



MAPPING CULTURAL INFORMATION

AUGSBURG AND VENICE IN INFOGRAPHICS

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THE REASONS FOR OUR JOINT ACTIVITY

Living in Europe today is a wonderful gift.

Looking back in history, one hardly will find a timespan of peace and prosperity as long as the current one, that started after the end of World War 2.

A key element of modern democracies is the educational level of its inhabitants. Their ability to form and actively participate in political, social and cultural progress. This doesn't come easy: Europe came with complicated, complex often abstract topics.

Information design is a discipline, that enables understanding through visualisation and explanation. Charts, diagrams, data visualisations, maps, cross section drawings help people not only to understand relevant issues but also to recall facts and figures.

With this series of collaboration between IUAV, Venice, and HSA, Augsburg, we wanted to shed light on the rich history and relation between both of our cities. Our students in mixed groups explored historic topics as well as questions on current life and living.

We compared architecture, tourism or water supply or public transport, to name a few.

By mapping information on the faces of a solid (in workshop 3 and 4) and on a city map (in workshop 1 and 2), students also learnt about new ways to tell their findings: from sorting, selecting and weighting on one hand to planning and designing on the other.

We as we are working in academics think, that it is our prominent task to educate students further in this field for a

good reason: to enable insight and understanding.

These DAAD-funded projects were an initial series of sparks and mark the start of a much more comprehensive relation between our universities.

*Emanuela Bonini-Lessing and Michael Stoll
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PROFILE IUAV

One of the first Architecture Schools in Italy (established in 1926), the Iuav University of Venice, with its community of 5 thousand students, is totally focusing on design. At the turning of the 21th century it has become a dedicated place for teaching, research and specialisation in multifaceted areas of design: facing issues concerning the living space and the environments in a whole, from buildings to cities, landscapes, infrastructures as well as the design of everyday use objects, communication design systems, fashion design, visual and performing arts, theatre. At Iuav attention to functional aspects crosses other values like sustainability, heritage and culture, sensorial and scenographic manifestations.

Educational courses and activities are divided into five undergraduate degree programs and eight degree programs, in addition to a number of postgraduate and advanced specialisation courses and eight research doctorates.

The University has entered into agreements with a number of institutions and cultural subjects in Venice, in the region and abroad. International Exchange Programmes are currently being offered in cooperation with hundred sixty European and over sixty non-European universities for the promotion of students', researchers' and faculty's mobility.

Among the university's highlights a four floor library open till midnight, a series of workshops fully equipped with technologies and know-how for internal activities as well for external commitments, the Archivio Progetti (design archive) with a collection of over 100.000 documents, 150.000 photographs, 300 mockups, 10.000 digital

images, in permanent cooperation with major Italian cultural institutions and research centres.

PROFILE HSA

The University of Applied Sciences has about 6000 students enrolled in seven faculties. The range of programmes from Design and Architecture to Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science gives students many opportunities to look for and work on interdisciplinary projects. Founded in 1710 as one of the oldest art schools in Germany and integrated in the University of Applied Sciences, the Faculty of Design has become the biggest of Bavaria's design schools with more than 600 students. The Faculty of Design offers two bachelor and two master programmes:

BA (Arts) Communication Design, 7 semester, with a strict and well structured first year, that leads into a broad second and third year with a huge variety of specialisations. Among a total of 14 are information design, brand identity, typography, letter making, advertising, photography and moving image.

MA (Arts) Design and Communication Strategy, 3 semester: This programme aims to give students the skills they need to manage design and innovation at a strategic level.

BA (Arts) Interactive Media, 7 semester: This programme is well known for its interdisciplinary and innovative approach to interactive media and for topics such as 2D Animation, 3D Modelling, Games, Interactive Installations as well as Internet and Mobile Applications.

MA (Arts) Interactive Media Systems, 3 semester: This joint programme is well known for its three areas of specialisation, namely Animation, Mobile Experience and

Game Development. Designers with these skills are in great demand.

According to the German Art Directors Club the Augsburg Faculty of Design is the best design school in Bavaria and the fourth best in Germany.

A HISTORIC RELATION BETWEEN AUGSBURG AND VENICE

Augsburg was founded in the year 15 b.C. by the Romans, while Venice seems to be about 100 years older. Both cities played a key role in several contexts throughout the centuries. Looking back in history we can easily discover a strong relationship between both cities. Traders and dealers from Venice carried their goods over the Alps into Europe for a long time. Augsburg served as a gateway to the European market, especially during the Renaissance. This fact contributed to the wealth of Augsburg a lot. Some of the most benefiting families were the Welsers and Fuggers. It didn't take long and many of these took their seat in Venice. Jakob Fugger (1459 - 1525) got his education at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (Warehouse of the Germans) in Venice, a palazzo-like trading house at the Canale Grande near Rialto bridge.

Having played for a long time the role of the gate to the East, Venice has been a prosperous city for many centuries. Its material richness relied on the revenues of the trade, while its cultural splendour was the result of the mix of habits and languages that qualified everyday life in the city.

The construction of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi is part of this framework: it dates back to the early 1200s, when the Venetian Republic granted a property to the merchants coming from Germany. The scope of this operation was not only to facilitate the transit of people and goods, but on the contrary to encourage the permanent presence and the development of the German community on the island.

During the second part of the twelfth century the business with the Germans occupied as a matter of fact the first place in the foreign trade of the Republic. The Fondaco was raised at the Rialto bridge's foot, at the both geographical and commercial centre of the prosperous city: one facade overlooking the Grand Canal (the main transit route), the others protruding the dense network of pedestrian routes. Burned twice (in 1318 and in 1505), it has been quickly rebuilt in larger size, consolidating its commercial role within the city. The presence of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi triggered a process of modernization of the surrounding area, boosting the proliferation of other activities, shops, stalls as well as the restoration of the houses of merchants and patricians near by.

This intense relation between Venice and Augsburg lead to an unmatched enthusiasm for Italian culture. Especially for the ideas and architecture of the Renaissance. When back in 1537 the Augsburg city administration replaced a figurine at one of the fountains from St. Ulrich to Neptune, the outrage - among the clerics - was huge. But it was a clear sign, that the Augsburg people loved the ideas of antique Rome, its architecture with the well calculated proportions and the world of myths. Admiring the antique principles never was enough for the Augsburg inhabitants: they wanted to embrace and live this style, so they shipped not only trading goods but also paintings, engravings and books. This again inspired the career of architect and master builder Hans Holl, whose buildings today would be called "crossovers" between gothic and renaissance styles. Later on his son Elias finally was appointed the city's official urban planner. Holding this position for about 20 years, Elias Holl transformed Augsburg from a medieval city into a modern city. Inspired by antique builder Vitruv, Elias Holl's buildings reflect all of vitruvian principles, like strong stability, human proportion and elegance. Among many different buildings,

like several city gates, two are outstanding: one is the Perlach Tower. It was redesigned by Elias Holl so the city bells found place in there.

On the other hand many were the artists leaving Italy to get assignments at the courts of the nobles in northern Europe. So did Jacopo de Barbari, who left Venice to Germany at about 1500. A few years before he met Albrecht Dürer in Nuremberg, his Map of Venice was published: a perspective and impressive view of Venice, made of woodcut (1.345 x 2.818 metres, from six blocks). On October 30th 1500 the Republic of Venice granted the privilege of printing it to the German Publisher Anton Kolb.

