch Kunst und Kultur in Kasachstan und Kirgistan

Kultur und Kunst erwiesen sich als die wohl einzigen Schauplätze ernsthafter Versuche demokratischer Erziehung. Das zeigt sich besonders am Beispiel der Kunst in zwei benachbarten und ein-

ander in vielerlei Hinsicht nahestehenden Staaten – Kirgistan und Kasachstan.

Zu ersten Protesten für mehr Demokratie kam es während der Perestroika in Alma-Ata – damals Hauptstadt der Kasachischen Sozialistischen Sowjetrepublik. Im Dezember 1986 gingen hier hauptsächlich Studenten auf die Straße, nachdem Staatschef Michail Gorbatschow beschlossen hatte, den seit 22 Jahren amtierenden Sekretär der Kommunistischen Partei von Kasachstan, Dinmuchar Kunajew, zu entlassen und durch den Russen Genadi Kolbin zu ersetzen, der nie zuvor in Kasachstan gearbeitet hatte. Mit dieser Entscheidung wollte die Staatsführung dem Stammes- und Clandenken im politischen Apparat der Republik ein Ende setzen. Nun forderten die Aufständischen allerdings nicht die Rückkehr Kunajews, sondern die Einsetzung eines Repräsentanten der lokalen Elite. Zwei Tage lang gab es Kundgebungen, die in Unruhen mündeten. Um die Ordnung in der Stadt wieder herzustellen, ließen die Machthaber Arbeitmiliz und Eliteeinheiten aufmarschieren, deren Truppen mit Gewalt gegen die Demonstranten vorgehen. Nach den Angaben des KGB der Kasachischen Sozialistischen Sowjetrepublik starben in Folge dieser Unruhen in Alma-Ata drei Menschen.



Nach Angaben von Augenzeugen wurde am nächsten Morgen der ganze Platz mit kochend heißem Wasser vom Blut gereinigt, und auf der Straße lagen viele Leichen, die von den Sicherheitsorganen weggebracht wurden. Ich war selbst bei den Ereignissen dabei und bin geneigt, eher den Schilderungen der Augenzeugen zu glauben als der offiziellen Statistik. Viele Studenten wurden damals aus den Universitäten ausgeschlossen oder kamen sogar ins Gefängnis. Aus diesen jungen Leuten rekrutierte sich in den 1990er Jahren die Künstlerriege, die einige Jahre später die Entwicklung der kasachischen Kunst und Kultur maßgeblich bestimmen sollte.

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## Kasachstan – Alte Mythen, neue Formensprache

Damals formierte sich die Gruppe „Die grüne Triangel“ (Almagul Menlibajewa, Saule Suleimnowa, Sitta Sultanbajewa, Albikim Akmulajew und andere), es bildete sich die sogenannte ‚Neue Schule der Malerei‘ (Bachit Babischew, Galim Madanow und andere), danach gründeten sich die Gruppen „Der rote Traktor“ (Moldakul Narimbetow, Said Atabekow) und die Galerie „KOK SEREK“ (Kanat Ibragimow, Erbosin Meldibekow). Diese jungen Künstler unternahmen die ersten Versuche, Unabhängigkeit und Selbstbestimmung nicht so sehr in einem aktivistischen Sinne zu verstehen, sondern eher in einem metaphorischen und plastischen Sinn.

Auf der Suche nach einer eigenen Formensprache griffen die Künstler auf die kasachische Mythologie und Geschichte zurück, auf das Erbe der alten Mongolen, auf die Werte und die Kunst der Nomaden. Ihre Kunst verkörperte den Schwung einer jungen, wagemutigen Nation, die nicht durch Konventionen eingeschränkt wurde. In dieser Zeit eröffneten viele unabhängige Kunstgalerien, die versuchten, das institutionalisierte Vakuum in der kulturellen

Sphäre zu füllen, es fanden Ausstellungen, Festivals und Debatten über Kunst und Kultur statt.

Die staatlichen Behörden konnten mit der Bewegung wenig anfangen. Für die künstlerische Unterstützung ihrer politischen Mythologie rekrutierten sie andere Kräfte der Kulturszene – unbedeutende Künstler, die jeder politischen Anweisung Folge leisteten und jeden noch so absurden Mythos in eine künstlerische Realität verwandelten. Die besten Künstler wurden in den Untergrund gezwungen, sofern sie nicht vom Westen unterstützt wurden. Dies spornte die progressiven Künstler Kasachstans dazu an, sich in die internationale Kunstszene zu integrieren, und zwar mit Hilfe zielgerichteter Strategien – etwa durch die Teilnahme an internationalen Ausstellungen wie der Biennale in Venedig. Doch leider entfremdete das die kasachischen Künstler ihrem einheimischen Publikum noch stärker, das sie bis heute als fremde ‚Agenten des Westens‘ betrachtet.

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## Kirgistan – Kunst im Untergrund

Diese Vorkommnisse sind jenen sehr ähnlich, die sich zwischen 2005 und 2010 in Kirgistan ereigneten. Als die kasachischen Künstler in den 1990er Jahren Bischkek besuchten, bäugten die kirgisischen Kollegen ihren Enthusiasmus kritisch. Sie fanden, die Kunst solle ‚spiritueller‘ sein, philosophischer, und sie sollte weniger auf aktuelle Probleme reagieren, die mit Spiritualität wenig zu tun hätten. Dann kam 2005 die „Tulpenrevolution“. Heute sind die Menschen, die damals opponierten, stolz auf die Ergebnisse der Videokunst, die auf den zerstörten Straßen Bischkeks entstand. Damals wurde der erste Präsident von Kirgistan, Aksar Akajew, aus dem Land gejagt und durch einen Vertreter eines politischen Clans aus dem Süden ersetzt, Kurmanbek Bakijew.

Anfang April 2010 überschlugen sich dann die Ereignisse in Kirgistan. Es war die Stunde der sogenannten „Zweiten Revolution“. Zornige junge Menschen, die mit dem Regime von Präsident Bakijew unzufrieden waren, begehrten im Süden des Landes auf. Sie kamen bis nach Bischkek und stürmten den Sitz des Präsidenten, obwohl Spezialeinheiten sie unter Beschuss nahmen. In der Folge dieser Aufstände kam es zu Zusammenstößen zwischen Angehörigen der kirgisischen und usbekischen Volksgruppen im Süden des Landes und zu Unruhen im Kampf um die Sitze im Parlament.

Nach diesen Ereignissen waren Hunderte Menschenleben ausgelöscht, und viele Künstler in Bischkek wurden zu Aktivisten. In den früheren Luftschutzkellern unter dem zentralen Platz von Bischkek hatten schon zuvor Ausstellungen zeitgenössischer Kunst stattgefunden, die sich mit den drängenden Problemen des Landes und der Region beschäftigten (die Kuratoren waren Gulnara Kasamaljewa, Muratbek Dschumaljew und Ulan Dschabarow). Nach den Ereignissen vom April 2010 wurden junge Künstler aktiv, organisierten sich in Aktivistengruppen und arbeiteten an Projekten, die politische und soziale Fragen behandelten, etwa einem Debattierclub für die Bewohner ärmerer Stadtteile unter den Dächern ihrer Häuser (Dschoschua Mersachmetow und die Gruppe „Art Revolution“). Die Künstler glaubten daran, dass es notwendig und möglich sei, die Haltung ihres Publikums durch Kunst zu beeinflussen.

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## Ausstellung „Kirgistan 2010“

Das eindrucksvollste Beispiel für die Versuche der Künstler, die Lage zu verändern, ist die Ausstellung „Kirgistan 2010“, die im September 2010 in Bischkek stattfand, im Kunstzentrum „Koldo“ (Projektschefin war Nasira Alimbajewa, Kurator Gamal Bokonbajew). Die Ausstellung wurde mit Künstlern aus Kirgistan, Zentralasien und Deutschland organisiert und vom Goethe-Institut im Rahmen des Projekts „Kultur und Entwicklung“ unterstützt. Nach Meinung der Teilnehmer und Organisatoren der Ausstellung

*ist es nun wichtig, eine positive Einschätzung der aktuellen Ereignisse zu erhalten. Deshalb brauchen wir heute mehr denn je zuvor den Blick des Künstlers, um die Ereignisse in einen sozialen Kontext zu stellen.*

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## Interview

Yuliya Sorokina mit Gamal Bokonbajew, Kurator der Ausstellung „Kirgistan 2010“

*YS: Herr Bokonbajew, wie hat sich Ihrer Meinung nach die Lage der Kultur Kirgistans seit der letzten Revolution verändert?*

GB: Überhaupt nicht. Die Machthaber haben es früher nicht geschafft, der Gesellschaft ihre Ansichten und ihren Geschmack aufzudrängen, und auch heute gelingt es ihnen nicht. Alle kulturellen Projekte, die sie starteten, waren dilettantisch durchgeführt und hatten keinen Einfluss auf die Gesellschaft. Kirgistan hat die Chance verpasst, an die fortschrittlichen Ideen anzuknüpfen, die das Land zu Zeiten der Sowjetunion gesammelt hatte. Das einzige positive Phänomen war das Auftauchen informeller nichtstaatlicher Institutionen auf dem

Kultursektor. Es fehlt die Kraft für großangelegte Projekte. Doch die Gesellschaft ist ziemlich abgeschlossen, die Armseligkeit offizieller Kulturprojekte ist offensichtlich, und die informellen Initiativen sind alle nicht überzeugend genug, um Aufmerksamkeit auf sich zu ziehen.

*YS: Welche Aufgaben setzen Sie sich jetzt und in welcher Funktion agieren Sie dabei – als Künstler, Kurator und Aktivist?*

GB: Ich versuche, die Kultur Kirgistans zu modernisieren. Ich würde gern an der Etablierung einer lokalen zeitgenössischen Kultur mitwirken, die von weltweiten Tendenzen beeinflusst wird – ohne, dass unter dem Druck der Globalisierung die kulturelle Eigenständigkeit verloren geht. Auch die Versuche, eine patriarchalische Identität wiederzubeleben oder Ethnographie in ein kulturelles Phänomen zu verwandeln, helfen uns nicht weiter. Es ärgert mich zu sehen, dass man beträchtliche Mittel für Projekte aufwendet, die uns in aller Welt dem Gespött preisgeben. Warum etwa veranstaltet man ein internationales Filmfestival in einem Land, dessen Regierung in den vergangenen 20 Jahren sage und schreibe zwei Kinofilme finanziert hat? Es wäre sinnvoller, ein Festival für Filme zu veranstalten, die auf Mobiltelefonen aufgenommen wurden.

*YS: Was muss Ihrer Meinung nach getan werden, damit Kunst- und Kulturschaffende auf gesellschaftliche Prozesse einwirken und sie mit künstlerischen Mitteln beeinflussen können?*

GB: Hier stehen wir ganz am Anfang. Am Anfang könnte eine Kulturzeitschrift stehen oder eine Internetseite – oder die Gründung eines Informations- und Lernzentrums. Auch wäre ich dafür, das Russische als Sprache im internationalen Verkehr zu erhalten. Westliche Stiftungen sind da skeptisch, dem Staat geht es darum, Kirgisisch als

Staatssprache zu fördern, und die im Kultursektor-Tätigen lernen Englisch. Ich habe den Eindruck, dass die Verdrängung der teilweise ja durchaus positiven sowjetischen Erfahrung zusammen mit dem Rückzug des Russischen in der Gesellschaft Spannungen erzeugt. Das Vakuum füllt man mit dem Islam und religiösem Extremismus. Die Politiker werden nie verstehen, dass die ethnischen Konflikte damit zusammenhängen, dass wir auf das Einheit stiftende Potenzial der russischen Sprache verzichten. Natürlich, einige werden jetzt Kirgisisch lernen, aber Zehntausende werden das Land verlassen. Und bis jetzt findet nicht einmal so etwas wie ein Literaturwettbewerb für Werke in der Staatssprache statt! Nicht einmal die einfachen und offensichtlichen Schritte werden getan.

*YS: Wie stehen Sie dazu, wenn der technologische Wandel von Ländern wie Südkorea auch in Kultur und Tourismus zum Ausdruck kommt? Ist eine solche Ausrichtung auch in dieser Region möglich?*

GB: Ich bin Kulturwissenschaftler und vielleicht auch ein Snob. Aber ich denke, dass es nicht um die Technologie geht und auch nicht um die Computerisierung von Finanzspekulationen. Bei uns in der Region brauchen wir eine Modernisierung der Kultur, in der Gesellschaft gibt es ein starkes imperiales Paradigma als sowjetisches Erbe. Meiner Ansicht nach sind sowohl unsere zwei Revolutionen als auch die ethnischen Zusammenstöße das Ergebnis der Widersprüche zwischen zeitgenössischen Technologien und einer obsolet gewordenen Lebensweise. Die Bewohner der niedergebrannten Häuser in der Stadt Osch im Süden des Landes bestehen darauf, dass ihre alten Unterkünfte in den Zentren ethnischer Minderheiten wieder errichtet werden und sie lehnen es ab, in die mehrstöckigen Wohnungen zu ziehen. Das ist verständlich, verstärkt aber nur die Konfrontation.

YS: *Worauf zielt Ihr letztes Projekt „Kirgistan 2010“ ab?*

GB: Wir wollten die Kunst dem Volk, zumindest aber der Realität näherbringen. Die zeitgenössische Kunst in Kirgistan hat völlig verlernt, auf die Realität unseres Lebens zu reagieren. Alle sind mit der Salon- und Festivalkunst beschäftigt. Es gibt talentierte Künstler, aber es gibt keine zeitgenössischen Methoden und auch kein Vertrauen darauf, dass etwas von hier Stammendes am weltweiten Maßstab gemessen interessant sein kann. Es gibt keinen Glauben daran, dass irgendetwas Künstlerisches die Gesellschaft aufrütteln kann.

YS: *Müssen sich die Methoden, die Form von Kunstevents in einer Zeit der Krise verändern?*

GB: Die Hauptsache ist, einen Prozess in Gang zu bringen. Dann werden die guten Arbeiten schon von allein kommen.

YS: *Verändert sich Ihrer Meinung nach etwas in der Beziehung zwischen dem Staat und der zeitgenössischen Kunst?*

GB: Das hängt von denen ab, die daran glauben, dass die zeitgenössische Kunst dem Land hilft. Jetzt ist es leichter möglich als je zuvor, den Staat für diese Sicht zu gewinnen. Die Machthaber haben selbst keine Lust mehr auf imperiale und traditionelle ethnische Projekte, aber es ist notwendig, dass sie Verständnis entwickeln. Aber bei uns gibt es weder eine Geschichte noch eine Theorie und auch keinen Ort, wo dies diskutiert würde. Es gibt noch nicht einmal Verständnis dafür, dass man all das braucht. Andererseits sind die Vertreter der zeitgenössischen Kunst, die von ausländischen Stipendien leben, der Auffassung, dass man die offiziellen Strukturen nicht für dieses Phänomen zu begeistern braucht. Das ist eine sehr bequeme Haltung. Sie stören niemanden und niemand stört sie. Aber ist es möglich, die Kunst auf diese Weise zu modernisieren? Das bezweifle ich sehr.

## Über die Autorin

Yuliya Sorokina (geboren 1965 in Shchuchinsk, Kasachstan) ist Künstlerin und Kuratorin für zeitgenössische Kunst. Als Gestalterin des zentralasiatischen Pavillions der 52. Biennale von Venedig, gelang es ihr erstmals, Werke von Künstlern aus Kasachstan, Kirgisistan und Usbekistan einer breiteren Öffentlichkeit zu präsentieren. Sie ist Mitbegründerin und seit 1999 Vorsitzende der Stiftung „Asia Art+“.

Indonesia

# Civil Art Censorship: Reclaiming the Public Space

by Felencia Oktaria Hutabarat

**This paper examines art censorship in Indonesia, focusing on minority Islamic fundamentalist groups that have been actively trying to shut down cultural events and to remove art works from public spaces which they consider 'unIslamic'. An analysis of government policy on public space and the shifting focus of the media will also be provided. Recommendations will be made on factors to be considered in policy making and in dealing with art censorship.**

## On public space

When art enters a public space, an intervention starts. A meeting and interaction with other elements that form the entered space begins. When an art object takes up temporary or permanent residency in a public space, it will inevitably claim a site in the shared space and will therefore contribute to changing the dynamics of the space. Consequently, it will influence the way other elements interact within that space and around the new object. The art object will then be a part of the future memory of that space and of anyone who enters that public space.

For example, when there is a new statue in a park, people might start to interact with the object by choosing to use it as a meeting point, a must-see or they might even take pictures around the statue. The statue becomes the new element in that park and influences the public dynamic in the space. In a public space, public participation is a key aspect of achieving an ideal utilization of the space. In the illustration above, public participation is required to justify the decision to place the object in the public space.

## Art censorship: Independence to the New Order (1945—1998)

On Thursday 30 March 1950, "Darah dan Doa" (The Long March), the first Indonesian film production after independence, started shooting.<sup>30</sup> The Long March tells the story of the Siliwangi Division of the Indonesian military returning from Yogyakarta to their home base in West Java. In the film, a high-ranking soldier falls in love with his Dutch prisoner. It examines the fight to eradicate the separatist movement (DI/TII)<sup>31</sup> and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Also in 1950, the Indonesian Film Monitoring Board was founded and passed a Film Inspection Guide. The Board's first task was to approve the public screening of The Long March, which it did by censoring some parts of the film, mainly by cutting out battle scenes considering them as far too realistic.

<sup>30</sup> Ismail, Usmar (1986): Usmar Ismail Mengupas Film. Jakarta, p.170.

<sup>31</sup> DI/TII (Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia) is a separatist movement that wants to establish the Islamic State of Indonesia. They rose in the late 1940s and ended in 1962.

During the public screenings, the film provoked further protests from members of the Indonesian military who thought that the main character was too weak. The PKI also protested against what it deemed to be the portrayal of its party members as fanatical and revengeful. Other protests were against the depiction of DI/TII. These protests led to screening cancellations in some areas. It marked one of the first acts of art censorship in Indonesian history.

After the New Order under President Suharto came to power in 1965, art censorship was mostly conducted by the state. Under this regime, the cultural policy by the state served as a controlling tool to reinforce the political order and governmental discourses.<sup>32</sup> In the first decade, books written by authors suspected of having affiliations with the PKI were either burned or banned. A famous incident was the banning of books written by Pramodya Ananta Toer's, who was a leading figure of the People's Arts Institute (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat-LEKRA), a cultural organisation closely affiliated with the PKI.

In the music industry, records containing songs used in the PKI's activities received similar treatment. Singers, musicians and dancers seen performing at PKI gatherings were arrested. People were forced to hide or throw away banned cultural products to avoid being questioned or arrested by the police. Cultural spaces were closely monitored by the regime.

Until the beginning of poetry readings in the 1990s, theatre and dance performances continued to face difficulty. Permission to perform was often denied or performances were forcibly cancelled prior to the opening night. Teater Koma, a well-known theater group, had to cancel three of its productions in Indonesia and Japan after it failed

to get permission.<sup>33</sup> Then in October 1993, the government stated that there would be no more banning for theatre performances. Nevertheless, in February 1994, a performance entitled "Pak Kanjeng" (His Highness), a story of the victims of eviction, was banned. The director, Emha Ainun Najib, was instructed by the Police Chief of East Java to modify the script in order to proceed with the performance. Even though two thousand tickets had already been sold, Najib chose to cancel the performance.<sup>34</sup>

## Art censorship in the reform era<sup>35</sup>

'Reformasi' has had a significant impact on the cultural sector in Indonesia. It marked the end of the licensing regime, and has encouraged organisations and individuals to deliberately stop asking for permits to hold art events.<sup>36</sup> Freedom of expression became the catchphrase, and social and political themes were increasingly adapted into the arts, especially by urban artists.

The control of the media that haunted many media organisations in the Suharto era was lifted as new regulations came into place. The media has more freedom to publish news and opinions without fear of intimidation. Under a new government structure, regional autonomy that followed a policy of decentralisation has seen the creation of new

33 The performances were: "Cockroach Opera" (1985, 1990, 1991), "Sam Pek Eng Tay" (1989) and "Succession" (1990). The plays encompassed social and political critics, [http://www.teaterkoma.org/ind/ex.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=77:rendra&catid=52:catatan&Itemid=58](http://www.teaterkoma.org/ind/ex.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=77:rendra&catid=52:catatan&Itemid=58).

34 See Hartati, Sri (1997): *Emha: Orang Islam Dibakar Supaya Mengamuk*.

35 The 'reformasi' era was marked by the stepping down of Soeharto on May 21, 1998.

36 Jones, Tod (2005): *Indonesian Cultural Policy, 1950-2003: Culture, Institutions, Government*. Curtin University of Technology, p. 208.

32 Jones, Tod (2005): *Indonesian Cultural Policy, 1950-2003: Culture, Institutions, Government*. Curtin University of Technology, p. 174.

authorities that have formulated cultural policies according to their respective interests. In some cities and provinces, the interests include promoting certain religious values. In this era, the word 'people' becomes very important but it is frequently misused by civil groups, political candidates and elected officials to justify their policies.

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## The birth of the conservative Islamic movement

The reform era witnessed the end of a socially dominant power and the birth of groups that wanted to take back the rights that had previously been taken from them by the state. Among these groups were radical Islamic groups that were highly repressed under the New Order regime. Ustadz Ma'ruf Bahrun, a secretary of Forum Komunikasi Ahlusunnah Waljamaah, has described how his group seeks to restore Islam's dignity.<sup>37</sup> In his words, the group feels it is important to consolidate the power of Islam in order to defend other Muslims when being attacked by other groups. It is not clear what Bahrun means by other groups, but he says this was why groups like Laskar Jihad, Laskar Jundullah and Laskar Hizbullah were established.

The main activities of these groups include military training to protect fellow Muslims and to eradicate obscene activities.<sup>38</sup> Similar views are held by the Islamic Defender's Forum (FPI), currently the most vocal group in Indonesia. In its opinion, the state cannot control immoral activities in society. Drugs, gambling, liquor consumption and obscenities are everywhere. They feel there is a need for Muslims to take responsibility

in assisting the government to eradicate obscene activities.<sup>39</sup>

This reasoning is used by FPI and other Islamic groups to take action against activities and objects they consider obscene, immoral and against Islamic values. This includes art works. Over the last 12 years, the media has recorded several cases of art/cultural objects that were forcedly taken down, covered or removed on 'public request'. The declining power of the state as a central authority has given room to these radical groups to implement street justice that leads to civil art censorship.

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## Art versus civil art censorship: Examples

- **Exhibition "The Unspeakable Horror"**: This first example of civil art censorship relates to a Solo Exhibition of Dadang Christanto, held in July 2002 at Bentara Budaya Gallery in Jakarta. One of the works displayed was an installation of 14 life-sized naked clay male statues, with headless bodies, which were covered in batik and sarongs. The work reflects Dadang's personal struggles when, as an eight year old in 1965, he witnessed his father being taken away from his house never to return.

The Bentara Budaya Gallery belongs to the Gramedia Group, which publishes "Kompas", Indonesia's largest circulation newspaper. The Gallery is situated near a crowded residential area. The open space in front of the Gallery is often used as a playground by children. Three days prior to the opening of the exhibition, several children went inside the gallery and, according to security staff, started playing obscenely with the genitals of the statues. The next day, the neighbouring

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37 This interview was conducted by Al-Zastrouw Ng, who did an investigation on Symbolic Islamic Movement for his master thesis.

38 Ng, Al Zastrouw (2006): Gerakan Islam Simbolik: Politik Kepentingan FPI. Yogyakarta, p. 88.

39 Ibid., p. 89.

community representative sent in a letter to the Gramedia Group. The letter stated that if the statues were not covered within 24 hours, the community would take necessary action. After negotiations between community representatives, the organiser and the curator, the artist agreed to cover the statues with black plastic material. The statues survived the opening but were removed completely from the exhibition the next day, after the local imam threatened to report Kompas and the exhibition to Council of Ulama's, the powerful religious leaders. The curator, Hendro Wiyanto, said he saw no reason why the statues had to be removed since they were no longer naked. Here, Dadang Christanto was not faced with state censorship but with civil censorship by the very people he defended and depicted in his works.<sup>40</sup> Christanto's case raised discussion about art in public spaces, the risks of doing so and how artists deal with these risks.

- **Exhibition "Pink Swing Park":** This case raised the widest media attention to date on art censorship creating heated debates among artists, curators and gallery owners, and even among a public who are not familiar with art exhibitions. The Jakarta CP (Center Point) Biennale held in 2005 was a prestigious art-exhibition that involved many established artists, organised by respected Indonesian curators. It was held in the Museum of Bank Indonesia. One of the works exhibited was digital images of a naked man and woman, in different poses inside a forest with their genitals covered by a white circle.

The image covered the walls of the exhibition room, and in the middle was a pink three-wheel pedicab (becak). This was a collaborative work by the two Indonesian artists Agus Suwage and Davy Linggar. One could see almost immediately that the naked man and woman were allegorical for Adam and Eve in Eden. The media had a field day once they found out that the male model was a famous soap opera star, Anjasmara, whose face appeared everyday on local TV channels. Celebrity shows on television and gossip columns in print media highlighted the nudity for days. The public eye turned to the news and it caught the interest of FPI.

The FPI declared that in the month prior to Ramadan, the artwork was particularly offensive to Muslims. A crowd of 250 supporters appeared at the exhibition site to add pressure to the demands. They reported the artist, the exhibition committee and the models to the police, and insisted the work to be taken down.<sup>41</sup> FPI filed the report under religious blasphemy, an article which still exists in the Indonesian Criminal Code. The art work was then closed to the public by the organiser. This decision was followed by protests from other artists who disagreed with the decision. Some of them even removed their works from the exhibition. This event took place only several months before the discussion on the Pornography law<sup>42</sup> started in the parliament.

<sup>40</sup> See Soeyono, Seno Joko (2002): Hitam-hitam untuk Dadang. Tempo Interactive, 15 July 2002. In the same article, Soeyono also mentioned the exhibition of Sigit Pius Kuncoro in January 2001 in Kedai Kebun, Yogyakarta. The theme of Kuncoro's paintings was the naked family. After receiving an anonymous letter, the pictures were turned facing the wall the next day.

<sup>41</sup> Carla Bianpoen (2005): Sad, tragic demise of the CP Biennale. The Jakarta Post, 17 November 2005.

<sup>42</sup> The Pornography law presents a very wide interpretation on what can be considered as pornography. Feminist activists fear that the law will again victimize woman, while cultural activists fear the law will lead to homogenization of culture. The law was mostly supported by islamic organisations and political parties, <http://www.lbh-apik.or.id/uu-pornografi.htm>; for English: <http://www.indonesiamatters.com/2474/porn-laws/>. (Accessed online 10 May 2011).



- **Statue “Tiga Mojang (Three Women)”:**

A 15-meter-high statue of three women once stood as a land mark at the entrance to a housing complex in Bekasi, a suburb of Jakarta. The statue was completed by noted Indonesian sculpture Nyoman Nuarta in 2007. On May 14, 2010, hundreds of people from the FPI and the Indonesian Moslem Forum (FUI) protested against the existence of the statue, saying that it did not represent the Islamic values shared by the people of Bekasi. They also complained about what they deemed to be the pornography of the statue (the three women wore bustiers that revealed the shapes of their bodies and their arms were bare), the trinity concept in Christianity (there were three figures) and the legality of the statue (no license from the Mayor of Bekasi).

These groups continued their protest by vandalising the statue. The demand was later brought to the administrative government of Bekasi. The Mayor of Bekasi reacted by sending a letter of ultimatum to the housing developer on May 17, stating that the statue must be dismantled within a week before the government used force. On June 19, at 1 a.m., the developer started to dismantle the statue, witnessed by the police and the protesters. One official in Bekasi later said that the statue was removed because it had no legal permission to be built.

- **“Bima Statue”:** The next case related to the protest against the building of Bima statue in Purwakarta in August 2010. Bima is a figure in the Javanese Mahabharata story that represents strength, loyalty and heroic characters. The protest came from FPI and FUI who questioned creating a statue which in their opinion did not represent the character of Purwakarta as a ‘Santri city’<sup>43</sup>. They suggested instead the creation of a statue of an Islamic leader or something representing the Islam.<sup>44</sup>

43 Purwakarta is a city in West Java with lot of Islamic boarding schools. A student of an Islamic boarding school is called Santri.

44 Pikiran Rakyat: <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/node/118650>.

## The monopolisation of public space

The above cases reveal the complexities of displaying art in public spaces. The claims of space by FPI and FUI show how these groups are fully aware of the importance of taking the space. A contestation of moral and religious values plays a significant role in the events. The question of what is allowed or not allowed and who should allow lingers. Freedom of expression, previously limited by the state under the New Order, is now challenged by members of the society. In the above cases, the claims of space were made by both FPI and the artists; though the artists occupied the space earlier than FPI. Both parties brought their private values to the public space. The significant difference is that the artists did not display force or use violence upon entering and occupying the space.

In all cases, the public space has failed to function as a free, open and accessible place for all members of society. The failure can be viewed from various perspectives. The incidents relating to the Bentara Budaya Gallery and the Museum of Bank Indonesia were closed public spaces and were intended for showcasing art works. The purpose and function of these spaces were clearly defined and the exhibition activities served that purpose. Both spaces were privately owned and in that sense the owner had a right to use the space accordingly. However, the protests by FPI and Islamic leaders were not about the utilisation of the space but rather the art display. They ignored the purpose of the exhibition and the meaning behind the display. Only their interpretation mattered and they were not hesitant to enforce it upon others.

This served to remind to the artist, the curator, the space, the organiser and the owner (hereafter to be called the arts community) that they are no longer autonomous when they invite the public to enter their private spaces. It appears that further

effort is needed to prepare the public, perhaps with precautions, before entry to an art space. The public can then choose whether or not to enter a space. One is left to wonder whether, in Christanto's case, the exhibition would have survived longer if public access had been restricted during the preparation of the exhibition.

Public space should remain accessible to all members of society. Artists have the same rights as Islamic groups to access and utilise space. When both parties bring their private values into the public arena, the collective space, they potentially create conflict. Thus, diversity in public spaces needs to be taken into consideration to minimise or to prevent potential conflict. Ideally, there should be a mutual interest in informing oneself about artworks. However, in Indonesia, people have not yet felt the need to inform and prepare themselves before entering an art exhibition. Some may enter out of curiosity to see what goes on inside the closed space, as in the case of *Bentara Budaya*. The art community needs to become more active in distributing information to the public about what they are going to encounter, so that they can make a choice about whether to enter an exhibition or not. This helps to establish a connection between the art community and their audience.

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## Ongoing search for common ground

The above events describe a lack of understanding on the part of the art community about the relation between the public and public space. The public is a sea of differences, an experience of connection and disconnection, an assortment of various thoughts, shapes, sizes and colors. Therefore, celebrating diversity is simply not enough. The idea of diversity needs to be constantly nurtured, developed and elaborated until creative ways to live in diversity are discovered and tested, over and over again.

The most common way of doing this is by searching for common ground, which acts as a starting point and an end point. However, the common ground may only hold for a short time. On the other hand, common ground can also lead to homogenisation when it is defined without consulting members of the society. In Indonesia, this has led to the implementation of Sharia Law in Aceh, Sumatra and Bulukumba, Sulawesi. Once established, the common ground can be formulated into a set of shared public values and must be continuously advocated. On the other hand, when facing radical groups who reject all opportunities to search for common ground, the public could demand intervention from a higher authority, the government.

In all of the above cases, the government was not actively involved in facilitating dialogue between the conflicting parties. The actions of the radical groups were 'tolerated' to a certain extent. The intimidation, the vandalism and threats from radical groups were not considered a form of violence to the art community. As a result, the art community was forced to give in to street justice. The decision to close the exhibition and to take down the art works was a result of intimidation by radical groups and was not the result of consensus between conflicting parties. In the case of the "Three Women", it was even worse. The authorities, represented by the Mayor of Bekasi, took sides with the FPI and FUI by sending in an official ultimatum letter, thus closing off all channels of dialogue. Similarly, in the case of "The Unspeakable Horror", the Gramedia Group was reluctant to pursue dialogue and decided to give in to the demand.

It is interesting to see how FPI, FUI and other radical groups, who are actually minorities, claim they are representing the will of the majority, the Muslims in Bekasi and Jakarta. At the same time, the 'represented' Muslims rarely show their approval or disapproval with regard to the claim. There has never been a survey conducted to find

out whether the Muslim majority in Jakarta and Bekasi share FPI or FUI values and their violent approach.

One could also argue that the real majority is not only Muslims but members of the public who are not part of the arts community or the radical groups. Most of the time they do not affiliate themselves with any group. This is the majority we now recognise as the silent majority. They see, hear and speak about the events but they do not come together to convey their support or disapproval.

This is the majority that is now trying to be won by other minorities (including the pluralists). However, they usually do not receive sufficient information on sensitive issues like those described above. Most of the time they receive information from the mainstream media, which apart from Kompas, Tempo and The Jakarta Post<sup>45</sup>, rarely provide balanced reports on what really happened. They may pick up keywords and those keywords are later used to determine their standpoint. For example, in the case of pornography laws, people in general tend to agree with the law if they think it is meant to prevent the distribution of pornographic materials and activities. Very few of them have actually read the content of the law and know what the real debate is all about.

45 Kompas, Tempo and The Jakarta Post are the three leading newspapers in Indonesia with national circulation. Tempo also comes in the form of a magazine. The three media companies have a reputation for balanced reporting and strong journalistic ethics and are mostly read by the middle class. In the case of the exhibition “The Unspeakable Horror” however, Kompas did very brief news, while in the case of the exhibition “The Pink Swing Park”, Kompas chose to invite external contributors to write and analyse the event in the opinion column. It seems that there were certain editorial policies that prevented Kompas from writing its own stories. Tempo and The Jakarta Post however, have been very consistent in presenting the injustices.

## Public space and the role of the state

Public space in Indonesia is regulated under Law No. 26/2007 on Spatial Planning, while public participation in decisions on such planning is regulated under Government Regulation No. 68/2010: Ways and Forms of the Public’s Role on Spatial Planning. It is interesting to note that the word chosen is not public participation but public role. This can be interpreted as an effort to limit public participation in decision making processes. The main role as described in the government regulation is focused on providing inputs for the government in planning. However, such forums rarely take place. The government often conducts hearings for reasons of formality and not because it seriously considers public input. This has created a tension between the public and the government and resulted in public distrust, thus creating a reluctance to participate in government initiatives.

Based on legal principles, physical public spaces are owned by the state. However, this often leads to the utilisation of public space by the state without public consent. Ideally, the state:

- should ensure the safety of its citizens in a public space
- should facilitate dialogue and treat each claim equally when there is a claim to a public space by certain groups
- should not in any way tolerate violence or intimidation conducted by one group against another

In the cases outlined above, the state did not protect its citizens from intimidation and violence from other citizens. The state’s main role here is to facilitate a healthy public space and to protect the safety of its citizen so that exchanges of ideas and interactions are possible. Furthermore it should

provide a clear communication structure and proper channels to enable and encourage interaction and dialogue. When the structure is non-existent, it may lead to chaos, particularly in such a diverse community as Indonesia.

The state censorship conducted under the New Order was an example of how the state preferred to avoid chaos rather than provide a mechanism for expression in the public space. The state's fundamental role is to provide an accessible public space for all its citizens. Apart from the physical space, the state should also provide the instruments to enable optimum interaction and exchange in public space.

Recently, there have been a number of private spaces that have been deliberately turned into public spaces by the owners. These citizen initiatives allow discourses, dialogue and exchange of knowledge to take place. Many of them were initiated by artists to provide a space for dialogue and interactions between artists and the public. These places are mostly located in big cities like Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta where diversity is an important element of public spaces.

Ruangrupa, Komunitas Salihara, Tembi, Padepokan Bagong Kussuddiardo, Kedai Kebun Forum and Common Room were created to reflect on contemporary issues in society. The dialogue is not only focused on the arts and culture but includes politics, social issues, economics, etc. When such initiatives exist, the state should also be able to support and protect them, especially because they play an important role in nurturing public spaces, which is supposed to be the state's job. However to date, little attention has been given to these spaces. As a result, they are also very fragile to attack and intimidation from radical groups such as FPI.<sup>46</sup>

46 See footnote no. 38.

## Civil art censorship in the media

After 'reformasi', heavy censorship on the media was lifted and media companies no longer adjusted their editorial policies to suit state policies. The long wait for freedom of expression and information seemed to be over as new media companies began flourishing. However, the reform era has also brought in a new form of control, not by the state, but by the media owner, who produces media content for the purpose of increasing profits. This has resulted in a lack of balance, poor reporting and pretentious headlines. The art and culture sector, which does not have much selling potential, receives very limited attention in the media. There is very little printed and electronic media in Indonesia that dedicates a special section to the arts sector. Consequently, there are very few journalists who understand and can write well about this sector.

This means discussion on substantial issues in arts and culture are rarely taken up in the media. Of the above mentioned cases, only two received wide media attention, the "Three Women" and the "Pink Swing Park". The news however, was not focused on a discussion of the art work. The point of view of the artist as the creator of the work was largely neglected. Most news one-sidedly highlighted the reason FPI and FUI wanted to remove the statue. Of the nine national print media, only Kompas, The Jakarta Post and Tempo provided more balanced news.<sup>47</sup>

Other newspapers highlighted the above events with titles such as: "The Controversial statue of Three Women was successfully brought down"<sup>48</sup>;

47 See footnote no. 45. The other media agencies are "Media Indonesia", "Pikiran Rakyat", "Suara Merdeka", "Antara", "Time" and "Republika".

48 Antara (2010): <http://www.antaranews.com/berita/1276922327/patung-kontroversial-tiga-mojang-berhasil-dirobohkan>, 19 June 2010.

“The statue of Three Women wearing sexy clothing was toppled down”<sup>49</sup>; and “The statue of three topless women was dismantled”.<sup>50</sup>

In the case of the “Pink Swing Park”, the media had a wonderful time exposing the nudity of the soap opera star, especially the celebrity TV shows. The case immediately became public and, in the end, the soap opera star apologised on television and together with the artists and the organiser of the exhibition, he was investigated by the police based on the report filed by FPI. The headlines were as follows: “Anjasmara is officially made suspect in the Nude Picture Case”<sup>51</sup> and “Anjasmara Nudity Brouhaha (1): Another Porn”<sup>52</sup>.

## Artists left out of debate

There are several ways to see why the mainstream media chose to publish news with pretentious headlines. Quotations in the reports came mostly from FPI or FUI leaders, and rarely from the art community. Most of the news coverage was limited to the conflicting religious values and ignored the discussion on the purpose of the art objects. The nudity presented by the art was simply considered to be pornography, while the “Bima statue” did not represent the Islamic character of Purwakarta. This is the kind of news that enters households, since the main source of news for many people is television and newspapers.

The words used in the headlines such as “porn”, “sexy”, “nude” was more than enough to lead the public to a discussion on pornography. While phrases such as “successfully brought down” and “toppled” implied a power play, and that the victory against obscenity and immorality belonged to the radical groups.

This is very dangerous, because the violence, commotion, vandalism, intimidation and fear created by the FPI were ignored and consciously taken out of the discussion. The art community is not seen as a victim but as the guilty party. The media also ignored the street justice activities that took place in front of the police, the authority that should enforce justice. The absence of the state was rarely discussed or questioned.

No survey has been done regarding how the majority saw the issue but the news coverage might have led to a kind of justification of FPI’s actions, especially when the news focused on keywords and phrases against immorality, pornography, obscenity and the defense of religious values, which the majority of the public would undoubtedly be concerned about. If the mainstream media continues with this tone of news coverage, not only will it lead to

49 Suara Merdeka (2010): <http://suaramerdeka.com/v1/index.php/read/news/2010/06/19/57336>, 19 June 2010.

50 Media Indonesia (2010): <http://www.mediaindonesia.com/read/2010/06/19/15000037/5/Patung-Tiga-Mojang-Bertelanjang-Dada-Dibongkar>, 19 June 2010.

51 Suara Merdeka (2006): <http://www.suaramerdeka.com/harian/0602/06/budo3.htm>, 6 February 2006.

52 Suara Merdeka (2010): <http://www.suaramerdeka.com/harian/0509/24/nas20%20.htm>, 24 September 2005.

a justification of violent civil art censorship, it will also create more distance between the public and the arts community, and between the public and the state. Here, radical groups have not only managed to become media darlings, they have also successfully used the media to convey their message.

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## Public space and civil art censorship: Steps to take

There is no simple formula to solve the problem of civil art censorship in public spaces. This problem also arises in developed countries such as the United States and in European countries. Therefore the process of finding solutions must also be a continuous process, in particular since public space is a dynamic place. But how should the arts community respond to this situation?

- The arts community needs to realise that the public must be taken into account when creating and presenting their work. The notion of the autonomy of the arts and artists must be revisited and given a new meaning. It is true that artists cannot be held responsible for the various interpretations of their art. However, if artists, galleries, curators and organisers of exhibitions considered the different interpretations that may arise, they would also be prepared to provide not only defensive explanations but also the means of reaching understanding and opening dialogue. This indeed requires some hard thinking from within the arts community, especially under the current circumstances in which the state seems to fail in playing a protecting role.
- The presence of art in the public space must be considered as an offer instead of being seen as a necessity or a forced occupation of space. As an offer, an existing art object in the public space

can be questioned, contested and become part of the development of the public space. The act of questioning or contesting however must be seen as a contribution to an involvement in the public space and not as an imposition of authority on the space that seeks only to eliminate the presence of the 'other'—under whatever label (religion, ethnicities, the state, etc.). This must be clearly defined so as to ensure the liquidity of the space. Each element that forms the space must be given the room to move, maneuver and merge. When this is established, new creative offers will emerge.

- Critical self-censorship on the part of the arts community could be used as a way to see and enter the public space. Here, self-censorship is not defined as a way of limiting imagination and expression but is more about finding a way to be more sensitive and more aware of the surrounding environment when making choices about presenting the art. The arts community needs to consider how the art might influence the public space. It needs to be constantly creative in presenting art to the public in the public space. Of course, this requires more interaction with the public in order to search for the common ground which will provide channels for communication. Self-censorship must always include critical thinking, both internally and externally. Internally implies that the cultural creation is not an absolute thing that the public must experience. It may contain limited values or might only be presented to a certain community. Externally implies the understanding that the cultural situation in the public space is not something static or inherent, in which values are fixed. It is something dynamic, liquid-like and the arts community grows together with it. Each element influences the other; each move will contribute to changing the public space.

Interactions, dialogue, the search for common ground, critical self-censorship and, occasionally, intervention are all important elements in shaping the public space. This applies to every community that accesses the public space and the arts community is no exception. There is no guarantee that when all of these elements are considered the public space will be free from injustice, repression or inequality. The challenge remains how to maintain and ensure that such elements are continually considered. This process requires participation from all members of the society, and when public participation is still limited, critical awareness of the part of the arts community becomes important. Affirmative actions from the arts community to introduce and to maintain these elements would eventually lead to healthier relations between the arts community and the diverse public. The arts community cannot and should not decide how the public interprets art but they could start a process of interaction with the public and thus offer new ways of looking at issues that emerge in our society today. At the same time, the public reaction, be it positive or negative, can and should be used to enrich the creative imagination and expression of the artists.

Finally, the state must ensure that this process will take place in an equal, fair and just environment. The state must provide the protection and the mechanism for the process to take place. There is no end to this process, everyone gives and everyone takes and what comes out of it, is what shapes the public space and the society.

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## About the author

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## Kenya

# Media and political crisis

by Tom Odhiambo

**What role do the media and other forms of popular cultural expression play in the democratisation and development of the African state? In what ways does the Kenyan media need to reflect on its role in the post-election violence in Kenya between December 2007 and February 2008? This report looks at these questions by examining, among other things, two photographic exhibitions, “Kenya Burning” and “Picha Mtaani”, which were aimed at sensitising Kenyans to the consequences of the violence.**

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## The media in Kenya

- **Broadcasting:** The public media in Kenya is a creation of the colonial government. The British modelled the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), with the primary aim of serving the colonial government in establishing rule over the colony. The KBC was replaced by the Voice of Kenya (VoK) in the immediate postcolonial era. The VoK assumed an Africanist agenda whose stated objectives included the promotion of an Afrocentric view of the world, in opposition to European dominated news and information during colonial rule. Between the 1960s and early 1990s, when the Kenya Television Network (KTN) was set up, the VoK was the sole public broadcaster offering radio and television services. The VoK reverted to being called the KBC in 1989.
- **Print media:** The print media was partly liberalised. The pro-government “East African Standard” was set up in 1902 and competed in recent decades with the “Nation”, which was established in 1960, as well as other periodicals. The 1990s brought about a revolution in the electronic and print media. The political changes which allowed for the registration of parties to compete with the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) also saw the establishment of dozens of new publications, some of them extremely opposed to the state. Magazines such as “Society” and “Nairobi Law Monthly” were heavily repressed; editors were even charged with defamation or treason. The full liberalisation of the media began in the late 1990s and has been accompanied by an exponential growth in access to the internet and growth in the use of mobile telephony.
- **Internet:** The internet revolution, the virtually universal access to mobile phones and an unprecedented expansion of frequency modulation (FM) radio stations in Kenya combined to completely transform the media landscape. The new media environment offered audiences an expanded range of services including news, entertainment, information and education, all at a fraction of what it cost before, more easily accessible and for 24 hours. Kenyans were actually experiencing a media revolution.



## Politics and the culture of misrepresentation

The massive transformation of the media occurred at a time of political change in the country. The media was quick to exploit the relaxed socio-cultural and political circumstances and to contest the authority of the state, in the wake of KANU's loss of status as the country's single political party. Previously taboo subjects such as the misappropriation of state resources and abuse of office by government officials became a common subject of debate.

The Kenya Times, then the mouthpiece of KANU, defended the interests of those in power, whilst the Nation appeared to lean towards those who disagreed with the state. The Standard stood in-between, seeming to pull in both directions—although at the time it was increasingly becoming known that a majority of its shareholders were associated with the KANU regime. Although much of the media claimed to be objective, media partisanship was, in fact, progressively institutionalised in Kenya from the earliest moments of the colonial administration. It is this bias, though without a clear editorial explanation to the public about a newspaper's political views, which would later come to haunt the media in the period after the Kenya general elections of 2007 when widespread violence broke out throughout the country.

The Kenyan media stands 'accused' of misrepresentation<sup>53</sup> while tending towards pretentious objectivity. The ideal of objectivity is one that the Kenyan media preaches, especially when the country is in a political crisis as in 2007/2008. Yet one does not need to 'read between the lines' to see how this same media is complicit in promoting what is often unsullied subjectivity. What passes

for op-ed columns, features or commentaries is often jingoism that evokes and invokes further diatribe, and the repetition of a cycle of fruitless 'debates'. These are actually exercises in innuendo, stereotyping, false accusation and misrepresentation. Such was the situation in the build up to the 2007 general elections.

The 2007 elections had had a preview in the form of the referendum on the proposed constitution in 2005. The No camp had come together under the umbrella of the Orange Democratic Party (ODM), borrowing from the media images of the so-called "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine of 2004–2005. The ODM group projected itself as progressive and standing for change. The ruling party, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), was soundly defeated in the referendum. This defeat led to the sacking of some of the members of the ODM from the government in 2005, which then set the stage for the tense campaign and elections of December 2007.

## Stoking the fires

The media, again, characterised the ODM group as rebellious, bitter and consumed with political and electoral 'revenge'. It was cast as having lost out to a 'cheating', not-to-be-trusted group and its political campaign was associated with a language which spoke of historical injustices, broken promises, betrayed memorandum, a corrupt cabal, the Mount Kenya mafia, the ethnic bloc, and the kitchen cabinet. These terms tended to intensify the differences between the ruling group and the group in 'opposition', with members of the Kikuyu ethnic group being seen as having unfairly benefited from national opportunities and resources.

The circulation of these terms within the public space happened through both formal and informal media networks. The print and electronic

53 See Ochieng, Philip (1992): *I Accuse the Press: An Insider's View of the Media and Politics in Africa*. Nairobi.

media, as well as the new media of the internet and mobile telephony (through SMS, for instance) uncritically circulated these ideas, most of which tended to carry heavy negative or prejudicial connotations against one socio-economic class or ethnic group or region in the country. News reports, analysis and opinions amplified the notion of a bifurcated country, with power, opportunity and resources being said to be ‘unfairly’ distributed across the country.

Although studies have consistently shown that Kenya is one of the most socio-economically unequal countries in the world<sup>54</sup>, the media often did not (and still does not) offer empirical evidence to support such claims, often ignoring, for instance, intra-group inequalities even in groups that are perceived to be ‘favoured’ by the state.

The media speculated that the elections would be ‘rigged’, that some groups ‘would not be allowed to rule others’ because their leaders were ‘thieves’ or ‘uncircumcised’ and so on. Such statements would subsequently stoke the tensions that were exploited when the elections were said to have been stolen by the losing side in the contest.

On the day before the elections the media reported that administration police officers were being ferried to Nyanza province in a scheme to rig the elections. These claims, which turned out to be partly true, led to the killing of tens of police officers by angry local residents of south Nyanza. On the day of the elections, when the name of the main opposition candidate, Raila Odinga, was found to be missing in the voters’ register in his own constituency, the media quickly termed it an attempt to ‘rig’ him out. In each of these cases the media seemed eager to report the news in a sensational manner, although much of the information was unverified. They paid little attention to how such news served to intensify tensions in the country.

54 Leys, Colin (1975): *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism*. Nairobi.

## Fuelling further tension

Even after the country started to ‘burn’ with the destruction of property, the killing of more than 1200 Kenyans, the displacement of thousands of people across the country, the mainstream Kenyan media did not appreciate the magnitude of the national crisis and continued to take sides in the political divide between the Party of National Unity (a conglomeration of small parties which had won just about 50 percent of the parliamentary seats) and the Orange Democratic Party (which had won the majority of parliamentary seats but whose candidate had lost the elections to the incumbent, President Mwai Kibaki). The “Daily Nation” and the “Standard”, the two leading daily newspapers, as well as their related electronic media, were seen to be supporting the PNU and ODM respectively<sup>55</sup>. FM radio stations were even more biased with some of them, mostly those broadcasting in local languages, claiming to speak directly for ‘their’ people<sup>56</sup>.

Interestingly, after carrying sensationalist and alarmist reports and news throughout the campaign period and into the first few days of the post-election crisis, the media seemed to have been shocked at the spread of the chaos and in what appeared to be a kind of choreographed message to the public it called for peace.

The Daily Nation had this to say on January 3, 2008: “Save Our Beloved Country”. In a plea for both the leaders and the citizens to sue for peace, the newspaper noted:

55 See Loughran, Gerard (2010): *Birth of a Nation: The Story of a Newspaper in Kenya*. London and New York.; Makokha, Kwamchetsi (2010): *The Dynamics and the Politics of Media in Kenya: The Role and Impact of Mainstream Media in the 2007 General Elections*. Nairobi.; Mwita, Chacha (2009): *Citizen Power: A different Kind of Politics, a Different Kind of Journalism*. Nairobi.

56 See Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2008): *On the brink of the Precipice: A Human Rights Account of Kenya’s Post-2007 Election Violence*.

*Our beloved country, the Republic of Kenya, is a burnt-out, smouldering ruin. The economy is at a virtual standstill and the armies of destruction are on the march in the Rift Valley and other places.*

This seemingly newfound remorse continued as the media fully supported the signing of the peace deal between Kibaki and Raila which established the coalition government.

The Standard headline on the February 29, 2008, the day after the signing of the peace deal read: “Joy as Kibaki and Raila sign power sharing deal.” The writer, Patrick Wachira, wrote:

*This memorable covenant that could usher in a new era of reforms—which successive regimes have procrastinated over until the near post-poll meltdown—will assume legal and constitutional force when Parliament is summoned.*

But couldn't the media have done better by insisting on certain minimum institutional changes before the elections, such as addressing the composition of the Electoral Commission of Kenya which had been skewed in favour of one party just before the polls? Or was the partisanship due to ideological sympathies or to be found in the nature of ownership of the Kenyan media?

In his book “Citizen Power: A Different Kind of Politics, a Different Kind of Journalism”, Chaacha Mwita has a chapter entitled: “Kenya’s Media Terrain: A Poison Pill for Democracy.” Mwita’s argument in this section of the book is that the ownership of the Kenyan media is too skewed in favour of one socio-economic group (and to a large extent one ethnic community) for it to be seen as fair. He notes that Kenya’s media cannot be objective given that it serves the interests of a select group and a region, and that it will easily lend itself to propaganda and partisanship. Mwita worked at the Standard media group where he was the Group Managing Editor.

Is it possible that in pursuit of narrow self-interest the Kenyan media promoted a culture of intolerance? Given the outcome of the civil unrest that followed the disputed elections of 2007, can the Kenyan media claim to be the fourth estate? How can ‘honorific’ members of the ruling class really represent the interests of the ruled majority by ‘watching’ over the rulers?

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## Trauma and public (in)sensitivity

Even after the fires had died, as the country was still in a state of tension, the Kenyan media, both print and electronic, uncritically participated in broadcasting raw images of the violence and deaths that had stalked Kenyans. This happened when the media covered two exhibitions, “Kenya Burning” and “Picha Mtaani” (Photography in the Neighbourhood), which were exhibitions of photography and witness testimonies following the 2007 post-election crisis and violence.

These exhibitions acutely illustrate the significance of the media in the developing world. They highlight the role the media has to play in times of crisis. Both exhibitions (and the catalogue that accompanied “Kenya Burning”) were projects organised by non-governmental organisations: the GoDown Arts Centre and the Kwani Trust sponsored “Kenya Burning”, whilst “Picha Mtaani” was initiated by an individual.

The origin of the “Kenya Burning” exhibition is described in the catalogue in the following terms:

*We came upon the photographs that would lead us to curate and carry the “Kenya Burning” exhibition. In February 2008, Nick Ysenburg, a freelance photographer, while discussing ... a photo project he hoped to embark on later that year, showed us images by 25-year-old Boniface Mwangi taken during the violence. They were dramatic, they were horrific and real. Nick then showed us*

other images by a Japanese photographer, Yasuyoshi Chiba, who had been in Kisumu during the election period. Again, in Chiba's photographs, we were struck by the power of the camera to capture scenes and moments of the unbridled emotions expressed by Kenyans during that trying period—anger, pain, despair, and sorrow.

Boniface Mwangi decided to withdraw from the GoDown project and curated the “Picha Mtaani” exhibition. His exhibition, just like “Kenya Burning,” toured many parts of the country (it can also be seen on YouTube) and often encountered hostile audiences in places like Kisumu, Eldoret and Nakuru. These three towns experienced widespread violence, destruction of property and deaths.

Most people reacted angrily to the exhibitions because they felt that the government—whose agents, especially the police, were accused of committing most of the killings in parts of Nairobi and Kisumu—was yet to account for its abdication of responsibility.<sup>57</sup> By reminding ordinary citizens of the recent violence, in areas where thousands of citizens were still in transit and in internally displaced people's camps, these two exhibitions were seen as re-opening a hardly-healed wound.

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## Anticipating hostility

Indeed, the curators of “Kenya Burning” anticipated such a reaction but proceeded anyway to show the pictures throughout the country with the support of the mainstream print and electronic media. They note in the catalogue:

*We should mention that we felt the timing of the exhibition in April 2008 was a gamble. It was still a tense time around the country, and we were uncertain about the*

*reception an exhibition of graphic and disturbing photographs would have. As in this book, the photographs in the exhibition were not directly captioned, because we were convinced that each picture told a story powerfully, and the images collectively represented the shocking eruption of heat and fire, that lay, simmering beneath the seemingly resigned faces of everyday Kenyans.*

The purpose of these two exhibitions was to remind Kenyans of the potential barbarism of ordinary citizens but they did not do much to examine the government's own culpability. Indeed, in the two months during which Kenya was ‘burning’ the government of Kenya existed in what has been described by Giorgio Agamben as a “state of exception”<sup>58</sup>. The state, through its agents, behaved in a criminal manner by allowing the rise and spread of violence and the destruction of property. When it took action, the state was just as violent as the angry citizens. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) attributes the majority of deaths during the period to gunshots from the police.

Yet the media and other institutions that started the processes of ‘memorialisation’ and ‘archiving’ of the postelection crisis did not seem to interrogate the state's complicity in what has come to be described as ‘crimes against humanity’. The Kenyan media did not challenge the government to account for its actions during the period. Instead the media focused on the ongoing accusations and counteraccusations within the ruling coalition that had brought together the contestants in the disputed elections. It seems not to have learned its lessons from the violence.

The International Criminal Court has indicted six individuals who have been accused of carrying the most responsibility for the post-2007 elections crisis. The current reporting on this issue is, once

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57 See Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2008): *On the brink of the Precipice: A Human Rights Account of Kenya's Post-2007 Election Violence*. Nairobi.

58 Agamben, Giorgio (2005): *State of Exception*. Chicago and London.

again, tendentious, projecting the accused as victims of false accusations from either side of the political divide.

If warning Kenyans about the consequences of violence was a justifiable motive for these photo exhibitions, then the Kenyan media and the non-governmental sector had access to an archive of images from previous so-called 'tribal clashes' in Rift Valley province and other parts of the country. In my opinion, given that some NGOs had information that the elections would lead to violence in some parts of Kenya, the pre-emptive act of staging a touring exhibition of previous Kenyan violence and reporting on it would have been appropriate. The display of the images of post-poll violence was too soon and too traumatic to be effective.

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## Time for reassessment

Could the Kenyan media have behaved differently than it did during the pre- and post-election period? Given that the ordinary citizen regularly rates the media, ahead of the church and the government, as the most trustworthy public institution, was the partisanship exhibited by most of the mainstream media wrong? Can the media in developing countries such as Kenya really help in 'building the nation', in the way it was conceived in the immediate postcolonial moment? These questions are largely rhetorical because if we assume Marshall McLuhan's proposition that the "media are extensions of man" then it follows naturally that the media, unless it states outright that it is a propaganda unit, needs to serve the common good.

Francis Nyamnjoh argues that the media, more so the African media, has to become the vanguard in advancing and institutionalising the practices of democracy, development and inclusive politics.<sup>59</sup>

One would have expected the Kenyan media to have dedicated time and space to a discussion about how the country might address "historical injustices" that are said to have triggered the post-election crisis.

The one trans-historical factor in the conflicts that Kenya has suffered since the inception of colonialism is land. Land is fought over because it is the basic factor of production in the country and it is scarce, as the economist X.N. Iraki noted recently.<sup>60</sup> Iraki argues that to resolve what is increasingly a national crisis of political leadership "the economic causes of post poll chaos must be addressed" because the "postelection violence had an economic angle with entrepreneurs bearing the brunt of the violence."

The government may claim to be addressing the institutional and collective deficiencies that contributed to the state of anarchy witnessed between December 2007 and February 2008 but it is the media that has to stay alert and remind the government and the citizens about the larger goal of working towards building a progressive society.

The response to the question as to whether the Kenyan media could have predicted and pre-empted the violence is: yes. The media's response to the national crisis, especially from mid-January to February 2008, was one of contrition and concern for the welfare and future of the country. Collectively, the national media, including the alternative press, called for an end to the strife and demanded that the leaders on both sides of the political divide commit themselves to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Subsequently the media was in the forefront of the call for the implementation of commitments to a new constitution, police reforms, establishment of institutions and mechanisms to address historical injustices, and for acceleration of the processes of national reconciliation.

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59 See Nyamnjoh, Francis B. (2005): *Africa's Media, Democracy and the Politics of Belonging*. London and New York.

60 See Iraki, X N (2010): *The Economic Causes of Post Poll Chaos Must Be Addressed*.

Today the Kenyan media still emphasises the need for the government to deliver on Agenda 4, a series of reforms that were agreed on between the opposing camps during the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation meetings chaired by Kofi Annan, the-then Chairperson of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, as a way of guaranteeing a peaceful, fair and equitable Kenya in future.

## Learning the lessons

One hopes that the Kenyan media, especially the mainstream media, which claims to be the eyes and ears of the ordinary citizens, learnt the lesson that “words are weapons”, as Steven Poole has argued.<sup>61</sup> The media can become a force for both good and bad deeds.

Media partisanship is not necessarily wrong, indeed it may be unavoidable in certain circumstances, but the particular media outlet or institution has to clearly state its preferences to the public rather than claim to be objective whilst promoting sectarian interests. But for a country struggling to (re)build itself, the media has to be an instrument of acculturation intended to cultivate and protect the common good, in this case the development of the nation.

To improve the performance of the media in educating and informing the public, there is a need to improve the quality of training, to pay them better, to institutionalise work ethics, to diversify ownership, to monitor and discipline outlets with a tendency to sensationalism—but to do this within the legal and constitutional limits.

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61 Poole, Steven (2007): Unspeak: Words are Weapons. London.

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#### **About the author**

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## Senegal

# Culture in Crisis: the case of Casamance

by **Amanda Fortier**

**How culture can be used as a positive force during times of war and violence is a question that is often difficult to answer. This report on five projects in Casamance, in the southwestern region of Senegal, examines some of the impacts that cultural initiatives can have in helping to restore peace in West Africa's longest running civil war. How can culture-based projects encourage communication and foster a sense of commonality amidst violence and tension?**

There is a Swahili proverb that says when elephants fight it is the grass that suffers most. In Casamance the grass has been trampled for nearly three decades. Even so, it remains one of the most forgotten wars in the region.

Over the decades, assistance has come from many big agencies such as the World Bank, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, USAID, Handicap International, GTZ, Senegalese Red Cross and Amnesty International, to name but a few. Their multi-disciplinary work has been integral to bringing relief to Casamance. At the same time, their commitment has been sporadic. This has raised numerous doubts over the viability and long-term benefits of such aid work. It is difficult to intervene in conflict and move towards reconciliation when the violence is ongoing.

There are some cultural festivals that have sprung up in recent times, including the ZigFest and the Kartong Festival. These initiatives have tried to bring together the various ethnic groups to celebrate the wide diversity of music, fine art, clothing, and ritual celebrations that make up the potpourri of cultures in Casamance. However, these events typically take place in urban areas. They are also carried out in an environment where tensions still linger and violence has become an everyday reality.

For the purposes of this paper, culture will be defined using definitions from Senegal's first President, Leopold Senghor, and the Franco-Bulgarian philosopher and cultural theorist, Tzvetan Todorov<sup>62</sup>. Combining the two, culture therefore includes anything added to nature that has "shared common characteristics and mental representation for a particular human group." Conflict will be defined, using the Local Capacity for Peace Framework's (LCCP) definition, as: "Negative, destructive (often violent) group interactions."<sup>63</sup> The concept of peace-building will be defined from Professor Michael Shank and Lisa Schirch's work as:

*A process of social change that enables the transformation of perceptions and relations between and among opposing actors.*<sup>64</sup>

According to the LCCP, before peace-building can begin the context of that conflict must be understood with regard to two aspects: which actors are divided and what are the sources of tensions

62 Todorov, Tzvetan (2010): Unity of civilization, plurality of cultures, <http://www.counterpoint-online.org/tzvetan-todorov-keynote/>.

63 LCCP's report is taken from Anderson, Mary B. (1999): Do no harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – Or War.

64 Shank, Michael/ Schirch, Lisa (2008): Strategic Arts-based Peacebuilding, p. 217-242.



between them?<sup>65</sup> The following paragraphs will provide a brief historical background to the conflict in Casamance.

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## Historical overview

Senegal gained independence from France in 1960. President Leopold Senghor became their first President and allegedly promised the Casamançais that they would be able to break free if they remained a part of the country for twenty years. But when Senghor stepped down in 1980 this understanding was not fulfilled. A struggle for independence ensued between the Movement des Forces Democratique de Casamance (MFDC) and the Government of Senegal. Over the years, several factions within the MFDC have splintered off. This has made it difficult to find a consensus among the Movement itself. Today, complacency on the part of these various MFDC groups and the Senegalese government to arrive at a compromise, which would bring peace to Casamance, has resulted in economic, social and cultural suffering for everyone.

Ata Bodian is a consultant for Les Collectifs des Casamançais, a group advocating a non-violent solution to the conflict. He works as a mediator between the MFDC and the national government. He says that the conflict initially sprung from a debate over land-rights and cultural differences:<sup>66</sup>

*The people of Casamance are very attached to their land. There is a misunderstanding between two cultures at work—those who come from the north and those who are natives. In Casamance, the people have a sense of pride that has everything to do with their land. Even between villages tensions over land can arise.*

Territorial issues are an important part of the conflict in Casamance. The region is geographically separated from the rest of Senegal by a tiny sliver of land that is ‘The Gambia’. According to many Casamançais, this physical barrier makes them feel disconnected and marginalised by what many consider a Dakar-centric national government.

Casamance has around 1.5 million inhabitants. This is roughly ten percent of the country’s population. There are nearly two-dozen different ethnic groups living side by side, each of which have their own language and, to a certain extent, culture. No one is entirely of one ethnic group. This makes it difficult to attach one specific ‘cultural identity’ to any individual person. The Diola (Jola), Fulani (Pulaar), Mandinke, Serer, Soninke, Bambara and Wolof (to name just a few of the primary ethnic groups in Casamance) all intermingle and may appropriate various aspects of their traditions and cultural heritage, including music, dress, religious ceremony and social outlooks. The majority of Senegalese are Wolof and Muslim. In Casamance, there is a higher percent of Diola. They are primarily Christians or animists. While it is clear that ethnicity and religion do play a role in this conflict, they are by no means the sole or primary determinants.

The conflict has severely hampered both the agricultural and tourism sectors of Casamance. Though small in landmass, Casamance forms a major part of the country’s economic backbone. Its lush and tropical environment was once considered the breadbasket of Senegal. It was an area thriving with crops—from rice, millet, sorghum and groundnuts to bountiful harvests of fruits and vegetables. It was also a popular vacation destination where tourists flocked to enjoy beaches with clear, blue water and the varied, traditional cultures. Since the war broke out, agricultural production has decreased by half and foreign embassies routinely warn against travel to Casamance.

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65 LCCP report (2002): pp. 2.

66 Bodian, Ata (2010): Personal interview, Feb. 2010.

The result has been economic and social devastation as well as a stifling of cultural dynamism. Hundreds of villages have been abandoned. Hundreds of people have been killed by landmines or rebellious forces. Tens of thousands have been internally displaced or sought refuge in neighbouring countries. While several peace accords have been signed, none have been respected. War and tension continues to simmer beneath the surface. It dissipates temporary—sometimes for many months at a time—only to suddenly re-emerge as a painful reminder that peace in Casamance remains in limbo.

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## Culture for Peace-building

For practitioners on the ground in Casamance the concern is how to bring peace and conflict-resolution to an area that is continually unstable and to an environment in which the main actors are divided. International organisations and NGO's must work from the bottom up, starting with the local populations who are suffering the most.

But restoring peace requires more than just financial aid or ensuring food and health provisions. While these basic needs are essential, sustainability also requires implementing more subtle forms of support—ones that restore a sense of humanity, trust and communal goals. This is where deeply rooted values, cultural viewpoints and historical narratives may intersect.

Culture can be used as a tool and when successfully managed, cultural activities can help foster a better understanding and prompt dialogue. While learning to accept differences comes slowly over time, it is also essential in establishing common ground. Ideally, this type of shared platform facilitates opportunities for communication—not only through words, but also through actions, symbols and emotions. In this sense, culture-based

activities can become a type of “social peace-building.”<sup>67</sup> They can help unite divided actors and allow culture to become a remedial rather than antagonistic force in times of crisis.

A number of cultural case studies are examined here in more detail: a community radio network, socio-educative and economic projects, exhibitions, role-play activities and photography.

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## World Education Community Radio Network

In 2004, just before the December peace accord was signed—one of several attempts over the decades to negotiate between the MFDC and Senegalese Government—the USAID-sponsored World Education Community Radio project started in Casamance. Initially, it began with a women's group and was started as a response to a lack of communication both within and across diverse communities.

Today, more than six years later, the project includes another ten stations. They are all run by local villagers and spread throughout the region—from Diouloulou in the northwest, to Pata along the Gambian border, down to Oussouye close to Guinea-Bissau. The format for most shows ranges from round table discussions to news bulletins and talk shows. Many radio topics relate to peace-building, though not exclusively. There are also programs with a purely entertainment focus, such as music, sports and drama series.

In peace-building projects that are focused on direct forms of communication, like radio, it is essential that certain topics be addressed with great sensitivity. According to Abdou Sarr, the director of the community radio network, based in the capital Ziguinchor, all peace-building topics are treated with “a lot of care, both in content

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67 McDonald, Johh, W. (2003): Multi-Track Diplomacy, [www.beyondintractability.org/essay/multi-track\\_diplomacy/](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/multi-track_diplomacy/).

and delivery.”<sup>68</sup> This means that editorial and programming decisions are based on a preliminary assessment of the needs and interests of its listeners. Then the programs are structured to meet the network’s overarching goal: to develop sustainability and build a peaceful respect for differences, the environment and the promotion of gender equality. In practical terms, this means the shows are broadcast in local languages and provide hands-on advice and open discussions on what are otherwise elusive topics: forgiveness and reconciliation, good governance, human rights, border disputes, accident prevention, gender and health issues, and environmental protection.

As an example, Sarr talks of a station in Diouloulou that provides a platform of communication between two separated groups: refugees who fled to The Gambia and local villagers back in Casamance. In this case, the radio is used to encourage refugees to come home and to allow local villagers to express interest in their reintegration within the community. It becomes a way of offering a safe encounter and a connection that may help the former group successfully return to their community.

Providing opportunities to communicate in the context of conflict can prompt change and development. This belief lies at the core of the work of the WE Community Radio Network. Their assumption is that the Casamance conflict is rooted in a lack of communication between opposing groups and/or the transmission of misinformation. The WE stations are trying to provide a space of contact through their interactive shows, through which the particular needs of various cultural identities can be heard, acknowledged and, ideally, respected.

Sarr says that the rebels can hear of the suffering of the people and their desire for peace. The MFDC themselves are a major presence on the

radio. Sarr says the success of the project depends on the will of the locals and of the MFDC to participate in the peace programs. Since the community radios started up, people (including the MFDC) have seen how radio shows can have a positive role.

Sarr uses the example of the King of Oussouye, who is a peace activist and advocate of the radio networks. Sarr says the King officially demanded that authorities repair a community radio station that had problems because every day his people were asking for him to do something about it. Sarr says that while there are cultural and artistic events taking place in cities they do not necessarily implicate everyone involved in the conflict. This means a great proportion of the population affected and the actors implicated are not necessarily involved.

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## Embracing diversity and facilitating cooperation

In the conflict-resolution process, it is crucial to involve as many actors as possible and to ensure they come from various backgrounds. This is an aspect espoused by the multi-track diplomacy peace-building model, originally developed by Joseph Montville in 1982 and later elaborated on by John McDonald and Louise Diamond.<sup>69</sup>

The latter authors created a “systems approach to peace,” which involves nine-categories of actors in the peace-building process. These groups range from members of government to business owners and private citizens to religious leaders, all of whom have “their own resources, values and approaches.” The goal is to get these groups working together. When this happens they produce what McDonald and Diamond call “a synergy.” This cooperative approach to conflict resolution

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68 Sarr, Abdou (2010): Personal interview. Mar. 2010.

69 McDonald, John W. (2003)

is something the WE radio stations try to do by encouraging a plurality of voices.

According to Sarr, all radio personnel come from the communities, which he says ensures they have the best possible understanding of the issues and how to broach them on-air. They also include the maximum amount of diversity among the guests. This includes politicians and religious leaders, locals and members of international organs, local villagers and members of the MFDC who are spread across the region and may otherwise never be heard.

The American-based conflict prevention and resolution nongovernmental organisation, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), also believes in this cooperative approach, but caution against “settling for the lowest common denominator.”<sup>70</sup> This means there is a risk of accepting an agreement where no one actually benefits. In the long run, taking such an approach may intensify tensions rather than alleviate them. Instead, the SFCG advocates for a higher level of compromise—something “to aspire to and work towards together.” But to arrive at this point, there must first of all be a safe place, common platform, where dialogical interactions are possible and even encouraged.

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## Building tolerance

The WE community stations try to achieve a neutral space by allowing different sides the opportunity to listen and to be listened to. The radio show that helped refugees in The Gambia to communicate with local Casamançais villagers is an example of how the radio can increase the likelihood that misinformation and stereotypes are overturned or at the very least questioned.

This type of program shows how the media can help build up respect and tolerance. But then tolerance should not simply be about acknowledging the presence of an ‘Other,’ because this only entails an acceptance of presence and still leaves barriers between groups. Rather, tolerance should also include notions of acceptance. This allows people the chance to speak about different needs and interests without fear or disapproval, and then hopefully move forward (and upwards) to that aspired for, higher level of compromise.

A final point worth mentioning about the radio network is the importance for programs to address common, everyday issues that are relevant to everyone. Shared topics like health, education and religion increase the chances of finding commonality among diverse groups. By discussing aspects that people have in common, those people are encouraged to focus on the issues themselves instead of highlighting the differences.

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## Usoforal: joining hands for peace

“Usoforal” means “let’s join hands” in Diola. It is an NGO founded in 1999 that supports a more active role for women and youth in the peace-building process. According to Renate Staudenmeyer,<sup>71</sup> a sociologist and pedagogical advisor who works with Usoforal in Casamance, there are three generations of youth who have become accustomed to the conflict. There is a serious risk that a type of conflict fatigue has set in, one where violence and unrest has become commonplace and banal. Staudenmeyer has also witnessed a change in attitude towards women. Traditionally, women have been highly revered and considered sacred among the Casamançais. However, the ongoing conflict has seen an exacerbation of violence against women. This is common during times of war.

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<sup>70</sup> Search for Common Ground (2010): Tips for Transforming Conflict, [www.sfcg.org/resources/resources\\_tips.html](http://www.sfcg.org/resources/resources_tips.html).

<sup>71</sup> Staudenmeyer, Renate (2010): Personal interview. Nov. 2010.

Since 2003, Usoforal has set up local conflict-resolution groups. The peace committees work in fifteen villages, while the mediation clubs works in six schools. All members are trained in intervention and reconciliation through non-violent communication. In the schools specifically, the youth meet once or twice a month. When conflicts or problems emerge between students or even teachers, members of the club intervene to promote a win-win solution. According to Staudenmeyer, Usoforal follows up on the activities with evaluation forms. This type of direct feedback serves to help monitor and evaluate their mediation work.

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## Socio-economic cultural projects

Usoforal also puts a lot of focus on training and empowering women in rural zones. They have developed socio-economic projects that allow them to learn entrepreneurial skills while earning an income. The construction of millet mills and the development of a line of mango-infused vinegar are two examples of cultural projects focused on traditional food preparation. They are also built on local realities. The projects consider what resources are already available and how the women can benefit from these.

In the more artistic cultural domain, Usoforal facilitated an exhibition called “Le Pagne Bandial”. It is a selection of traditional skirts made and worn by women from Bandial, a tiny village in the southwest of Senegal. The intention of this project was to promote a part of their cultural identity, as expressed through clothing. While food and clothes may not fit traditional concepts of art they remain integral parts of one’s culture. They are intrinsic parts of social and cultural heritage.

The two projects are also good examples of how Usoforal adopts an elicitive approach to their peace-building initiatives.<sup>72</sup> The elicitive framework, as laid out by the authors Michael Shank and Lisa Schirch, values the participants as resources not simply as recipients. The women in Casamance become the sources and recipients of knowledge. They work together to teach and learn, thereby sharing leadership. This is a valuable way to build connections for mutual benefit.

By bringing mediation training into the schools and providing financial and cultural incentives to women, Usoforal’s work helps strengthen local capacity and build confidence. Also, by relying on local materials and tapping into pre-existing knowledge and skills, they are helping to lay the ground for sustainable peace-building practices.

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## Encoded messages

There are risks, however, in using artistic products in times of conflict. Shank and Schirch’s report stresses the different impact and effectiveness of using some art forms over others. According to the authors, different mediums use different symbolic references to nonverbally communicate about the real world. Various art forms have various encoded messages. They also have different impacts depending on when and how they are used.

In a culture like Casamance—which is already so varied and intertwined—and in a conflict that has been ongoing for years, the elicitive approach must be attuned to any implicit messages. Usoforal did not exhibit “Le Pagne Bandial” in Casamance, because underlying messages may have been perceived as favouring one group of women over the others. Rather, the exhibition went on display in Canada, Germany and even in Dakar. Perhaps in

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72 Shank, Michael/ Schirch, Lisa (2008): pp. 232.

the future the exhibition, or similar ones, will be ready for public display in Casamance. But this should only happen at the very latter stages of the peace-building process, at a point when they are moving closer to reconciliation and when emotions and underlying tensions are less heightened.

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## Women's dual role

One other final point to make from the experience of the "Le Pagne Bandial" project is the assumption that women always play the role of peace-builders. Certainly in recent decades there has been more attention paid to the role of women as unifiers and peace-builders. The 2002 UNIFEM report<sup>73</sup> argued that involving women in the peace-building process greatly improves the chances that peace agreements can be achieved. Though this is largely true it is not always the case.

As Mary B. Anderson in her "Do no harm strategies" cautions women can be either connectors or deeply committed dividers. There is the possibility that "Le Pagne Bandial" could be perceived as a legitimisation of one group over another. By carrying out a preliminary study to assess the nature and strength of conflict between groups or communities, organisations like Usoforal may decide that a well-intentioned project might actually reinforce pre-existing tensions or feelings of mistrust. This is another crucial reason why a prior needs analysis must be carried out and subsequent monitoring must continue throughout the project's implementation.

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## The Karuna Center for Peace-building

Based in Massachusetts, the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding has worked in over twenty countries during the last sixteen years to help bring peace and resolution to areas of violence and conflict. Two initiatives carried out in Casamance over the last couple of years include a workshop on using role play as a peace-building mechanism and a photography project to engage local students in cultural awareness.

Adin Thayer, an associate with the Karuna Center, went to Casamance in July 2010. She worked with World Education to train 40 Casamançais on how to bring peace to their region. These 21 peace committees, similar to those organised by Usoforal, were made up of a diverse group of actors—from religious leaders and politicians to women, youth and educational advisors. Thayer explains that at the core of her work as a peace-builder she helps people "step back from conflict" so they can "consciously analyse and understand it."<sup>74</sup> She worked with the team to develop effective, culturally based methods to communicate and build understanding.

During their five-day workshop, Thayer helped the groups develop a list of messages they wanted to communicate. These messages included: respect for many different cultures, standing up to actively support marginalised people to find the advantages in differences, and the opportunity to save face when acknowledging any wrong-doing. The men and women then engaged in role-plays and skits. This allowed a high level of interactive participation where their ideas could transform into concrete behaviour. This exercise proved to be an effective way of articulating underlying tensions without the threat of engendering embarrassment

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73 Rehn, Elisabeth/Sirleaf, Ellen Johnson (2002): Women, War, Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-Building (Progress of the World's Women).

74 Thayer, Adin (2010): Personal interview. Nov. 2010.

or hostility. In the end, the groups were able to critically reflect on what each other had enacted. This was a useful way to help create new knowledge and build understanding between the various participants.

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## Cultural contexts and non-verbal communication

In Shank and Schirch's article, they discuss the importance of knowing the cultural context before implementing arts-based strategies.<sup>75</sup> In a high-culture context, like Casamance, communication should be indirect, informal, relational, face-saving and collectivistic. This is in contrast to a low-culture context, which favours direct, formal, rational, explicit and individualistic communication. It is vital that practitioners adopt an approach that is sensitive to the specific cultural context. Otherwise their work may have negative consequences, exacerbating the problem or even offending or embarrassing the people involved.

The role-play technique that Thayer used was a creative approach to address otherwise touchy issues. This type of theatre-based exercise offered the participants the chance to address complex issues in a safe way. In this context, safe means a more comfortable way of projecting a real life feeling, because it is under the guise that it is only an enactment. As such, it cannot be directly attributed to the person performing the role-play, but only raised as a possible perspective or feeling that can exist 'out there'. Individuals assumed specific roles by first imaging how they would feel and then by reaching a point of empathy whereby they could actually display the particular emotions they might feel if they were this person in this particular situation.

Even without words, non-verbal aspects can also be communicated through facial expressions, body posture or eye movement. This type of role-play exercise can be very effective precisely because it relies on the non-verbal capacities to deliver messages. This is what Shank and Schirch explain as symbolic channels.<sup>76</sup> These aspects all "carry important information about emotions, ideas and feelings that words alone cannot." When it works successfully role-play, as an example of a cultural activity, can offer new perspectives and create new frames for interpreting conflict.

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## Capacity Building

During the workshop, Thayer's role was similar to that of a coach. She trained the participants, then stepped aside allowing them the space to make their own realisations and take responsibility for their own problems. This gives the individuals involved a sense of confidence and control, both of which are essential in the peace-building process. It also ensures that the resources being delivered will be transferred in a way that the local peace committee members and journalists can adapt accordingly.

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## The Culture and Peace Photography Project

A second type of cultural project with the Karuna Center in Casamance is "The Culture and Peace Photography Project". It took place between March and May 2008 as a way to "highlight the culture and identity of the region" by encouraging 30 high-school students to use photography as a means of

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75 Shank, Michael/ Schirch, Lisa (2008): pp. 237.

76 Ibid. pp. 235.

expression.<sup>77</sup> They were trained in basic photography by American professors Kerry Coppin and Peter Mark and given six digital cameras to document whatever aspect of their life, cultural community or tradition interested them. Photography was the medium of choice because the professors considered it “a democratic method” and one that “permits each to experience and share a personal sense of his or her own culture.” The end result was an exhibition of 50 photos that ranged from images of home life, family and food preparation to school, landscape and architecture.

This project is based on the precept that peace requires a foundation of mutual respect between the Casamançais and the rest of Senegal. As the project’s blog says, “mutual respect can only be based upon respect for self, which implies recognition of one’s own cultural heritage.”

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## Culture and identity

This idea of respect for self is interesting because one’s ‘self’ is multiple. An individual’s sense of identity is varied and constantly changing. You may at once be a student and sibling, athlete and artist, Diola and Serer, Casamançais and Senegalese. It is important to let students decide what aspects of their own lives they want to document and therefore reflect upon. This type of project allows them, somewhat unconsciously, to think about their identity and what their lives consist of. Even if the students are not fully aware of it, either during or after the project, their lives are documented through multiple facets of one’s self.

Paula Green, the founding director of the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, says that

*successful mediators are able to tap into those identities that are common across the conflict divide and use them as stepping-stones to achieve a common ground.*<sup>78</sup>

This photo project is yet another example of how art can help transform conflict by providing people with various opportunities to establish connections (or common ground) with one another.

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## Concluding remarks

This report has looked at some of the ways cultural projects can help restore peace in Casamance. It has tried to present culture as a concept with a variety of forms and guises. The intent was to explore both the implications of using particular types of culture in peace-building and what factors must be considered in this process.

The WE project shows how radio can play a crucial role in building a platform of communication. This platform targets a wide audience, who might otherwise not be in contact, and includes a diverse array of actors in the production and diffusion process. Radio also allows people to broach issues in their local languages without the potential threats that arise from face-to-face contact. This can make people more at ease and lessen the fear or hostility that may arise when discussing potentially controversial and sensitive topics. One of the aims of this radio network is to engender a ‘productive’ type of dialogue, one that cuts across ethnic, religious and even geographic barriers.

Ultimately, productive dialogical interactions used in conflict resolution and peace-building must achieve a two-fold purpose: facilitate and encourage a plurality of voices that can be heard; and

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77 [http://cultureandpeace.blogspot.com/2008/05/blog-post\\_1353.html](http://cultureandpeace.blogspot.com/2008/05/blog-post_1353.html).

78 Green, Paula. (2007): Intercultural Education for Peacebuilders, pp. 8.



move towards greater levels of compromise that first consider and then accept the different needs and interests of the 'Other' while not sacrificing one's own beliefs and values. This type of transformation is no small task. It takes time, cooperation and willingness, as well as a team of individuals who are highly sensitive to the historical and cultural realities within which they work.

Usoforal's various projects demonstrate why conducting prior needs analysis is essential and using participants as resources is beneficial. To increase the chances that a project will be successful and sustainable, it is vital to implicate the specific actors in ways that build capacity and can be empowering. But before this is done the cultural project must be considered in terms of four key factors. Is the culture high or low context? Does the project rely on local realities (i.e. does it use readily available materials and draw on pre-existing knowledge)? How might it be perceived by opposing groups (i.e. what are the underlying historical, ethnic, linguistic or religious tensions)? And, finally, what encoded, symbolic messages may lie within this medium and its mode of presentation? Once all these aspects are carefully considered, the project becomes engaged in a more elicitive, do-no-harm approach. This helps build up the confidence of its participants and allow them to become active and responsible for their own actions.

Finally, the cultural work of the Karuna Center has shown how creative approaches can help transform perspectives by giving individuals the opportunity to express themselves in safer, less-direct ways. Establishing a neutral space, through role-play and photography, allows participants to look at the perspectives of others—and sometimes even put a mirror up to themselves—in very subtle ways. This is an interesting and potent way to build empathy and understanding, and hopefully open the mind towards a broader view of how other people are affected by the conflict.

To maximise the effectiveness of any one cultural project a clear and focused goal must be defined.<sup>79</sup> This is essential whether it be a radio station or mediation club, clothing exhibition or role-play. What is the ultimate purpose of the project? Then, secondly, this goal must work in accordance with the specific views and cultural knowledge of its participants, not the practitioners (who are often Westerners) parachuting in and out. The chances of a project succeeding greatly increase when the intentions are transparent and the steps taken towards those intentions are carefully matched to the cultural context, including its social, economic and historical realities.

It is also vital for peace-builders working on the ground to adopt an integrative, cooperative approach. This does not only mean including various actors involved in the conflict but also implicating other NGO's and government-based organisations working in the same domain.

Hundreds of people are working for the same ultimate goal in Casamance: to see a final resolution to the conflict and a return to peace, as well as agricultural and social prosperity for local populations. Unfortunately, these hundreds of workers are also not always communicating with each other by sharing their thoughts, ideas and experiences. There must be more transparency between organisations. Practitioners must be held accountable for the work they have done and intend to do. This requires being honest about their real needs and interests and planning how to work together to achieve them. But once again, this is no easy feat.

The question of how cultural projects can be monitored and evaluated remains open to debate. This makes it difficult to collaborate with other organisations and individuals. How can work be shared when there is no tangible proof? Is anecdotal evidence enough? How can practitioners know

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79 Shank, Michael/ Schirch, Lisa (2008): pp. 237.

if their projects are successful, if ‘success’ means a transformation and change in the human element or in the thoughts behaviour and ideas of people?

The strength of culture often lies in its affective capacities and its ability to enable transformation. Culture cannot always be touched, measured or counted. Emotions and opinions are hard to assess. But this does not negate culture’s effectiveness or utility. This report has tried to highlight some valuable lessons that can be learned from these particular case studies. Ideally, we can move towards a better understanding of culture as a positive force that can incite development and promote change in times of crisis.

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## About the author

Amanda Fortier (born in 1978 in Edmonton, Canada) studied film, anthropology and journalism, focussing on war and reporting conflicts. In Dakar, Senegal, she worked for the Canadian NGO Journalists for Human Rights. Fortier teaches English at the British Council in Dakar and co-hosts a professional development radio series for teachers. She reports regularly for Voice of America on cultural and humanitarian issues.

## Zimbabwe

# Arts under pressure

by Chris Kabwato

**The current Zimbabwean crisis can be understood by examining the role and place of the arts. The arts, and in particular music, was critical as a motivating factor in the anti-colonial struggle. Now, it has become even more strident in its opposition to political violence, growing repression and the collapse of the economy. This report examines the work of one musician in particular, Thomas Mapfumo, who has captured the different epochs of the history of the country in his music. The author also suggests how the arts and culture sector in Zimbabwe can be revived.**

The last decade in Zimbabwe has been marked by the contestation for political, economic and cultural ascendancy. President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) has been in power since 1980. In the more-than thirty years of Mugabe's leadership, the country has witnessed mixed fortunes—an expansion of education and health in the period 1980 to 1990, and from 1998 onwards the collapse of the economy and an increasingly repressive state.

Brian Raftopoulos et al. argue in "Becoming Zimbabwe" that the causes and consequences include unsustainable welfarism, an untransformed economy, unbudgeted payment of war veterans, the war adventure in the Congo, the rejection of the draft constitution in 1999, the violent land occupations, the decimation of the judiciary, the birth of the national Constitutional Assembly, the violent elections of 2000, the change in citizenship laws, the hyperinflation and mass migration.

Since 1980 there has been a culture of dissidence in the arts, that is, a culture of defying the state. Yet this was in keeping with the culture of resistance to oppression that artists, especially musicians, had exhibited during the anti-colonial struggles. What is notable in the music of Zimbabwean artists is the journey from anti-colonial

protest, to celebration and euphoria at independence, to disillusionment.

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## The struggle for a different Zimbabwe

An examination of the work of one of Zimbabwe's foremost musicians, Thomas Mapfumo, neatly illustrates the various phases of the role of arts and culture in Zimbabwe's struggles for a truly democratic society. Mapfumo is recognized as the lead exponent of what is termed 'Chimurenga Music'—the music of people's resistance to oppression and injustice.

One can look at four phases in the artistic career of Mapfumo: the early years of American musical influence; the growing consciousness of African identity, the re-discovery of mbira music and the support for the war of liberation; the ecstatic celebration of independence and, the disillusionment with independence and self-exile.

The cultural theorist Homi Bhabha argues that identity is not an issue until it is under threat. Mapfumo's rediscovery of his 'roots' was part of the nationalistic feeling that swept through the younger, more radical generation of the 1960s and 70s as they

reacted to growing repression by the Rhodesian Front-led government. Thousands of young people were crossing the borders of Rhodesia to join the guerilla armies in Mozambique and Zambia. The ‘Smith regime’ was stretched in terms of financial, human and material resources.

Thomas Mapfumo had started his music career doing cover songs of American rhythm and blues, especially of Otis Redding and James Brown. Many of his generation were heavily influenced by the fashion, hairstyle (afro) and the music of rock, soul, jazz and R&B. As the war heated up and the urban centres became sites of struggle, the music changed. It became more local, and at the heart of the music was the “mbira” instrument. The “mbira” is a hand piano that comes in various shapes, sizes and range of notes. It is claimed that the Shona people have played this instrument for centuries. Paul Berliner has done an excellent study of the influence of this instrument in “The Soul of Mbira”.

## Music of resistance

Mapfumo’s genius was to combine the mbira music with electronic instruments and produce a type of music he would call “Chimurenga” (struggle/resistance/war). Maurice Vambe, Alice Kwaramba and Banning Eyre have done separate studies that explore the origins of ‘murenga’ music. They are all agreed that Thomas Mapfumo is the key artist of this genre of music.

In the second phase of his career in the mid-1970s, Mapfumo was unambiguous about his position vis-à-vis the minority regime of Rhodesia. His songs “Hokoyo” (Watch Out), “Chipatapata” (Chaos) and “Kuyaura” (Plea) spoke directly to the condition of the black people — at war, dispossessed, suffering and pleading for respite. The music mirrored the songs that were being composed and sung by

the liberation armies and broadcast from outside the country in the period 1972–1979.

In “Kuyaura”, Mapfumo sings:

*Kuyaura kwevasina musha*

This is the plea of the dispossessed

*Chembere dzemuno dziripi dzatipa makano*

Where are the grandmothers of this place

So they can give us axes

*Kutipa makano tiuraye mhandu*

So we can kill the enemy

I remember hearing this song being played in bars in the late 1970s and for the Africans the message was clear: the enemy (white Rhodesia) needed to be fought and defeated. Mapfumo would later be arrested by the authorities for his political songs.

Mapfumo was not alone in the use of songs to mobilise people against the injustices of the Rhodesian era. Alec J. Pongweni’s “Songs that Won the Liberation War” is an excellent study of the songs that were composed, sung and recorded by the guerrilla armies based in Mozambique and Zambia. The anthology captures the essence of these songs and the variety of themes: solidarity, social justice, spiritual significance of land, labour conditions, and respect for the rights of people.

One song, “Kune Nzira Dzemasoja” (A Soldier’s Code of Conduct—English translation below) ran:

*Kune nzira dzemasoja, dzeku-*

*zvibatanadzo*

*Tererai mitemo yose nenzira*

*dzakanaka*

*Kune nzira dzemasoja,*

*dzekuzvibata nadzo*

*Tererai mitemo yose nenzira*

*dzakanaka.*

*Tisava tinotora zvinhu zvemass  
 yeḁu.  
 Dzoserai zvinhu zvose,  
 zvatorwa kumuvengi.*

*Taurai zvinonzwika kuruzhinji  
 Rwevanhu;  
 Kuti mass inzisisi  
 zvakananga musangano.*

*Bhadharai zvamunotenga  
 Nenzira dzakanaka  
 Nokuti mudzosere zvinhu  
 Zvose  
 Zvamunenge matora  
 Bhadharai zvamunotenga  
 Nezira dzakanaka  
 Nokuti mudzosere zvinhu  
 Zvose  
 Zvamunenge matora.*

(In English)  
 Soldiers have a code of conduct  
 By which they live;  
 Obey rules and regulations.

Soldiers have a code of conduct  
 By which they live;  
 Obey all rules and regulations.

We must not exploit or rob the  
 masses.  
 We must return all contraband to  
 the enemy.

You must communicate your stand  
 clearly to the masses.  
 They must know the party line.

Pay fair prices for everything that  
 you buy  
 Return anything that you have

Confiscated for military reasons

Pay fair prices for everything that  
 You buy  
 Return anything that you have  
 Confiscated for military reasons.

What was clear then was that music played a key role in raising the consciousness of the people. The same music was also used for morale boosting and in the rural parts of Zimbabwe the guerrillas held what was termed ‘pungwes’—all night meetings punctuated with songs, dances and speeches. The purpose of the meetings was clear: the masses or ‘povo’ (people) needed to be educated about the war and their role in it. According to the Mao Tse-Tung dictum the liberation armies followed, the guerrillas were the fish and the people were the water. The fish needed the water.

In the third phase of Mapfumo’s artistic development he celebrated the birth of the new Zimbabwe that came into being on April 18, 1980. His songs then chided those who had been defeated, celebrated the triumph of the guerrillas, the resilience of the people and urged all to work to build a prosperous nation. One song had the following lyrics:

*Baba tafara  
 Oh, Father we are elated*

*Muno muZimbabwe  
 Here is Zimbabwe*

*Hondo yapera  
 The war is over*

*Rakarira jongwe  
 The rooster has crowed*

Another song, “Nyarai”, went:

If you have been defeated  
 Concede

The image of rooster is significant because this was the party symbol of ZANU-PF—the victors of the 1980 election. This was not just an ecstatic Mapfumo. It was also clear which party he supported: Robert Mugabe’s ZANU-PF. For those of us old enough to have experienced the horrors of repression and the war, it is easy to understand the euphoria in Mapfumo’s songs in the early years of Zimbabwe’s independence. An anthology of poetry published in 1981 captured this ecstasy in its title “And Now the Poets Speak.”

But Mapfumo would go even further and urged the whole nation to unite behind Robert Mugabe. One of his major songs was a celebration of the annual ZANU-PF conferences dubbed “The Congress”. Over thirty years the annual congress has become the most significant event in the Zimbabwean political calendar because this is where the party adopts a variety of resolutions relating to the political, economic and social policies of the country. Without fail each congress endorses Mugabe’s continued leadership of the party. Mapfumo composed a song entitled “Congress” with the lines:

*Kana tinerimwe vakomana*  
 If we are united

*Toita mushandira pamwe*  
 We will work together

He then goes on to urge everyone, including the animals of the forest, to come and attend the congress. In recent years some critics have attempted to downplay the meaning of this song and claimed it was satirical. This is rather self-serving. Like most Zimbabweans in the early 1980s, Mapfumo believed in Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF.

But after eight years of independence, Mapfumo’s music entered a third phase. In 1988 a significant event took place: the country was shaken by a newspaper’s corruption investigation into how government ministers were buying scarce new

vehicles from the country’s sole motor vehicle manufacturer and re-selling these at inflated prices to the public. The ministers were being given a special price for these vehicles at a time when ordinary people and companies could not import or source locally new vehicles because of government restrictions. This would be dubbed the “Willowgate Scandal”. It cost several ministers their jobs; one minister committed suicide.

Mapfumo released a song that would become a major hit in Zimbabwe, “Corruption”:

Nothing for nothing  
 Something for something

Chorus: Corruption, corruption  
 In the society

It was clear the singer was becoming disillusioned by the apparent setting aside of the promises of the pre-independence movements. Political office was a now a sure route to enrichment. Mapfumo still thought at this stage that he could appeal to the conscience of the political leaders and the people to do the right thing.

In “Varombo kuVarombo” (The poor to the poor) he laments:

*Varombo kuvarombo*  
 The poor for poor

*Vapfumi kuvapfumi*  
 The rich for the rich

*Ndiwo magariro atisingade*  
 That is not how we should live

This is an artist concerned by the widening social gap between the rich and poor. If the Mapfumo of this phase still believed that one could appeal to the leadership of the country to intervene and ameliorate the social problems of high food prices,

unemployment and corruption, the events of 1999 and beyond would disavow him of that faith.

Ironically, ZANU-PF would declare from the year 2000 that it was entering a phase called the 'Third Chimurenga'. The party was facing electoral defeat at the hands of the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and declared a new phase in its 'struggle', which would be characterised by the violent seizure of farms without compensation, political violence, the closure of newspapers, the assault and arrest of journalists, and a new level of propaganda in the state and party-controlled media.

If ZANU-PF claimed to be leading a 'Chimurenga' (struggle) and Thomas Mapfumo was the music leader of Chimurenga music then there was a clash of understanding of the meaning of Chimurenga. For Mapfumo, it was clear that the political leadership had betrayed the people. His song, "Nhamo Zvakare", is direct in its accusation:

*Baba namai takakunyeperai*  
 Baba namai takakunyeperai

*Zvatakabva kuhondo*  
 When we came from the war

*Tikati rugare rwauya*  
 And proclaimed good living

*Nokuperavo kwehondo*  
 Now that the war is over

*Nhamo yauya vakomana*  
 Poverty has beset us

*Nhamo yauya vasikana*  
 Nhamo yauya iwe

For Mapfumo, Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF were the authors of the political, economic and social problems besetting Zimbabwe. Two violent elections in 2000 and 2002 would convince Mapfumo

that the erstwhile leaders for a new Zimbabwe had betrayed the people. Fearing for his life, Mapfumo went into exile in 2001 to the United States of America. His music has continued with the same strident tone of protest at the injustices in Zimbabwe. The titles of his recent albums are telling: "Rise Up", "Chimurenga Rebel", etc.

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## Persecution of artists

Mapfumo's self-exile can be understood if one analyses the prevailing culture of violence, impunity and disrespect for the rule of law.

In early December 2010, the Zimbabwean music-poet Comrade Fatso (real name Farai Samm Munro) was briefly arrested by the Zimbabwe Republic Police whilst shooting a musical video. This is how Comrade Fatso related the event to me:

*We were shooting two music videos with the award winning director, Magee McIlvaine from US record label Nomadic Wax. The first video we were shooting was 'Korokoza', a politically charged hip hop rock fusion track that attacks the murderous Zimbabwean authorities for their involvement in the plundering of the Chiadzwa diamond fields and reducing Zimbabwe to a nation of 'makorokoza' - hustlers. We had found a train graveyard filled with hollowed out old carriages that were fantastic for the aesthetic of the shoot: urban decay.*

*A few hours into the shoot two cars of National railways security and police men pulled up and demanded us to stop what we were doing. They took down our ID's and car registration plate numbers. I was questioned as the one in charge. We were detained and taken in convoy to the head of NRZ security who said we were trespassing on 'state property' and when asked why they had called the police he said it was a question of 'national security.' We were then told we were to be taken to Central Police station to explain our case. It was now a question of getting clearance or being locked up. We saw the officer in*

*charge and managed to convince him to give us clearance. Then we went straight back to the trains and carried on shooting. Coz they can't stop us!*

*Once again we see the police state that Zimbabwe is. You are not free to film anywhere. The state is always ready to pounce. As an activist you always have to be ready. It's all about guerilla filming!*

In a conversation I had with a coordinator of Artists for Democracy, he pointed out how outdated censorship laws were being used to restrict freedom of expression. For example, a recent film called “Lobola” had been briefly banned because of a kissing scene—“an unAfrican act” the censors reportedly stated. All musicians are supposed to be registered with the National Arts Council and also to pay an annual fee. Controversial artists find themselves routinely excluded from the playlists of the sole broadcaster.

A filmmaker who made the mistake of doing an advertisement for an independent newspaper, has been blacklisted by the national broadcaster. He would have to pay to have any of his films screened on television (a common practice in Africa that defies the logic of the broadcasting business). Commercial advertisements he has done cannot be screened. In the same vein an advertisement for a new independent daily, “NewsDay”, was forbidden by a civil servant in the Ministry of Information for spurious reasons including that the advertisement made certain claims that were misleading, for example, claiming that NewsDay would be “candid”.

Broadcasting Services Act are designed to restrict the fundamental rights of the people. POSA ensures that no Zimbabweans can gather for any purpose without police clearance. In practice this means that civil society and political parties are denied clearance to convene rallies or conduct demonstrations.

Journalists cannot practise without an official licence from the Zimbabwe Media Commission. The media is hampered by archaic laws such as the Criminal Code in which defamation is a criminal offence. This is a country where a simple digital camera is viewed with suspicion and one is likely to be taken in for questioning by intelligence officers. Journalism has been criminalised in Zimbabwe.

Added to the above are the extra-judicial activities of the state where police, the army and the ZANU-PF militia harass ordinary people, journalists and civil society activists. Zimbabwe is one of the remaining few countries in Africa where all broadcasting (television and radio) is controlled by the state via the Ministry of Information. There are no private or community television and radio stations.

In the print media the government controls the main daily and Sunday newspapers. ZANU-PF ensures that the broadcasting and print platforms are used for propaganda purposes. Hate speech is the hallmark of columns by writers like Nathaniel Manheru (a pseudonym used by a high-ranking state official who is also aligned to ZANU-PF).

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## The discourse of power

In the context of a poisoned public sphere, the subversion of public discourse has given birth to polarisation. The rules of rational discourse are that everyone has a right to speak and to be heard. But Zimbabwe is a society that no longer understands the rules in this way. What we have in

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## The poisoned public sphere

The Zimbabwean Public Sphere is severely limited. Laws such as the Public Order and Safety Act (POSA), the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Zimbabwe



place is the discourse of power—the power to rule in the voices of patronage and the power to rule out the voices of anyone with suspect loyalties. In Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, the political parties that took the lead in the liberation from colonial rule have made the assumption that they rule by divine right. It is no wonder that in Zimbabwe one sycophantic Member of Parliament called Robert Mugabe “God’s Second Son”. In South Africa, the firebrand leader of the Youth League of the African National Congress said his party would rule until “Jesus’ Second Coming”.

What has emerged then is a situation where the liberation movements-cum-political parties can lose an election but will refuse to vacate power. ZANU-PF will not give up power because it controls the security apparatus, the civil service and its leaders have vast financial interests. On the other hand the party that offers the most formidable opposition to ZANU-PF, the Movement for Democratic Change, repeatedly wins elections but cannot form a government of their choice. Hence, the compromise of a Government of National Unity.

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## The intellectuals

Zimbabwean intellectuals have also contributed to the current malaise by becoming partisan. From the period of 2000 onwards the intellectuals began to behave like Dr. Faustus in Christopher Marlowe’s play, “The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus”. In Marlowe’s work, Dr. Faustus is the curious character who would like to know all there is to know but he also wants something more: power. To get this he needs to do a deal with Mephistopheles—the devil’s servant. And what will the devil get in return? After some years Mephistopheles would return to get Dr. Faustus’ soul.

But the Zimbabwean thinkers did not start off by signing this kind of bargain. At first they

genuinely imagined the nation. They imagined Africa. They were excited by the possibilities and potential of a newly founded state that had come into being after a bloody struggle.

The 1980s were heady days in Harare. Kenyan intellectuals Shadrack Gutto, Micere Mugo, Kimani Gecau, Tanzanian Issa Shivji and Zimbabweans Ibbo Mandaza, Kempton Makamure, Masipula Sithole, Rudo Gaidzanwa and Jonathan Moyo, amongst others, were stirring the cauldron of the intellectual soup. Our role as university students was to engage with these formidable minds and become inspired. Inspiration translated into street demonstrations against corruption, expressions of solidarity with the workers, celebration and commemoration of the 1987 battle of Cuito Cuanavale (when the Apartheid military juggernaut met its match in Angola), remembrance of Machel, Dambudzo Marechera, Thomas Sankara (former Burkinabe leader assassinated in 1987) etc. Pan Africanism, international solidarity and Marx were the oxygen we breathed.

Around 1984 Kenyan writer and academic, Ngugi wa Thiongo was in Harare and delivered a powerful lecture entitled “Education for National Liberation”.

The irony was that my lecturers used wa Thiongo’s novel “Devil on the Cross” to analyse the emerging Zimbabwe. They spoke in terms of a “comprador bourgeoisie” that had betrayed the people in complicity with international capital. Frantz Fanon, Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin: the works of these radical thinkers were marshalled to assist us in dissecting the contradictions that were beginning to emerge in our society. It seemed our academics had noted how the nation-building project was being used to conveniently mask primitive accumulation and growing repression. The seeds of discord were being sown and the early 1990s would see the growing chasm between artists, intellectuals and the ruling elite.

Fast forward to the year 2000 when our political and economic crisis had begun to manifest itself more visibly. A brains trust was set up to defend the revolution now re-christened the ‘Third Chimurenga’. The shameless opportunism of it was apparent when one analysed where these intellectuals were coming from (including one who had allegedly embezzled funds at an international donor organisation and then fled to the safety of Zimbabwe).

In the book “African Intellectuals: Rethinking Politics, Language, Gender and Development”, Joseph Ki-Zerbo argues that

*African intellectuals must refuse and reject all forms of internal and external subordination, arbitrary limitation and exclusion. They must reject the status quo with its conflict-prone structure: that is, strive for genuine modernity wherein everyone is true to himself or herself and all positive interaction is possible.*

He then suggests the ingredients we need to conceptualise a new nation: “imagination, method, foresight and organisation.” Mkandawire himself advises that intellectuals should

*insist on autonomy and a critical distance from the state, even when the liberation movement’s commitment to democracy is impeccable.*

## Claims and counter claims of symbols

A major cultural war is being fought in Zimbabwe and it involves history, memory and myth. In 1897 a woman called Charwi or Mbuya Nehanda was executed by the new British settler government in land that was to become Zimbabwe nearly a century later. Nehanda had been accused of being one of the principal architects of the Shona people’s uprising against the colonial government. Myth has it that at her death she prophesied that:

„My bones shall rise from the grave and take back the land.” The spirit of Nehanda was invoked in the 1970s as the war of liberation. In 2000 the same Nehanda would be invoked again for supposedly another war.

For ZANU-PF, Mbuya Nehanda represents an uninterrupted history of struggle, and they categorise the Zimbabwean struggles into three phases. The ‘First Chimurenga’ was the anti-colonial struggle led by Ndebele and Shona chiefs and their subjects and this ended in the victory of the British settlers and the conquest of the land that would be re-named Rhodesia. The ‘Second Chimurenga’ was the armed struggle to oust the minority white government of Ian Douglas Smith which began in earnest in 1972 and would end in 1979 with the British-brokered Lancaster Agreement. The ‘Third Chimurenga’ dates from the year 2000 when the repression deepened and the country’s economy collapsed.

Television, radio and the print media have been hijacked by ZANU-PF in an all out cultural war in which other political parties, civil society organisations, artists and intellectuals, and private media are castigated as ‘foreign agents’ paid to effect ‘regime change’.

In a recent book, “Becoming Zimbabwe”, historians have attempted to interrogate nationalistic histories. They warn the reader of the dangers of a history that romanticises the past by attempting to paint a picture of a unified and homogenous people with a rather uninterrupted history. The same book moves from the pre-colonial era to colonialism and the early resistance movements. Again the approach is one of contrasting various arguments such as Julian Cobbing’s disputing of Mbuya Nehanda’s central role in the First Chimurenga Risings (1896-7) and Ranger’s argument of a unified spiritual force in both the Ndebele and Shona risings. By doing this the authors seek to show the difficulties in the historiography of Zimbabwean history.

## Recommendations for supporting artistic freedom in Zimbabwe

Given the political, economic and social turmoil that has marked the past decade in Zimbabwe, it is imperative that support is given to the arts and cultural sector. A Marshall Plan of sorts is called for and it should involve the following elements:

- **Supporting arts networks:** Zimbabwe has a variety of arts associations covering all artistic disciplines, such as the Zimbabwe Union of Musicians, the Zimbabwe Women Writers and Magamba (performance poets). However, there is an apparent need for financial resources to ensure the survival of these associations. Willing and able arts administrators have been groomed in the past five years but there are not many opportunities for these managers. Financial resources coupled with corporate governance training for trustees and directors would greatly assist the arts sector. A dedicated arts space that accommodates these networks and also provides a space for showcasing talent (performances, exhibitions) would be ideal. Such a space would ideally be owned and run by the Zimbabwe Culture Fund, an independent trust set up to develop the sector.
- **Capacity Building:** skills, knowledge (resource centres): Although many training workshops have been run by the British Council, the Culture Fund and other organisations, there is need for a coherent and comprehensive arts and culture training program. Such a program would cover certificate, diploma and degree level courses in arts and culture management, for example, business management, entrepreneurial skills, marketing, heritage management and artist management. To create a sustainability effect these courses could be run in conjunction with

universities and colleges that offer arts courses such as theatre, film, poetry etc.

- **Commercialisation:** creative enterprises, intellectual property rights: One of the challenges of the arts sector in Zimbabwe is that for the past three decades it has largely been donor-supported. There is a need to increasingly support the arts to become self-financing via the commercialisation of those services and products which have commercial appeal. For example, nearly all theatres in Zimbabwe are donor-funded and in many cases are supported on the basis of the relevant message of a given piece. It may be time for theatre producers and directors to take risks and produce plays with their own resources, and to recoup their investments in the same way that musicians organise performances hoping that the public will pay for the experience. The creation of creative enterprises is long overdue in Zimbabwe. Although there will always be art that requires both state and donor support for it to be produced. The one area that needs work is in intellectual property i.e. the securing of rights and the protection of original work.
- **Legislative reform:** As already argued, Zimbabwe is stuck with a constitution that contains laws from colonial times that the state has not been willing to amend because of the purpose they serve in restricting freedom of expression. There is a need to support artists in the call for the repeal of the Entertainment and Censorship Act, the Public Order and Safety Act and the Access to Information and Personal Privacy Act. Furthermore, there is need for the transformation of the media environment, principally, by licensing new private players in television and radio broadcasting and by turning the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation into a truly public

broadcaster that caters for the interests of all Zimbabweans without partiality.

A stand-alone Ministry of Arts and Culture is vital. Since 1980 the arts have been shunted from one ministry to another (sports, education). With each subsequent move draft cultural policies have been developed but never adopted.

- **Digital platforms and security:** With increasing uptake of internet and mobile technologies, the digital platforms offer artists an opportunity to do a number of things: to market, publicise and sell; to circumvent censorship; and to raise funding for projects.

However, for artists to understand these technologies and how to leverage them effectively they have to be empowered through a coherent and sustainable training program.

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## Conclusion

In its 120-year history as a state, Zimbabwe has gone through tumultuous times marked by colonisation, anti-colonial protests and struggles, independence, post-independence contradictions, electoral violence, controversial land re-distribution, economic collapse and increased repression. Artists such as the musician, Thomas Mapfumo, have sought to capture some of the phases of the social history of the country in their music.

What is clear though is that the arts and culture sector in Zimbabwe requires comprehensive assistance. A major intervention is required and this should encompass support for artists' networks, management skills training, commercialisation and digital media skills.

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## Japan

# Cultural initiatives fostering peace

by Akiko Fukushima

**Samuel Huntington's theory on 'the clash of civilisations,' which gained currency after the 9/11 attacks on the United States, holds that should there be a third world war it would be caused by a clash of cultures. So, does culture cause conflict or is it merely one of the issues brought to the fore by conflict? Can culture be used to help ease tension in conflict regions? The following analysis addresses these questions by looking at examples of good practice—mainly involving Japanese peace-builders—in music and sport.**

## Does culture cause conflict?

Here, culture is broadly defined as including elements such as art, drama, dance, films, sport and music, as well as a way of life, values and identity. There is no historical evidence that culture alone causes conflicts. Certainly there have been instances when sport, for example, ignited war, as was the case with a 1969 El Salvador versus Honduras soccer qualifying game for the 1970 World Cup in Mexico. But even then, the sole cause of war was not the dispute over the qualifying match; bilateral territorial and farmers' immigration disputes were largely to blame.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, in the former Yugoslavia, it was not just the ethnic cleansing and the differences in culture, ethnicity and beliefs that sparked the war but, rather, the desire for economic opportunity and political clout.

Religion, mutually unintelligible languages, and historical backgrounds are also often blamed for causing war, but such issues do not cause conflict. Based on the Conflict Information System (CONIS) database developed at Heidelberg University's Institute of Political Science, Professor Aurel

Croissant has observed that cultural conflicts, that is, political conflicts involving cultural issues, have increased since 1945 and most prominently during the post-Cold War period. In fact, between 1986 and 2007 (the year for which the latest data is available), the number of cultural conflicts exceeded that of non-cultural conflicts.<sup>81</sup>

This increase suggests that in order to prevent or resolve conflicts and when reconstructing war-torn societies in the 21st century culture must be taken into account by those wishing to foster peace. Otherwise, even after mediation, resolution and the signing of peace accords, peace cannot be consolidated. While in most recommendations dealing with conflict resolution and peace-building culture has been mentioned as one of the areas to be addressed, there seems to be no clear understanding of just how cultural considerations might be co-opted when building peace. Given the growing percentage of culture-related conflicts and the fact that 44 percent of conflicts recur,<sup>82</sup> one should note that culture is no longer a luxury to be dealt with after economic, security and other considerations have

80 See Tanaka, Takashi (2004): Sakka funso-chubeuchiiki funso no hidane wo nokuso (Soccer war- sources for conflict in Central America), p. 133.

81 Bertelsmann Stiftung (2010): Culture and Conflict in Global Perspective. Gütersloh, pp. 15, 31–41.

82 Collier, Paul/ Hoffer, Anke (2002): Greed and Grievance in Civil War, <http://www.csa.e.ox.ac.uk/workingpapers/pdfs/2002-01text.pdf>.

been attained, nor a component to be brushed aside during conflict resolution. The following sections showcase instances of good practice in which music and sport were used to foster peace.

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## Good practice: classical music

Music has been used both by people in conflict areas and international aid workers. On May 27, 1992, during the Bosnian war, Serbian forces shelled Sarajevo from the hills, reportedly killing 22 people and injuring more than 100 as they waited patiently in a breadline. Vedran Smailovic, chief cellist of the former Sarajevo Opera Company, lived a few hundred metres from the site of the shelling. On the following day, he appeared in the formal evening jacket and white tie he wore when performing in the opera company and played Albinoni's Adagio, which was the saddest music he knew. For 22 days he played there, to honour the memory of the 22 people who had been killed.

The story, carried by CNN and the BBC, caught the attention of the international community. Smailovic's performance neither stopped the shelling nor ended the war, but his story was held up to the world "as a symbol of inspiring courage and nonviolent resistance in the face of horrible violence and human suffering."<sup>83</sup> People in conflict zones have used music mostly to encourage fellow citizens and inform the international community of their predicament.

International artists and aid workers have also used music to foster peace in conflict areas. The UNHCR, for example, has been conducting a campaign since 2007 called Express Yourself and has been selling, through Amazon and iTunes, an album entitled Transitions, produced by three Iraqi refugees. The proceeds go to help Iraqi refugees. A

Japanese NGO, Orchestra without Borders, led by Japanese popular singer Mayo Shono, has donated musical instruments to children in conflict areas and held concerts and workshops. During concerts in Africa and Asia, Shono has invited local children to listen and sing along with professional singers. Children who had been deprived of music as a result of conflict and poverty were delighted at the opportunity to touch musical instruments and happily sang together. Wangari Muta Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner, has praised the activities of the Orchestra without Borders, saying that "uniting people, using the weapon of music to resolve conflict, indeed serves the interests of peace-building."<sup>84</sup>

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## Classical music has no borders

An Israeli conductor based in Germany and a Japanese conductor based in Kosovo have each been running an orchestra project to build trust among people who are either in confrontation or have been in confrontation. Israeli Daniel Barenboim together with the late Edward Wadie Said (1935–2003), a Palestinian-American, founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra in 1999, on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the birth of German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) in the German state of Weimar. Barenboim invited about 70 young musicians from Israel, Palestine and Arab states, including Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Turkey and Iran. Over a period of three weeks, he conducted rehearsals during the day and, with Said, held discussions in the evening. Barenboim explained that an orchestra fights ignorance and that the resulting knowledge will serve as the beginning of peace between Israel and Palestine.

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83 Ledrach, John Pau (2005): *Artistic Response to the Siege of Sarajevo*, p. 302.

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84 Joint Research Institute of Aoyama Gakuin University (2010): *Heiwa notameno bunka initiative no yakuwari-good practices*, pp. 179–183.

Whenever young musicians involved in the orchestra meet for the first time at the annual summer workshop, initially held in Weimar, then in Chicago and then in Seville, Spain, relations are tense. Some, for political reasons, will never have met Israelis, yet have an image of them as killers. However, as Said observed, the musicians have to share music stands when they play in the orchestra, and learn, for example, how to coordinate their finger movements with those of other musicians.

When the musicians initially meet, their identities are those of their respective countries. But over the three-week period of rehearsals and two-month concert tour, they come to identify each other according to their musical role—cellist, violinist or pianist—rather than by nationality. This transformation of identity and perception greatly enhance the orchestra's performance. Moreover, a number of young musicians who lack instruments and even teachers at home, and thus have to endure intensive practice sessions with Barenboim, are invariably thrilled to be trained by the world famous conductor, no matter how hard he drives them.

Said called the orchestra project a bridge to coexistence, spending his time and energy leading evening discussions during the workshops. The orchestra project has continued, despite Said's death from leukaemia, under the leadership of Barenboim and with the support of Said's widow, Miriam Said.

Barenboim admits that the orchestra cannot solve the long conflict between Israel and Palestine but wishes to show young musicians that a military solution is not tenable in the Middle East. In 2005, Barenboim arranged for the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra to give a concert in the Palestinian city of Ramallah. Several musicians from Arab states were afraid, because they had to cross Israeli territory to reach Ramallah, something that is prohibited by some Arab states. Nevertheless, Barenboim

managed to persuade all the orchestra members to take part in the concert, going so far as to arrange Spanish diplomatic passports to ensure the security of some members of the orchestra. He also arranged for some non-Israeli members to fly from the Spanish city of Seville to the Jordanian capital of Amman and then on to Ramallah. Israeli musicians, meanwhile, flew to Tel Aviv and then took diplomatic cars provided by the German, Spanish and French embassies in Israel to Ramallah. The concert was held under tight security but was a success and made a huge impression on both participants and the audience. Barenboim told the audience that, although the orchestra could not bring peace to the Middle East, music could deliver mutual understanding.

Barenboim's dream is to perform in each of the countries from which the orchestra's musicians are drawn.<sup>85</sup> While many members return to the orchestra each year, new ones are also recruited. The orchestra, which has even performed at Carnegie Hall in New York, invariably captivates the audience, but it is not immune to political troubles. In 2006, musicians from Syria and Lebanon could not go to Seville, because of the clashes between Israel and Hezbollah. But despite such challenges Barenboim's orchestra continues.

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## A Balkan music project

Another instance of good practice involves the multi-ethnic Balkan Chamber Orchestra, under the baton of Japanese conductor Toshio Yanagisawa, who founded it in 2007. Yanagisawa is currently the principal conductor of the Kosovo Philharmonic Orchestra, which was set up in 2000 to replace the Pristina Radio Orchestra that had included Serbian, Albanian, Turkish and Bosnian members but

<sup>85</sup> See Smaczny, Paul (2006): Knowledge is the Beginning: The Ramallah Concert—West Eastern Divan Orchestra.

had been dissolved during the Kosovo war. Once conflict had subsided and the Kosovo Philharmonic took to the stage, it initially comprised only Albanian musicians.

From 2004 until 2007, Yanagisawa led the Macedonia Opera Orchestra, made up only of Macedonian musicians. Then, in March 2007, he was invited to conduct the Kosovo Philharmonic's concert marking the golden anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. During a rehearsal, he heard that one of the musicians would take up arms were the Serbs to attack Kosovo to prevent its independence. This he would do to avenge his family, which had been forced to flee to Macedonia by Serbian police during the Kosovo war.

However, after the performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in the concert, the same musician apologised to Yanagisawa, saying he now realised that music knows no borders. It was this event that convinced Yanagisawa to form a multi-ethnic orchestra that would bring Serbian, Macedonian and Albanian musicians together. He first approached Macedonian and Albanian musicians, and that resulted in the 2007 founding of the 15-member Balkan Chamber Orchestra, which was the first post-Kosovo war multi-ethnic orchestra.

Yanagisawa is quick to emphasise that his orchestra is not a tool for reconciliation. He asserts that while many people will refer to inter-ethnic reconciliation casually the term reconciliation does not yet sit well in the region of the former Yugoslavia, although referring to 'common prosperity' for all ethnic groups is readily accepted. Thus, he defines the main goal of the orchestra's activities as helping the ethnicities it represents attain a common prosperity. Since the formation of the Balkan Chamber Orchestra, a concert has been held once or twice a year. In June 2007, it was held in Skopje, Macedonia; in June 2008 in Pristina, Kosovo; in May 2009, in Mitrovica, Kosovo; in November 2009 in Tokyo, Japan; in May 2010 in Sarajevo,

Bosnia and Herzegovina; and in September 2010 in New York.

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## Music as a bridge builder

The concert that was the biggest challenge so far was that held in Mitrovica. The city suffered significant damage during the Kosovo conflict and remains divided. Serbs live on the north bank of the Ibar River which divides the city and Albanians on the south bank. Each district has its own currency, national flag and language. Although a bridge spans the river, people are reluctant to cross it and need a pass to do so. The bridge is guarded at all times by military forces.

Yanagisawa wanted to hold concerts on both sides of the river but, by that time, the Republic of Kosovo had become independent and the plan to hold concerts on both sides of the river in Mitrovica was criticised as being divisive. Complaints were lodged with the cultural minister and some asserted that plans for concerts by a multi-ethnic orchestra were premature, even though it was already more than ten years since the war there had ended.

At first, Yanagisawa had difficulty locating Serbian musicians but, finally, he invited some from Belgrade to whom he had been introduced by a teacher at the music school on the city's north side. When members first met for a rehearsal the tension was such that some of the musicians, particularly the Serbs, did not greet the Albanians and vice versa. But as they continued to rehearse, the musicians came to recognise that they shared a common interest in playing the music better and together as professionals.

One week before the performance on the north side, a bomb exploded and there was shooting, exacerbating the general concern. It was thus decided not to publicise the names of the musicians



so as not to reveal their ethnicity, nor to have an intermission during the 50-minute performance, and to hold both the rehearsals and performance in Macedonia under guard. On the day of the concert the musicians travelled by UN bus from Macedonia to the Mitrovica concert hall and were asked not to leave the premises until they all left together at the end of the concert.

Finally, in May 2009, a concert was held in both north and south Mitrovica. The first performance was in the south followed by one in the north. The audience at the first concert was clearly moved, even though many knew that there were Serbs among the musicians. After the concert in the north, the musicians returned to the south for a closing reception. The concert marked the first cultural exchange of its kind in roughly 20 years for those on both sides of the river. No one had expected people from different ethnicities to sit side by side on the stage. Musicians even exchanged e-mail addresses so that they could stay in touch.

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## Facing memories of conflict

The orchestra performed in Sarajevo in May 2010 and included Bosnian musicians. Yanagisawa explains that he gave a concert in Sarajevo because he wanted to show Albanians and Serbians that the three groups live together in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while they live separately in Kosovo. For this concert Yanagisawa chose chamber orchestra music by Shostakovich. An Albanian violinist said she found it difficult to play, because the sound reminded her of the time, during the Kosovo war, when Serbian police had knocked on the door and forced her and her family to flee the Kosovo city of Pristina for Macedonia. But Yanagisawa was adamant; he wanted members of the orchestra to face their conflict-related memories squarely, in the belief that this was essential if there was to be harmony

and mutual trust in the orchestra. The audience in Sarajevo found the performance very moving.

In September 2010, Yanagisawa was invited by the Federation of Balkan Americans (FEBA) to give concerts in New York on the occasion of the Millennium Development Goals Summit at the UN General Assembly. The orchestra performed for heads of Balkan states at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.<sup>86</sup>

Yet another example of the efforts of a Japanese conductor come from Southeast Asia, although in this case the goal is not conflict resolution but, rather, achieving regional stability and solidarity. Yoshikazu Fukumura, conductor and director of the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Vietnam, attached to the Ho Chi Min Music School, has spent more than 20 years promoting classical music in Vietnam. He conducted the ASEAN Philharmonic Orchestra in October 2010 at the concert hall of the National Academy of Music, the Hanoi Opera House and again at the International Convention Centre where the ASEAN Summit meeting was held. Among the members of ASEAN, there are countries that do not have an orchestra or, if they do, the musicians are often foreigners. Thus, Fukumura made it a point to have only local musicians in the ASEAN philharmonic. When Dvorak's Symphony Number 9 "From the New World" was played at the concert, the audience was moved, having taken the piece to signify the launch of the ASEAN community.<sup>87</sup>

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86 The description of the activities of Toshio Yanagisawa and the Balkan Chamber Orchestra is based on the author's interviews with the conductor on 26 December, 2008 and 21 July, 2009, as well as two TV programs: "Senjo ni ongaku no kakehashi wo—shikisha Yanagisawa Toshio Kosovo no Chosen" (Building a bridge of music across a battlefield: conductor Toshio Yanagisawa faces a challenge in Kosovo), shown on BS Japan, 20 June, 2009; and "NHK BS tokushuu: hibike naisen no kioku wo koete—kyuu yugo minzoku wakai no gakudan" (Music transcends memories of civil war: an orchestra for reconciliation in the former Yugoslavia), shown on NHK on 3 July, 2010.

87 <http://blog.canpan.info/koho/archive/1254>. (only in Japanese).

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## Overcoming barriers and borders

All four of the above-mentioned orchestras have had to accommodate regional political situations. Yanagisawa faced the challenges of ensuring safety, which could not be guaranteed in the divided city of Mitrovica, and of obtaining visas for the Kosovo Albanian musicians to enter Bosnia for the Sarajevo concert, even though Bosnia and Herzegovina did not recognise Kosovo's independence. Barenboim, meanwhile, has faced similar difficulties, with orchestra members sometimes not able to take part in performances due to political hostilities.

In addition, the conductors had to work with the mediocre skills of the musicians who, although talented, lacked access to musical instruments and music teachers at home. Yet despite these handicaps, musicians and conductors alike continue to strive to attain peace and stability through music, which knows no borders. This they are able to do since they recognise that in an orchestra, which is a microcosm of a community, unless each member fulfils their given role, music cannot be performed. In other words, the orchestra forces participants to collaborate in the interests of presenting music of the highest quality possible to an audience, even should this require that the musicians surmount the traumas of their past, particularly memories of conflict.

Performances given in conflict areas provide musicians with opportunities to develop skills, perform in public and visualise a future as a musician. The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra has shown this to be true, since some of its musicians have become active international musicians. Moreover, the audience, momentarily casting aside hatred and despair, may find solace in concerts, experiencing the joy of hearing live music.<sup>88</sup>

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88 Based on the author's conversations with individuals attending the reception following the Balkan Chamber Orchestra concert in Sarajevo.

During and soon after a conflict people find it difficult, if not impossible, to work together on anything of a political nature. It is precisely at this point in time that music can help bridge the gap between people, helping them to get to know each other and work together.

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## Good practice: sport

As mentioned above, soccer has been linked to conflict. Certainly, the game can raise national sentiment among team supporters and so, when agitators with a political agenda get to work stirring up feelings of nationalism and patriotism, confrontation can easily result. Japanese soccer teams, for example, have been booed by Chinese spectators, an experience shared even by Japan's national team when it played in the Asian Games in 2010.

However, of all sports, soccer is most often used by peace-builders as a vehicle for communication and trust-building in conflict zones. The United Nations, recognising the positive role of sport in winning the hearts and minds of local populations, declared at its General Assembly in 2003,<sup>89</sup> that sport can promote education, health, national development and peace. It designated 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, the Toronto-based Canadian NGO, Right to Play, asserts in a report that sport can offer a platform for communication and dialogue.<sup>91</sup>

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89 United Nations General Assembly (2003): *Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace*, UN Doc, A/RES/58/5, 17 November 2003.

90 United Nations Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace (2005): *United Nations, International Year of Sport and Physical Education. Office for the International Year of Sport and Physical Education*: Geneva, p. 5–8.

91 See *Right to Play*: [http://www.righttoplay.com/International/our-impact/Documents/Final\\_Report\\_Chapter\\_6.pdf](http://www.righttoplay.com/International/our-impact/Documents/Final_Report_Chapter_6.pdf), pp. 207–208.

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA) in Sweden also observes that sport allows participants to develop trust and nurture confidence which, in turn, allows them to recognise the identities of others. This process allows people in divided societies to surmount divisions.<sup>92</sup>

In the men's doubles of the U.S. Open Tennis Tournament played in September 2010, the Pakistani Aisam-ul Haq Qureshi and Indian Rohan Bopanna played as a pair in an appeal for peace. India and Pakistan have been fighting a territorial dispute over Kashmir since their partition and independence in 1947. In November 2008, multiple sites in the Indian city of Mumbai were attacked over a period of three days, revealing the ongoing tension between the two countries.

Qureshi and Bopanna, convinced that sport transcends differences in political and religious beliefs, have played as a doubles pair since 2002, calling themselves the 'Indo-Pak Express'.<sup>93</sup> They wear a windcheater emblazoned with the words, 'Stop War Start Tennis' to convey their message. At the semi-final of the U.S. Open Tennis Championships, the Indian and Pakistani ambassadors to the UN mission sat together to watch the game.<sup>94</sup>

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## Football for Peace

In Israel, David Colin Bedford, former world record holder for the men's 10,000 metres and London Marathon director, started a soccer project that was further developed by the British Council and

Brighton University in the UK. In September 2003, the project Football for Peace (F4P) was set up to promote mutual understanding and build trust among Israeli Jews and Palestinians in the Galilee region of northern Israel. Here, soccer is being used to give Israeli Jews and Palestinians a chance to meet and interact. Since Palestinians and Jews, who live in separate towns and villages in Galilee, generally have no chance to run into each other, F4P provides opportunities for children to meet and interact through soccer. The project, enabling children in the area not only to develop their soccer skills, but also to learn about and understand people with whom they do not usually come into contact, is designed to enable Palestinians and Jews to coexist peacefully in Galilee.

The project brings 100 local children, between 10 and 14 years of age, to a dormitory where they stay and practice soccer for one week. John Sugden of Brighton University involves British, local Palestinian and Israeli coaches and community leaders in the project, while the British Council in Israel serves as an impartial project coordinator. When these children play soccer together in teams, membership of which is based on age not ethnicity, they gradually become less frightened of their partner ethnic group and more trusting. Then, on returning to their families, the children share their positive experiences with their communities and at school.<sup>95</sup>

According to Sugden, when the children first participate in a game there may be divisions in teams but once play starts the children focus on the game and the identity of their teammates no longer matters. Over the week, the children enjoy chatting and playing together.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, parents participate in the project to lend support, their

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92 See International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA) (2003): *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict: A Handbook*, pp. 19–21.

93 See Sahota Interpret (2010): *Indi-Pakistan Tennis Stars Transcend National Distrust*. BBC, 25 June 2010.

94 See Sheringham, Sam (2010): *Can Tennis Pair Pave Way to India-Pakistan Harmony?* CNN, 10 September 2010.

95 Whitfield, Geoffrey (2007): *The Down to Earth Miracle 2000-2003*, p. viii.

96 Sugden, John (2005): *Sport and Community Relations in Northern Ireland and Israel*, pp. 249–250.

feelings of ownership and partnership ensuring the sustainability of the project.

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## Trust in soccer

Japanese actors have also employed soccer to build tolerance and trust. Taro Morita initiated a project in Bosnia and Herzegovina to promote communication among the three ethnic and religious groups that were divided during the 1992 conflict. Then, in February 1999, he had a chance to work as a volunteer in Sarajevo. Finding that the children there were most enthusiastic and happy when playing soccer, he wondered whether soccer might bridge the divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>97</sup> Soccer had been very popular in the former Yugoslavia. Internationally famous players came from the region and a national team had contested well in world tournaments.

Morita's idea to promote trust among three groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina through soccer won him the first Yutaka Akino Award, which allowed him to start the Sarajevo Football Project in Spring 2000. He was also helped by local NGOs, such as Danas za Molje Sutra DBS (For a Better Future), and set up Fudbalski Klub Krilo (Football Club Krilo). Kurilo means wing, and signifies the wings of hope that can transcend the walls of ethnicity, a soccer team comprising boys of different ethnic backgrounds.

Morita's team is made up of Bosnian and Serb children under the age of 15. His goal was to promote communication and exchanges among different ethnic groups, as well as to heal the trauma of children who had experienced war. He first invited children from both ethnic groups to practice separately and only later had them practice together,

involving adults as coaches and managers, and the children's parents.

Initially, Serbs came to practice on the Bosnian side, with only one child practicing on the Serb side. Bosnian children avoided joining the Serb side, fearing they might be killed by the Serbs, as had happened during the war. However, when one Bosnian boy found the courage to practice with the Serbs, and then spoke of the fun that practice had been, other children also joined the Serbs.<sup>98</sup> The project organises a goodwill match once a month, giving the children another chance to chat on the bus to the game as they gradually develop friendships. Little by little, Morita passed the baton to local people who are continuing the project, which he continues to finance.

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## Goodwill football

While the soccer projects cited above are conducted in conflict areas, another Japanese project has invited Israeli and Palestinian youths to Japan to play soccer in ethnically mixed teams. In 2003, children were invited to come from Israel and Palestine for two weeks to play a goodwill soccer game in Japan with Japanese children. With world peace the ultimate goal, it was hoped that this project would promote goodwill and friendship among Israeli, Palestinian and Japanese children, as well as encourage dialogue, collaboration and education. Soccer accounted for the bulk of the children's activities and was used as a common language for the children.<sup>99</sup>

The event was so successful that the organisation Peace Kids Soccer (PKS) was established in 2004 so that the event could continue. Each year,

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97 See Foreign Press Center Japan (2002): People in the News: Sarajevo Football Project Taro Morita, [http://fpcj.jp/old/j/mrs/peopleinthenewas/pin\\_28.html](http://fpcj.jp/old/j/mrs/peopleinthenewas/pin_28.html).

98 Morita, Taro (2002): Soccer ga koeta minzoku no kabe (Soccer transcends inter-ethnic wall). Tokyo, pp. 94–95.

99 See Shuishi, Daiikai: Israel-Palestina Japan Goodwill Soccer Game 2003. Tokyo.

youth from Israel and Palestine are invited to Japan. Over the years, particularly since 2007, the project's emphasis has shifted away from playing soccer to learning about the Japanese way of life.

The change came about when the Palestinian authority informed the PKS's local partner that they could no longer permit their children to go overseas and play soccer with enemy children, pointing out that in the continuing conflict Israelis were attacking their homes and killing many Palestinians. As a result, the PKS changed their activities and name. It is now Peace Fields Japan that continues the project, inviting Israeli and Palestinian teenage girls to spend about ten days in Japan, mostly in rural areas, where they discuss and experience Japanese rural life. They still use sport, such as aerobics, mountain climbing and yoga as icebreakers.

But as a lingua franca, soccer has helped many a hostile group communicate by bridging the gaps in divided societies. Moreover, as we have seen with the four orchestras mentioned above—the Orchestra without Borders, West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, Balkan Chamber Orchestra and ASEAN Philharmonic Orchestra—team sport, particularly soccer, compels participants to communicate, get to know and understand each other, and develop friendships despite differences in background. This is a first step towards tolerance and trust-building.

## Role of culture: potential and limitations

As is clear from the cases cited here and those collected by the Joint Research Institute for Peace and Culture (JRIPEC) in its research on conflict and culture,<sup>100</sup> cultural activities can effectively contribute to conflict resolution at versatile phases

of the conflict cycle. Cultural activities can be a potent ingredient in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building. Culture can help effect communication among people in mutually hostile groups, and transform identities that have been deformed and damaged by conflict. Without communication and intact identities, there cannot be sustained peace.

Cultural initiatives can help facilitate peace because they can provide the following five benefits:

- Cultural initiatives can offer common time and space, that is, a platform upon which people in hostile groups can converse, interact and collaborate. Most often in conflicts it is difficult if not impossible for people in different groups to communicate because of the political setting. A cultural setting, however, enables people to take part in a common activity, be it music or soccer, which allows them to ignore their political and ethnic differences. Moreover, the participants are compelled to collaborate and to do so they must talk to each other.
- Cultural activities can place conflicts in perspective for those living in conflict areas. People are able to keep up those cultural activities of theirs that bring them pleasure and joy, as well as further develop cultural skills so that they can inform people outside the area of their suffering. An individual with the potential to become a world-class musician or soccer player, for example, can certainly give hope to children whose lives are beset by conflict. In addition, when cultural activities are covered by the international press, international society will have its attention focused on events and atrocities that may otherwise simply be ignored.

<sup>100</sup> Available at <http://www.jripec-aoyama.jp/english/publication/>.

- Culture can give people in conflict areas the chance to heal their wartime traumas, transform themselves and develop new identities, leaving behind the conflict-damaged identities that nurse a simmering hatred of those against whom they have fought. The four orchestras mentioned above have succeeded in transforming the identities of their members. At rehearsals and in concerts it was no longer the ethnicity of the musician that mattered but the individual's musical role. And we have seen in examples of other good practice how drama workshops, for example, help people heal their conflict-related trauma by being able to express their pain and overcome wartime memories.
- Cultural initiatives can allow people to build tolerance, trust and confidence, and ultimately to reconcile. Cultural activities such as music and sport encourage hostile people to get to know their opposite number, communicate with them, and develop different perspectives by engaging in cultural activities in which they have a shared interest. At the very least, cultural initiatives enable people to develop tolerance towards their former enemies.
- Cultural initiatives can empower people in conflict areas by restoring their cultural heritage and promoting their traditional crafts and industries, such as fabric weaving and pottery. JRIPEC research on good practice shows how promotion of Tais fabric production in Timor-Leste and the revival of pottery-making in Istalif, Afghanistan, have assisted local people to regain pride in their culture, restart traditional industries that had been destroyed by war, and generate an income. Further, restoration of such cultural heritage sites as Angkor Wat has led to increased international tourism, which contributes to the local economy.

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## New-style peace-making

I have dared to call the above cases cultural initiatives rather than cultural activities because international peace-builders remain in place only for a short time and must find ways of transferring projects to local people. The inter-state conflicts of the twentieth century were followed by peace accords that allowed people to live peacefully and safely within national borders. Today, however, with ever more numerous civil wars and intra-state conflicts, peoples find that once peace accords are signed they must live together again in the same or an adjacent community with former enemies. This calls for communication among hostile peoples, and that can be more effectively facilitated by cultural initiatives, which often tap into the common interests of hostile groups. This has become an essential part of peace-building in the twenty-first century.

That said, culture does have its limitations, as one can see from the cases of good practice cited. Music and sport, although at a far remove from politics, are nevertheless not immune to political fallout. Nevertheless, culture is essential for the consolidation of peace and conflict resolution, otherwise conflicts will continue to occur and reoccur.

Both Germany and Japan have a difficult historical past. But while events in World War II have imposed a degree of restraint on their respective contributions to international peace and security, they can both make an ample contribution to peace-building by launching cultural initiatives that, inevitably, will lead to new foreign policy horizons. Beyond public diplomacy, both countries can tap soft power options for conflict resolution, and employ cultural initiatives, which are likely to become increasingly important elements in peace-building this century.

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## About the author

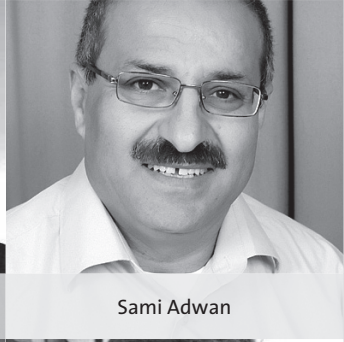
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# Agents of Change



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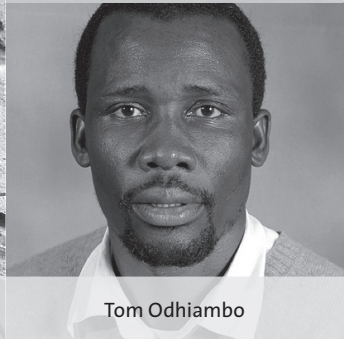
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