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> One day in December 2009 I was sitting working on a book we produced after the International Urban Workshop, 'Gardens of Art'... The morning was bright and a little bit misty and through the window I saw the tower of St George's church in Kidderminster, in the UK. I was thinking that I was a little bit tired with urban workshops, summer schools and all these activities which cost a lot of efforts and I was wondering whether I should rather focus on something more quiet. That day I have got an email from Krzysztof Mularczyk, Head of UN Habitat Warsaw Office:



'UN Habitat wishes to organise a summer school for young European professionals in urban planning. Could you please help?'

- > Well, I knew that there would be a lot of work ahead and again, that very soon I might regret my 'yes' but there was something exciting in two key words – **Europe** and **Urban**.
- > What is meant by 'Europe' – I was thinking?
- > Poland? Spain? Greece? Ukraine? Alsace? Brandenburg? All together?

Or rather it is something about European 'spirit', < soul of Europe?

Why should we gather European planners to < discuss urban matters? I am talking about Europe not the European Union... Is there something we understand in the same way?

Well, the first answer might be – history, tradition, < heritage... but what is history?... Wars, battles, takeovers... Till now we cannot tell the same story when we are writing history...

But we all – Portuguese and Finnish, Croatians < and Irish understand the music of Mozart, Chopin and Bizet, our imagination is shaped by Ariosto, Shakespeare, Goethe, Delacroix, Picasso...

The European soul is about culture and values < not about history.

Europe is more a concept and an idea than a place < and history.

Place and history are included in this concept, but < Europe is created by an ingenious vision rather than against the backcloth of history... Our identity is a matter of choice.



- > And then I realised that one of the most important components of European identity is the city. Culture and lifestyle, innovation and knowledge, ideas and art... these are 'urban things'. They are the basis of our European identity...
What is essential about cities? What are the key words for city?
- > For me: change, transformation, movement.
- > This is to say that being rooted in culture and tradition cities are focusing on the future. This is why they are rebellious, immodest, even arrogant... this is why they are fascinating.
- > What have cities learnt from the past? Probably that the future cannot be more like the past.
- > This is why we have to study cities carefully and constantly as well as the concept of 'urbanity', an essential part of our European identity.
- > I was thinking that we have to define our role as urban planners in this context. We do not need to analyse structure or 'make plans', or introduce policies...

What I believe we need is – **to imagine the future.** <

This is a challenge. This needs creativity and knowledge, courage and confidence. This is why all of us – invited tutors and young professionals, the Wrocław Dream Team and many others were in Wrocław in September 2010.

1279 years ago, on 10th October 732, Charles < Martell and his army won the Battle of Poitiers. A chronicle describes this event: 'Europeans have won'...

Probably this was the first hint of European < identity. Probably this was the first use of the word 'Europeans'.

We, young European planners (well we are all < young, only a few of us have a little longer practice in being young...) **we have to imagine a better urban future.**

**THIS IS OUR TASK. AND OUR CHALLENGE.
I WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OF US TO HAVE
NO LIMITS TO IMAGINATION.**

habda Mironowicz

/ HEAD OF EUSS 2010