

IMAGINED LOCALITIES

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE REVISITED: THE CASE OF OBERAMMERGAU

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Facing the emergence of a global media space – the world-wide cross linking and penetration of the media channels – Marshall McLuhan spoke already in the 1960s of a »global village« that the world had become (see *Understanding Media*). Since then, the (primarily economy-driven) international linking-up, the transcendence of cultural and political borders, even increased, but it takes »different« forms: the fluidity of capital blazes its trail yet to »remote« regions – and adjusts its concrete appearance to the local conditions wherever it seems appropriate for the sake of profit. And, by the advent of interactive media like the Internet, a more direct, reciprocal communication and individualised ways of media access became possible. At the same time, however, the synchronicity and conformity of information, which characterised the age of television, is destroyed (see Clarke: *How the World Was One* as well as in an overview Jain: »Mediated« *Transformations of the Public Sphere*). What is more, we must not forget that – as an integral, functional element – there still exist blank spaces in the global network: places that are excluded, that cannot get access to the »liquidised« space of globalisation of the Internet-age (see also Bauman: *Liquid Modernity* in combination with Rifkin: *The Age of Access*).

Referring to Saskia Sassen one could thus claim: there are »Global Cities« (1991) – centres, nodes of the global network, in which the »flows« (of information, goods and services) take form and from where they set off to infiltrate global space.¹ And there are, on the »other side«, peripheral spaces, which (possibly) are not even of interest as a(n export) market. These peripheral regions, the dumps and forgotten holes of globalisation, which, being fixed to their concrete place, stay excluded from the world-wide networks, are only marginally considered here, but not because they are not important. Forasmuch as these exclusions are so central, the focus will be on a truly *global* village, the German village Oberammergau – in order to find out which excluding (and embracing) effects the dialectic of globalisation shows even on those places which are at its core. So what does this dialectic exactly mean?

1. THE DIALECTIC OF GLOBALISATION AND ITS ROOTS IN THE (ECONOMIC) DYNAMICS OF MODERNITY

Although certain aspects of globalisation, like intercontinental trade, did already exist in antiquity and in the middle ages (see also Wallerstein: *The Modern World-System*; pp. 15ff. and ch. 2),² it is, in its essence, a phenomenon of modernity. And, reciprocally, it is true: »Modernity is inherently globalising.« (Giddens: *The Consequences of Modernity*; p. 63) Following Marx and

Engels, the driving force which keeps globalisation »in motion« and makes it tear down all borders and exceed all limits can be seen in the dynamics of (modern) capitalism:

»The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country [...] In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations [...]« (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*; Section I)

In accordance to this (farsighted) understanding of modern capitalism, globalisation means, in its quintessence, a (spatial) extension, and one can classify its economy-driven movement either as a process of (progressive, civilising) development, as (neo-)imperialism or simply as being neutral.³ Only one thing seems to be clear: globalisation is »the world-wide spread of previously locally bound economic, political and cultural patterns and the consequent construction of a global network« (Jain: *Politik in der (Post-)Moderne*; p. 73 [own translation]).

Along with the global cross linking, a reflexive interdependence between global and local space evolves. This »reciprocity« is a crucial point in Giddens' concept of globalisation, as he asserts: »Globalisation can [...] be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa.« (*The Consequences of Modernity*; p. 64) Accordingly, in current concepts globalisation is mostly conceptualised dialectically, i.e. globalisation is complemented with processes of (re-)localisation: the extension of a local consciousness and the modulation of the global flows according to the specific local conditions. This is why Roland Robertson prefers the (economy-biased) hybrid term »glocalization« (see *Glocalization*).

2. THE BASIC CONTRADICTION OF GLOBALISATION AND ITS »CREATIVE« SOLUTION

The dialectic of globalisation thus reflects the dialectic of modernity (of universalisation and fragmentation, of integration and differentiation) on the spatial level. And it implies corresponding contradictions, since – confronted with reality – exactly the forward-driven, generalising, universalising tendency of the order of modernity sets a force to differentiation(s). The general creates – by its disaccords – the specific. With the contradictions of globalisation it is a similar case. On the one side, certain tendencies can be traced that the global flows (of people, symbols, technologies, money and ideas etc.) are increasingly disconnected; we face the emergence

of the separated spheres of »ethnoscapes«, »mediascapes«, »technoscapes«, »financescapes« und »ideoscapes«, as Appadurai seeks to prove (see *Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy*).⁴ However, the primary and conjunctive motor of globalisation is still the expansionist dynamics of capitalism. Realizing how the capitalist economy works, one is thus drawn to a basic contradiction of globalisation:

Capitalism relies, to put it rather simple, on the *exploitation of difference*. It can be, for example, a power imbalance (between capital and labour, between the »First« and the »Third World«), a (technological) competitive edge or a cultural difference (conveying ideas for new product lines or just creating export possibilities). The possible surplus, which is implied in such differences, is mainly realised through spatial progression, since only expansion allows the achievement of »critical mass« in production and the opening up of new, unsaturated markets. Accordingly, spatial differences become central, especially in advanced capitalism. »Without local differences globalisation could not stake place.« (Jain: *The »Global Class«*; p. 8) It would (at least economically) be »pointless«. This factor can explain a big part of the recent interest for the local and its particularities.

But globalisation, as an expansive process, causes – however (superficially) locally adjusted – a homogenisation, a (sometimes rather forceful) equalisation of global spaces. (Advanced) capitalism, which is no more caught in the borders of the state, thus undermines the base of its economy, for in its globalising dynamics it eliminates the (spatial) differences which constitute the »ground« for its (necessary) economic growth. How can this dilemma, this contradiction be resolved? There is only one way out: differences have to be (»virtually«) created, »different spaces«, which satisfy the economic needs for (»useful«, exploitable) difference, have to be imagined and produced. So, the expansionist movement of globalisation eliminates difference – by its mere dynamics, but also everywhere where difference takes the form of deviance and unfolds resistance. However, difference stays the fuel and base of (economic) globalisation. Therefore, certain »valuable« forms of difference (like poverty or a harmless, but appealing cultural »flavour«) are artificially and violently sustained or creatively generated wherever they seem to evaporate (see also Jain: *Differences in Difference*).

3. IMAGINED LOCALITIES: THE QUESTION OF SPACE AND PLACE IN THE DIALECTIC OF GLOBALISATION

Hence, through globalisation the category of space (and its differences) becomes central. This does not only affect the economic sphere, but the whole society and culture. We face a collapse

of temporality, as Fredric Jameson asserts in regard of the dominance of the spatial logic. That leads, being an effect of the lack of historical consciousness, to the phenomenons of cultural »pastiche« and »flatness«, and »[...] a model of political culture appropriate to our own situation will necessarily have to raise spatial issues as its fundamental organising concern.« (*Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*; p. 51).⁵

This (real) importance of space (and its gradients), which has to be conceptionally reflected, does, however, not mean that the concrete places actually gained relevance. In the »space of flows« of the network society, place loses its specifics and importance (see also Castells: *The Rise of the Network Society*). A distinct place, that kept an independent characteristic, can possibly not be integrated seamlessly into the global network – as it would maybe develop a tenacious willfulness (as its »sense of place«). Indeterminate, freely re-shapeable places are demanded. In order to integrate them into the global network, the »resistance« of the concrete places, which results from the anchorage in history and culture and the linkage to the »lifeworld« of their inhabitants, must be dissolved by the absorbing and – at the same time – disembedding power of globalisation. (Hyper)real non-places do come into being.

Following Michel de Certeau, who created this term, non-places are (symbolic) places that can be named, but do not bear the character of a (structured) space of action: they are (urban) transient places, places of restless drift, of an endless search, of absence (see *The Practice of Everyday Life*). They are – as Marc Augé additionally and clarifyingly pointed out – places without identity and history that do not possess real relations to other places; they are merely functional places of passage, like waiting lounges or highways, to which their »users« cannot build a real relationship (see *Non-Places*).

However, it is not so much the functional places of passage that I will refer to here. Instead, I will understand by a non-place a »hyperreal« place that was disembedded from its (lifeworldly) context in order to freely re-form its shape just to expose and stage its difference in contrast and in competition to other places. The equalising dynamics of globalisation leads to this kind of paradox production if a place wants to keep or improve its position in the global network. Thus, the non-places of globalisation are *imagined localities*. They were created or re-shaped according to certain images. They are at the same time real and unreal. Similar to the final ossification of the imagined communities of the nation in the process history (see Anderson: *Imagined Communities*) the imagined localities represent a spatial reality that gains momentum with the staging of their fictional characteristic. After a certain time, these non-places are not just a mirror of the images that shaped them, but they reach in fact an »unimaginable« amount of reality.

They ought to bear this exaggerated form of »reality« to credibly expose their particularity, to attract and bind capital, investments and visitors etc. Mostly, they hide their artificial character by a fiction of authenticity, since otherwise the »miracle of difference« would not work.⁶ Their imagined authenticity has to be completed, they are flat and polished spaces, without fractions, without friction, without starting points for practices of resistance. They duplicate in an accomplished manner their imagined reality, they are *more real than the real*, they are hyperreal simulacra of places (see also Baudrillard: *Simulacra and Simulation*).⁷

As hyperreal non-places they are radically opposed to the non-place of U-topia. They eliminate all alternative visions by their evenness, their frictionless factuality. The imagination of Utopia is frozen to reality in the imagined locality (and thus abandoned as a horizon), or as Baudrillard remarked on the »postmodern condition« in general: »Everything is here, heaven has come down the earth, the heaven of utopia [...]« (*Fatal Strategies*; p. 71).

The imagined localities expose their particularity, but they are no heterotopias.⁸ They are neither »other places« in the sense of an embracement and enclosure of the other and the deviant, like »mental homes« or prisons, nor are they places that give »real space« to practices of resistance, since anything that is in contrast to the »dream« that they stage in order to position themselves in the global space of difference has to be excluded. Their difference dissolves in identity as it is an exposure of an extraordinary character that is, however, in accordance to the common: the factual rules. They are places of a paradox »compulsion of identity« (Adorno) which consists of the pressure of a performance of difference created by the economy-driven dynamics of globalisation.⁹

As non-places, the imagined localities share the character of being places of exclusion with the peripheral spaces, but the voidness and difference of the latter is of a different kind: the marginal regions of global space are »different« because, for them, different rules and standards are valid, since, for example, sites of cost efficient production are needed. This form of difference is violently established and sustained (be it through neo-colonial practices or by tariff walls etc.). Anyhow, the peripheral regions (independent from their actual geographic position) are only partially integrated into the global network – wherever they serve as a production site or as a market. Otherwise, they are shut out, and this exclusion works also symbolically, i.e. they are not represented in the global consciousness, they are inexistent.

The imagined localities are, to the contrary, (omni)present in the global space and consciousness. They are privileged spaces, but in order to enjoy their privilege they ought to pay the cost of adjustment. They must continuously create and stage their singularity and always have to

care that it does not take the form of deviance. The permanent pressure of a hyperreal production and simulation of difference inhibits them from becoming real places: places of being, places of community, places of being different.

4. THE »GLOBAL VILLAGE« OBERAMMERGAU AS A REAL IMAGINED LOCALITY

But how can an imagined locality be actually imagined? This is only possible by drawing on an example, and so, as a »real« case, I will focus on the Bavarian village Oberammergau. Oberammergau is a truly »global village« that is well placed in the charts of German tourism. Its fame as a beautiful mountain site and especially as the locale for a passion play has spread to the whole world.

But why did I chose exactly this example? I have a very personal relationship with Oberammergau, and in my memory it is present as a highly artificial place. It is the place where my mother was brought up, a place that I remember through her stories and where my grand aunt still lives. It is a place that demonstrated the absurdity of family rituals to me and that made me feel how to be »another«. And it is a place that I explored in hours of boredom and that, already as a child, appeared to me like a theatre scene. Today I know why I got this impression: Oberammergau is one of those non-places, it is a real imagined locality.

A) (HI)STORIES, FACTS AND FICTIONS: THE INVENTION OF OBERAMMERGAU

Oberammergau, which likes to label itself as »the most famous village of the world«, was first mentioned in official documents in the year 910. At that time it was, however, a rather minor spot in the Bavarian Alps. It is situated about 90 km southwest from Munich: at 11°36' eastern longitude and 47°36' northern latitude. The commune covers a total space of 3005 ha, and it is populated by approximately 5000 inhabitants.

How perceives and especially how does this place – that, at a first glance, does not seem to be something very special – present itself? Which »creative« imagination is at its base? In this respect, some formulations in a current advertisement leaflet are very instructive:

»There is more beauty than the can behold. Take a look. Discover houses that tell stories and fairy-tale castles. The mountains that ring the country-side. This is your holiday in Oberammergau.«

And further on it says:

»What better place to meet than a place that is used to having the world as its guest? Once every ten years, the Passion Plays attract visitors to Oberammergau. In between its [!] the unique melding of nature and culture, woodcarving and handicrafts that is more than reason enough to meet here.«

As it seems, Oberammergau wants to seduce its visitors with its sensually perceivable history. Nature and culture melt into a hybrid tourist space which does not just visually impress, but tells stories. However, the text of the folder seems also to suggest that »normal« life in Oberammergau is a stagnation, an intermediate time, a (ten years long) break between the performances of the passion play.

The play is central to the image and imagination of the Oberammergau, it is at the core of its produced difference and fictional identity. The total village life circles around the performance of the play – and virtually is a performance. The play is the (temporary) checkpoint, all the other elements of the staged self-image are aligned around it. The nature and wildlife, which Oberammergau has to share with so many other places and which, therefore, cannot really be used to create a particularity, just serve as an additional »surplus«. And then, there is the handicrafts, the fresco painting (»Lüftlmalerei«) and woodcarving for which Oberammergau is famous. But the real core of the identity of the place is represented and created by the passions plays.

However, before focussing on that core of the place's identity, it is worthwhile to analyse the »imaginative« contribution of the local handicraft industry. The legend says that the tradition of the carving of sacred motifs in Oberammergau roots to the »magic« year 1111, and it states that the initial impulse was given by lay brothers of the near cloister Rottenbuch. Yet, first official mentions of this tradition appear only around 1520, and the rather profane background of its establishment is that Oberammergau used to be a very poor rural area so that the peasants were forced to search for a source of extra income to make a living. As woodcarving could be done at the farmsteads, the surroundings were full of wood and there was a good connection to trading routes, a woodcarving home industry emerged, however, with changing cycles. Since the 18th century brokers controlled the business whose power and profit relied on a system of advance payment (on a low level) and contracts that narrowly bound the contractors and lead to economic dependence. On the other side, the brokers made Oberammergau's name famous as a site of religious carving; as – aside from toys – the main items sold were crucifixes, Christmas ornamentation and sacred sculptures. (See Heynald-Graefe: *Oberammergauer Schnitzkunst* as well as Gröber: *Alte Oberammergauer Hauskunst*).

Currently, the woodcarving tradition is presented purified from its shabbiness, the broker system is long abandoned and carving is a good income for the around 150 local handicraftsmen. The production is mainly for the tourist market and the offers are correspondingly diversified. The brochure »Handicrafts at Oberammergau« summarizes: »You can find the sacred and the profane, decorative and droll stuff, painted carvings or traditional reverse glass art.« (P. 5 [own translation]) In other words: the scale ranges from traditionalist mimicry to tourist trash (see pic. 1). This created image of a handicrafts tradition rooted in religion – complemented with a mercantile tribute to the spirit of the age – ideally fits into the imagination of the passion play village. In this process, tradition is reinvented: what was once an expression of misery, is now »artfully« rearranged and serves as a tourist attraction – refined and purified from interfering elements. Interestingly, one can find clear traces of »orientalism« though,¹⁰ especially in Christmas ornaments, so that it is, for example, nothing usual to see a wooden camel be used as a decorative guidepost at the village square (see pic. 2).

Also the fresco painting ideally fits into the image that the village created of itself in order to stage its particularity. Oberammergau is not the only place where, traditionally, the fronts of the houses were decorated with fresco paintings, this is a common practice in the south of Germany (see. Rattelmüller: *Lüftlmalerei in Oberbayern*). However, Oberammergau exhibits some spectacular examples. The most famous and impressive one is the »Pilatus House«, which was built in 1774/75 (see pic. 3). It carries this name because of the fresco »Christ in front of the Pilatus« (see pic. 4) painted by the famous local artist Franz Seraph Zwinck (see also Koch et. al: *Franz Seraph Zwinck*). The fresco (and its message) seamlessly weaves into the passion play image and performance of Oberammergau as it shows a scene that is also central to the passion story. Even the composition of the fresco resembles a (baroque) theatre scene. Here, too, the elements orientalism are conspicuous since the jews (historically wrong, but in accordance to the fascination for the Orient of the time) are shown with turbans – an »exotic motif« that still serves as a (contrasting) attraction in tourist brochures (see pic. 5). »The others« who are presented in this (alienated) manner do not appear in a favourable role as the scene stands for a kind of biblical variant of the theory of the Jewish-American world conspiracy: Judas and the Roman Empire (represented by Pilatus) form an alliance in order to betray Jesus Christ. However, not all the fresco paintings are as ideologically loaded, but e.g. show »innocent« musician scenes (see pic. 6) or historically quote to the passion play topic (see pic. 7).

Wandering around, the »painful« order and cleanliness of the place, which is kept in spite of the streams of tourist, is striking. Everything is »well arranged«, there are no aberrations of the »Lüftl«-idyll. There are, however, equivocal, abortive examples of historicism as well as

of a synthesis with modernism (see pic. 8 and 9). And, of course, in spite of the hard efforts to keep an »authentic« character, there are manifestations of globalisation like agaves that serve as a house decoration instead of domestic plants (see pic. 10). Public space is fully adjusted according to the needs of tourism: one can choose from a big variety of coffee houses and inns offering traditional Bavarian cuisine. A rather irritating »foreign body« is, however, the small tourist train which, again and again, is circling in the village in order to show the visitors the attractions of the place (see pic. 11). But also the – mostly elderly – pedestrians can make their way easily as there are plenty of guideposts; and sufficient parking space is offered at the festival building, which appears to be slightly oversized and which is situated »at the margin« of the village centre – although it represents its real core (see pic. 12).

The entire idea and reality of Oberammergau is built around the passion plays. This is also reflected in the public perception of the place. A little (non-representative) survey among randomly picked passers-by revealed: the vast majority of people identified Oberammergau exclusively with the passion plays although they are a rather rare event (see Fink/Schwarzer: *Die ewige Passion*; pp. 15f.).¹¹ Their birth is a myth. A local legend, which can be traced to the 18th century and which is still a quite popular story to tell, claims the following: In the year 1633, there was a plague epidemic. For a long time, however, Oberammergau could prevent the »breaking in« of the plague by a strict sealing policy. But then, an infected servant slipped in and so, in relatively short time, many victims were caused. People waited for a miracle and to assure the support of god they relied on religion. The inhabitants pledged to perform every ten years the sufferings of Christ – in order to protect themselves in future from the plague. The historical accuracy of this version of the birth of the plays is questionable, but it is a fact that the plague was prevalent around that date in Oberammergau and that also the passion plays were first staged around that time. However, with its exchange deal: passion for protection, Oberammergau was rather late. In other places, even nearby, similar plays were performed much earlier. But in Oberammergau the tradition was kept more persistently – to its current economic benefit. (See *ibid.*; pp. 17ff. as well as Shapiro: *Oberammergau*; pp. 101–136).

Much (maybe too much) has been written about the passion plays of Oberammergau, so I just want to address some aspects which refer to the way how the place has reinvented itself through the plays, how it exposes itself as a different, special place. For this task, tradition is creatively reformed and »rewritten« according to the needs of the day. This can even be shown on the script-level. The oldest (conserved) version of the text dates from the year 1662 and is composed from parts of various other passion plays. It is itself not the original, but already a reworked (and long abandoned) version. In the following, the text was again and again extended and provided

with more melodramatic elements. This, however, resulted in a critical attitude of the official church and the state. In the year 1770, there occurred even a (first) prohibition of the plays. Thus, at the end of the 18th century, there were efforts of a »purification«, and, again, a revision of the script was done at the beginning of the 19th century by the local priest Daisenberger who created more or less the version which is still in use (except from some minor changes that sought to eliminate existing antisemitic tendencies etc.). (See Fink/Schwarzer: *Die ewige Passion*; pp. 27–48 as well as Holzheimer et al.: *Leiden schafft Passion*; pp. 39f. and pp. 62–91)

These tendencies were – as a tribute to the »Zeitgeist« – quite prominent at the times of nazism. Correspondingly, the anniversary-plays of the year 1934 are a rather a blind spot, and the villagers prefer not to talk too much about this part of history. Hitler, however, who personally had visited the plays already in 1930, was pleased and remarked: »[...] barely, the Jewish danger, within the example of the Roman Empire, was ever portrayed more lively than by the character of Pontius Pilatus at this festival, since he was shown as racially and intellectually superior Roman so that he appeared to be a solid rock among the Jewish dregs and crowd.« (Pickert: *Hitlers Tischgespräche*; pp. 604f., quoted according to Holzheimer et al.: *Leiden schafft Passion*; p. 97 [own translation])¹²

No surprise: instead of Hitler, people at Oberammergau prefer to remember the visit of VIPs from all over the world like Ludwig II. (King of Bavaria), Lady Churchill, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Henry Ford, Thomas Mann, Ferdinand de Rothschild, Rabindranath Tagore, Richard Wagner or the Prince of Wales, who are indicators of the fame of Oberammergau and its passion plays. Especially lately, as an effect of this »internationalisation«, there are attempts of a professionalisation. Although the actors are still picked among the villagers and thus are amateurs, the play director of the year 2000 (for scenes see pic. 13 and 14), Christian Stückl, was an experienced stage manager who already worked at the famous »Kammerspiele« of Munich (see Holzheimer et al.: *Leiden schafft Passion*; pp. 13f.).

In order to cope with the rush of the tourist masses in the years of the performance of the play the festival building has to be sized accordingly. Therefore, one even restrained from the omnipresent fresco-romanticism; we face a rather pragmatic, modern, functional building (see again pic. 12). Financially, the passion plays are usually a big success. The revenue is put in the municipal funds and is used to improve tourism infrastructure (see op. cit.; p. 247). The success and the essential importance for local tourism make the plays, however, a continuous cause of quarrel. »Passionate« discussions centre on the decision about the play director or questions of casting and regularly lead to local pollings (see *ibid.*; pp. 250–273).

In the face of this omnipresence of the passions plays in local life one might get the impression: it is not Oberammergau that performs the plays but it is the plays that perform Oberammergau. Even this non-place is a place where life, in the private dwellings and public spaces, »takes place« though. But it is not a life for itself but a life for the task of hyperreal production.

B) WAYS TO REALITY?

The passion plays are not just a metaphor of the place but rather represent a kind of blueprint for Oberammergau, which appears to be just an unreal scene – built from religionised carvings and illusionary frescos – for passion play tourism. How could this place, which captures itself in its fictional history, be (re)connected to the reality of the 21st century? Or is it rather that Oberammergau is too closely linked to that reality? So, maybe, Oberammergau has to be protected from this reality to become again a »real« place (of being). Through the hyperreal production of its difference, Oberammergau is in fact an integral part of the reality of globalisation – and is absorbed by it.

But, as globalisation is a dialectical process, one cannot eliminate the possibility that the processes of localisation will counteract the dynamics of globalisation instead of just functionally complementing it. Although, it is rather unlikely that this challenge of the global order will origin from the »global cities« or from a global village like Oberammergau. It is much more probable that this »revolution« (of which nobody can tell its chances to succeed) will begin in the real »villages« of global space – where the fixation to concrete place creates the assertive u-topian want of its transcendence.

NOTES:

1. These urban nodes – which, according to Sassen, are divided themselves by globalized and localised micro-structures – constitute a subcutaneous power structure. There is no more a spatially integrated centre. Or as Hardt and Negri formulate: the empire of globalisation is »a decentred and deterritorialising apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm with its open, expanding frontiers« (*Empire*; p. xii).
2. The famous distinction between core, semi-periphery and periphery was established by Wallerstein in this volume.
3. In spite of their critique of capitalism and imperialism, Marx and Engels seem to have interpreted globalisation in the first sense, as they (appreciatory) remarked on the historical mission of the bourgeois class: »The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian [!], nations into civilization.« (Ibid.)
4. Appadurai thus considers concepts that refer to the opposition of core and periphery as outdated. And, beneath tendencies of nationalist or fundamentalist regress, he identifies the opening up of spaces in the system of global flows that can be used for progressive transnational alliances and for a widening of individual horizons (see *ibid.*; p. 308).
5. Similarly, Henri Lefebvre revealed already in the 1970s that the survival of capitalism is currently increasingly dependent on its capacity of a capturing of (global) space, which is why a spatial thinking has to complement historical analysis (see *The Production of Space*).
6. The »virtual« worlds of amusement parks like »Disney World« or artificial landscapes like in the »Eden Project« (see <http://www.edenproject.com>) make an exception.
7. Thus, hyperreal simulation is in explicit contrast to the symbolic (and the metaphoric), which do not duplicate reality but represent a (u-topian) alternative (see *ibid.*: *Symbolic Exchange and Death* as well as in an overview Jain: *Medien der Anschauung*; pp. 122–133).
8. For Foucault heterotopic places are »real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.« (*Of Other Spaces*; p. 24). He differentiates crisis heterotopias (special places for people in a special situation), heterotopias of deviation (where the deviant is locked), heterotopias of illusion (representing an illusionary space, which means that the entering of this space is in fact an exit) and heterotopias of compensation (which do compensate, on a limited space, for the deficiencies of reality by the realisation of an ideal).

9. Thus, the imagined localities cannot count as heterotopias of illusion nor of compensation (see above) as they are not the limited reality of a dream nor are they an illusionary space of difference; they are not opposed to reality, they are the (hyperreal) duplication reality within their imagined space.

10. Edward Said, who introduced this term to the debate, states: »[...] the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. Yet none of this Orient is merely imaginative. The Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture.« (*Orientalism*; p. 2)

11. To be exact: 74%. The others answered: »woodcarving« (8%), »passion plays and woodcarving« (3%), »is situated in Bavaria« (2%), »is situated in Austria« (2%), »already heard« (3%). Only 4% did not know the place at all (see *ibid.*).

12. Unlikely to be an accident: exactly the visitor's book in which Hitler had given his signature disappeared. For further details about the Nazi-history and -involvement of the passion plays and Oberammergau see Shapiro: *Oberammergau*; pp. 137–186 and Utschneider: *Oberammergau im Dritten Reich*; esp. pp. 100–109.

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Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5 (Source: Advertisement Booklet)



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8



Picture 9



Picture 10



Picture 11



Picture 12



Picture 13 (Source: Postcards)



Picture 14 (Source: Postcard)

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