



Culture of remembrance

Summary written by Peter Förster, Monheim

Head of the Foreign Languages Team, NDC Germany

The fundamental word **culture** is made more concrete when you look at the determiner **remembrance** (or recollection) and consider five aspects:

- remembrance and memory
- remembrance and history
- remembrance and society
- remembrance and future
- remembrance and art

Ever since Plato the psychological faculty of the memory is differentiated from remembrance by which the mind bethinks itself of its prenatal participation of the truth of ideas. Remembrance lives with language without which neither history nor education is possible. The preservation of remembrance is based on our careful use of language.

Today's social theory looks at the events of the 20th century whose foundation of an argumentative basis optimists of history like Hegel and Marx have destroyed.

World Wars, atom bombs and the holocaust – instead of the realm of freedom global terror becomes visible. Ideas of the philosophers of the Frankfurt School should be remembered as critical norms of change in society. By means of remembrance promises and possibilities that a civilized individual has pushed aside can be preserved. By collectively suppressing the danger of global catastrophe society becomes sick.

Something that has never existed before, including a utopian idea of a reconciled society that man longs for, is inherent in the term future. Remembrance can preserve this longing and thus affront present dangers.

The medium of art can keep awake the idea of utopia in the consciousness of man. Schiller invokes utopia in his Ode to Joy, set to music by Beethoven.

Modern art evokes a memory of a longing for redemption in a dialectical way, e.g. by expressing the deepest horror in E. Munch's *The Scream*.

In other words, art stands up for the possibility of the possible. The sculpture *Girl Statue for Peace* by Mr and Mrs Kim does not make any exception here.