PATCHWORK OF NARRATIVES

WHEN WE ENTER A CITY
WE ENTER A STORY
PATCHWORK
OF NARRATIVES
## CONTENTS

A PATCHWORK OF IDENTITIES  
by Joachim Granit  

IMMORTAL MOMENTS—A JUMP INTO THE WATER  
by Arna Mackic  

BEIRUT’S HEART—THE LIFE OF A SQUARE  
by Rania Sassine  

BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS  
by Michael Azar  

STOCKTOWN BLUES  
by Nachla Libre  

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & IMAGE CREDITS  

Stories, memories, impressions and sedimentations that create a patchwork of narratives.
A Patchwork of Identities

For several years, Färgfabriken had a unique opportunity to implement projects and exhibitions in various cities throughout our world. In Asia, former Eastern Europe and the Balkans, in the Middle East and in our immediate surroundings around the Baltic Sea. Meeting people with different cultural experiences and perspectives has taught us much. Everywhere, we have seen a willingness and a commitment to finding solutions to make our cities more livable. We have seen that there are themes that are universal. Such as democracy, transparency, as well as economic, ecological and social issues, which of course, bounce back to how cities are physically planned and built. In many cases there are structural barriers that hamper sensible development and change.

With these starting points Färgfabriken has developed New Urban Topologies, an ongoing project where we, together with local partners, investigate the city as an organism. New Urban Topologies is based on creating an international network of actors from different disciplines. It could be described as a project where the method is a sort of democratic acupuncture.

There are ways to define and describe our cities, their content and identity, that rarely come up when we talk about our cities from the technical planning perspective. These angles are however constantly present in film, literature and in many other forms of cultural expression. Stories, memories, impressions and sedimentations that create a Patchwork of Narratives. These experiences, need to be highlighted, as they are not only present among writers or artists but are central to the lives of a city’s inhabitants.

This publication examines the concept of the city and also tries to capture the soul of two cities: Mostar and Beirut. Both carry a traumatic history and are facing great challenges. Currently, there are enor-
mous refugee flows to Lebanon and Beirut. It puts the country and the
city under great pressure, while large financial interests tear-down and
build-up a new commercialized Beirut. The city’s skyline consists of
cranes resembling a swarm of mechanical insects.

Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a relatively small city that is
separated by a boulevard which in turn, twenty years after the war, is di-
vided into a Bosnian and Croatian side; the war has left deep scars. The
generations who experienced the war find it hard to forget the horrors,
while the younger generation seeks a different future, one of hope. Mo-
star’s Old Town and the bridge Stari Most, both of great symbolic value,
were shot down by artillery during the war. These parts of Mostar are re-
built, but still a number of ruins remain. For a visitor it can be perceived
as exotic, but for all those who were there twenty years ago—and even
for us who were not—it should be a reminder of how fragile peace can
be, how easily and quickly what we all take for granted can disappear.

If we look at the two cities’ ethnic structures we see that the
boulevard in Mostar divided the city into two parts. Beirut, on the other
hand, forms a mosaic. When moving around in the city between the
districts one is faced with different political and religious symbols that
mark the groups that live there. These symbols and signs serve as clear
markers and create sharp boundaries throughout the city. Also in Stock-
holm, where Färgfabriken resides, segregation is clearly readable. Here
the planning has parted city and suburbs into a system of islands, sepa-
rated economically.

There is a nostalgic and romanticized image of the concept of
the city. We need to ask ourselves if it is open to everyone? You are
certainly welcomed to visit it, but are you welcomed to live and inhabit
its central parts? Economic factors have resulted in invisible barricades
that are built around our inner-cities. It is clear that the concept of City
must be redefined. Today we see how the city is reborn in various forms,
in a multitude of places, and outside the central areas. This in turn cre-
ates a new pattern through stories, myths and the identity we all seek,
which in turn results in a Patchwork of Identities.

Joachim Granit
YANGON, DECEMBER 2014
THE BOULEVARD IN MOSTAR DIVIDED THE CITY INTO TWO PARTS. BEIRUT ON THE OTHER HAND FORMS A MOSAIC
Immortal moments

A JUMP INTO THE WATER

BY ARNA MACKIC

PART 1: BULLET HOLES AS ORNAMENT

THE ATTACKERS METICULOUSLY PLANNED what to destroy and what not to destroy. Their aim was to psychologically incapacitate the inhabitants of the city. The mental targets were those structures that the people identified themselves and their culture with. Museums, libraries and squares. All gone. When the facades of a city are destroyed its face lays beyond recognition but when its heritage sites and public places are targeted, it deprives the city of its legibility, disconnecting the inhabitants from their surroundings. Still to this day, the injured city is under attack.

Architecture came to play a major role during the last war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially in the city of Mostar. After the war the recovery of Mostar became a slow, complex process, partly due to the fact that the city was divided into two parts. Each belonging exclusively to a specific ethnic group. Currently it is impossible to walk through Mostar without being confronted with the war that massacred the city between 1992 and 1995. Mostar has become a dishonest city. What we see is an abundance of fragmented and imaginary self-proclaimed and self-imposed commemorations. Mostar was once a clear repository of symbols and memories, now the city has become hazy, almost opaque. Will the citizens of Mostar ever be able to read their city?

Perhaps this is an irrelevant question. At the same time that the citizens have changed the past is being retold and emphasized in competing ways by symbolic architectural interventions. The people of this city, just as all over the Balkans, continue to look to the past as it comes
to determine their future to such a great extent. But how can the mental
recovery from the war continue when the physical reconstruction of the
city is obscured heavily in politics? How can people deal with their his-
tory when they are constantly confronted with destroyed buildings and
with new religious political symbols of division in public space?

As history is no longer visible in the architecture and the public
spaces the communication between the city dwellers and Mostar, itself,
has ceased to exist. Due to destroyed buildings and added symbols it is
impossible for the inhabitants to waive the war away, to deal with it and
to forgive. Since the new generation of citizens who did not experience
the war directly are not able to meet each other and engage in a dialogue
prejudices will live on.

What else stays behind after the death of a city? The rubble,
the survivors and many memories. Memories not only located within
Mostar but dispersed among the many countries that the inhabitants
fled to. In his book “From Summer to Reality” (1997) Dutch writer and
journalist Chris Keulemans refers to Dubravka Ugrešić, a Croatian au-
thor who explains the possible modes of survival during and after the
Bosnia-Herzegovina war:
Somebody who has to live through a war can choose from three modes of survival. ‘Adaption, Inner Exile and Fleeing.’ All three are a kind of tour of the underworld, which has to be made in order to reconquer the right to a new life. All three demand from a survivor the discarding of his old life, of the habits and preferences from which it was made, the characteristics by which his environment could recognize him.

The absence of the people who fled, combined with the addition of refugees from the surrounding rural areas, created a new social structure in Mostar. The decline and destruction of the conventional industries, the unemployment, decay and empty spaces of the city center coupled with an unsafe environment drove the young and educated away from the city. The absences provided by the people who fled combined with the addition of refugees from the surrounding rural areas created a new social structure for Mostar.

The effects of the destruction during the war can be divided into two categories: physical and mental consequences. The physical ones are the most visible—roofs, frames, windows and parts of facades have been blown away by grenades and bullets destroying buildings and creating vacant dwellings next to the streets that are full with grenade shell holes. Neglected for a long time their interiors are overgrown and their walls are often covered in graffiti. As the ruins are slowly eroded by climatological influences the scars from the wars become even more visible, even more natural.

This does not only result in a horrifying image but also a fascinating one. These interiors become part of the public space. Those who dare can enter the buildings and might even appreciate their new characteristics. As the vulnerable materials did not endure the war the buildings reveal their construction, the basic shapes of their architecture. The thousands of scars from grenade shells and bullet holes have become ornaments. Even so, these buildings should not be considered as romantic ruins. Their destruction is not the result of neglect or abandonment but of a sudden deliberate annihilation.

The fascination with destruction is not new to the art and architecture world. Sometimes we appreciate this through myths and re-
religious histories such as the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (present both in the Bible and the Koran), acting as a great source of inspiration. The German artist Gerhard Richter has been extensively inspired by World War II in his work, just like the American architect and artist Lebbeus Woods, who was instigated to work by the Loma Prieta earthquake in San Francisco. Artists who live in countries marked by war find themselves in between the horror and fascination that is evoked by grim images.

In “From Summer to Reality”, Chris Keulemans cites two poems by Bosnian poet Semezdin Mehmedinović, who writes about the fascinating images of destruction in Sarajevo:

FIRES

On his way home after photographing the Viječnica, which was going up in flames, Kemo Hadžić got injured by a grenade shell. It is hard not to think mystically during a war. My first thought was: his injury is a warning. Kemo says he didn’t feel any pain as long as he was in shock.

In order to feel pain one has to be aware of pain, whilst being in shock—while it lasts—is a form of staying on the other side. It is a dive into the world of the practices of art as well: because what was this photographer exactly doing while he encircled the burning library, looking for the ideal viewpoint and light conditions with the water of the Miljačka captured in his wide angle lens; what else was this than the fiery longing of the artist to extract the ferocious beauty from this horrible spectacle of death, to approach it from the other side.

The urge of the artist to venture into the unknown is perilous but precisely in this venture lies the power of art. Would it be possible to say that the grenade shells were a punishment for that heretic step? Perhaps that is not more than just an esoteric thought brought up by the panic of the war, the same way a boy—who Kemo, in shock, followed to the hospital and only noticed again after surgery because of the doctor, while he provided him with some cool air by waving a folded newspaper—the same way I recognize a creature in that boy that does not belong to this reality any more. Because of the boy’s angel-like gesture.
I walk towards the window and look at the broken glass panel of the Jugobanka. I could keep on standing there for hours. A blue facade of glass. On the floor above the windows behind which I am watching, a professor in aesthetics enters his balcony: he puts on his glasses and combs his beard with his fingers. I can see his image mirrored in the blue facade of the Jugobanka, in the broken glass panels that turn the scene into a living cubist painting on a sunny day.

For me, a destroyed building tells a story, shows a transformation and most of all, leaves a lot to one’s imagination. Suddenly a building is shrouded in mystery. This environment of destruction is not just fascinating but also a daily remembrance of the war. The inhabitants will not be able to put these memories to rest as long as the destroyed buildings are still there. How could one commence his or her own mental reconstruction when the physical environment is destroyed?
Apart from the physical changes that took place during the war Mostar had to deal with the transformation that came about after it. People began to slowly rebuild: not only buildings but also the government of the city. In March 1994 the Washington Agreement put an end to the war between the Bosnian army and the Croatian Republic Herceg-Bosna. The agreement took the divided situation of Mostar seriously and the European Union got the mandate to govern the city for a period of two years. The European Union Administration of Mostar (EUAM) aimed to maintain peace, to facilitate the return of refugees and to restore essential institutes in the city.

Two years later when the mandate of the EUAM ended the Office of the High Representative (OHR) was founded in order to develop new strategies for the unification of the city. As part of this an Interim Statute of the city was established as a temporary solution for the self-governance of the city. The Statute allowed for the separation of the city into Croatian and a Muslim parts. Seven large autonomous districts were created: three in the west with a Croatian majority, three in the east with a Muslim majority and a small commonly governed Central Zone.

The Mostar city center contained three of these seven divided districts: the Croatian governed Southwest district, the Muslim governed Old City and in between the Croatian and Muslim districts, the Central Zone. The Interim Statute also appointed a central city government with a mayor, a deputy mayor and a city council. This citywide government—which was also supposed to control the Central Zone—did not have a lot of authority due to the segregated power of the districts.

Each district had its own urban planning authority and started simultaneously but separately and without consulting each other the rebuilding of the city. As it was the only politically shared space the EUAM hoped that the Central Zone could be an area where interaction and discussion between the two ethnicities could take place. They hoped that soon the Interim Statute would be replaced by a permanent statute and that the Central Zone could be the physical starting point for a reunited city. This zone covered an important part of the city which resulted in fierce discussions about its borders. It was disputed whether specific symbols or economically vital places should be a part of this area as well.
The two most important places that were not part of the Central Zone were the Liska Street cemetery, which contained both Muslim and Croatian graves and the water supply. Both were assigned to the authority of the Croatian districts. However, the Gymnasium and the bus and train station were part of the Central Zone. Due to the resistance of the Croatian controlled districts the size of this Central Zone turned out to be much smaller than was initially hoped by the EUAM and the Muslim controlled districts, this reduction was seen as impairing the chances of future unification.

Between 1997 and 2003 several attempts were made to unite the public services of education and medical infrastructure without any success. In 2003 a commission was founded dedicated to reform the city and to handle the problematic division. The six districts as governing units were done away with and replaced by a single city government. The interests of the districts however were maintained by turning them into constituencies. In 2011 the constitutional court declared the current statute as unconstitutional because the number of representatives of the constituencies did not correlate with the numbers of voters in each district. The city has been waiting for a new statute ever since.

The aforementioned developments resulted in a very complex political climate, hindering the process of rebuilding. Many postwar reconstruction projects have reflected these difficulties. The reconstruction of deliberately destroyed public and religious buildings raised questions and controversies. The debates on the different identities and the tendencies of separation and unification came to be perceived in the architecture and public spaces. Many religious symbols and monuments have been added to the public space. Streets have received new, often nationalistic, names and ethnically and politically colored institutes have been given prominent places in the city but the Central Zone, the public space that is most shared in Mostar, is subject to the biggest controversies regarding the (re)construction of buildings. One example is the Gymnasium, heavily bombed during the war. Built during the Austro-Hungarian era the building is considered to have housed one of the best high schools of Yugoslavia before the war. Because it is located in the Central Zone it was intended to be a shared space for the inhabitants of both Croatian and Muslim districts. No discussion was dedicated to the way it would be
THE GYMNASIUM DESTROYED AND RECONSTRUCTED
rebuilt: it needed to look exactly like it did before the war.

In 2000 the Croatian district only reconstructed the first floor of the building and reopened it as the Brother Dominik Mandić Grammar School. Naming the school after a Franciscan friar made it clear that the school was exclusively meant for Catholic Croats. The OHR responded by deciding that once the entire school building would be reconstructed both Croatian and Muslim-run schools should be housed there. Under the catchphrase of ‘separate but equal schools’ the two institutions would share the same roof and function apart from each other: each with their own board, curriculum, students and entrances.

In 2003, when the opening of the New Old Bridge and the political unification of Mostar came closer, the OHR and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) proposed to merge the boards of the two schools as well as the mathematics and science curricula. From that point onwards the two schools in the Gymnasium shared the same name, board and physical building. Yet the students were still being taught separately, exceptions being the teaching of the mathematics and science curricula. In 2006 the United World College (UWC) of Mostar moved in to the third floor.

This high school aims to contribute to the reconstruction of postwar societies by way of education. It has students of many different ethnic groups from former Yugoslavia, as well as many countries in southern, eastern and western Europe, the Middle East, the USA and many other crisis countries like Israel and Lebanon. It is remarkable that a single structure can hold such a vast quantity of contradiction, of divisions and unities and still stand, still support its own weight.

Despite the single city government Mostar remains culturally and socially separated to a large extent. The Central Zone, which for a decade was the physical border between the two ethnicities, has now become a buffer zone. A kind of no man’s land that cannot be ignored because it is located at the center, the heart of the city. Twenty-two years after the war and eleven years after the political reunification of the city, it somehow remains a neglected area to be avoided by all. There is little there: neither shared spaces nor many private ones. While regulations and decisions about whether construction projects for the area will continue to remain in limbo, so does the fate of Mostar’s former Central Zone.
PART III: THE JUMP

The city has existed for centuries, longer than the generations, longer than the languages, the very powers and religions that have founded and found refuge here. This history should be visible in the architecture and the public space of the city. It should not be imposed upon the citizens by bringing the city back to its exact original state or by reconstructing buildings in their old style. Rather, the reconstruction of the city should be based on the cultural history of the city. Especially in a city where the war has mutated so much.

In Mostar everything is ethnically and politically charged: every building, every monument, every street name. In a society where the past and memory itself have become so vague, we have to look for a new language, a clean language that nobody will politically, religiously or ethnically identify themselves with. A language that does not ignore or deny the past but engages with it and puts it in a new perspective without imposing truth. It is a language that glances upon the future, like the monuments commemorating the victims of World War II in former Yugoslavia built between 1950 and 1980. This new language could be compared to the way the Dutch designer Jurgen Bey in an interview for the debate series “In de Toekomstige Tijd: Utopisch denken in het onderwijs” describes the beauty of the language of art, that exists within the reader:

“It is an open language that does not seal things but a language that, if you listen to it, provides potential and because of that can work as an accelerator. The beauty of the language of art is that it is much closer to literature. Everybody who reads a book knows that the language only exists with him or her. Everything you know comes forward; anything you do not know doesn’t exist.”

The biggest design challenge for Mostar lies—apart from the obvious necessary architectural tasks like the (re)building or renovating of houses, hospitals, schools, parks, et cetera—in forming a new open architectural language. This language could not be applied to everything or acquire every possible function. In order to rebuild destroyed buildings the opportunities lies, for the most part, in buildings that did not have any significant political, religious or ethnic meaning before the war.
Everything that was viewed as ‘meaningless’ was left untouched during the war. Those sites and structures that were saved consequently continue to exist as ‘open’ places. Neutral and unburdened by the past. Places that can mold the potential of a new future. The Central Zone—the part of the city that should be an entirely ‘open’ place—consists of a couple of these places such as the Glass Bank building. For the construction of new buildings the opportunities lay in constructing something that is not burdened by religion, politics or ethnicity but that instead is closer to the creativity and individualism of the arts. As these buildings would employ a new architectural language their function should be mostly public and aimed at affording encounters between people. This new architectural language doesn’t have to get rid of symbols.

The Serbian architect Bogdan Bogdanović used symbols for the monuments he designed throughout Yugoslavia that transcended ethnicity and religion in order to avoid making any political or ideological statements. Instead, he found his inspiration in archeological shapes and kept diving deeper into the richness of archetypical images. He tried to reach the primal shapes of the imagination. We can learn a lot from Bogdan Bogdanović efforts in order to decide the new functions of the clean places. What if we would focus on functions that have to do with ancient traditions that go beyond any specific religion or ethnicity? To get there it’s important to recognize the cultural, historical and spatial qualities of Mostar—the ones that do not refer to ethnicity and religion. Currently this language cannot be found in architecture and urban planning. In theater and music, however, there are a couple of examples that employ a new open language liberated from politics or ethnicity. The Mostarki Teater Mladih, the Mostar Youth Theater, educates young people in practical drama and production and is open to anyone regardless of their ethnicity or religion. Experimentation, openness, development and bridging differences are both a way of working and a life philosophy for the members of the theater group.

The Mostarian band Zoster—which named itself after the Herpes zoster virus and rose to fame thanks to the bad condition of the immune system of the society they reside in—tries to insert tolerance, peace, development and love to the music scene of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This band, which was founded in 2000, has experimented with many
musical styles and has become even more abstract in their language and expressions over the years. Mario Knezović the band’s front man and singer, told me that he does not want to impose a message upon his audience. When listening to their music I can find many references that point towards the political, social and economic situation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Mostar.

However, the stance of Zoster in their lyrics is precisely to remain neutral. With their music they tell things without saying them. They keep things open in order for the listeners to appropriate it. When I ask Knezović if his lyrics would be different if he would have grown up in another city, he hesitates but eventually sticks to his point: it is not about the message, it is about opening up, offering neutrality and a possibility to hold on to it. This seems the best possible strategy for Mostar: to not force people to be together but to offer them choices in thought and in living. It probably would be the best approach to apply to the urban planning of Mostar as well. An area similar to the former neutral zone cannot function when it is very pronounced and specific but will only work when it is neutral, when it allows people to make it their own by employing an open language. That’s why it is essential to implement an architectural intervention that is grounded on precisely this stance: not taking any stance.

Mostar currently finds itself in an exceptional condition. It will never be the way it is right now, not ever again. In what way a city like Mostar will restore itself is unclear. What we can be sure of is that the city will never keep on being itself. It will rather mutate into a totally different society. The inhabitants of the city have a big responsibility, they share something unique (their images of destruction) and will contribute to the building of this new society. It is to be hoped that religion and ethnicity will one day not control the role of the schools, fire departments, cellular networks, hospitals, football teams and bus stations. That these institutions will be reduced by half: one of each for both parts of the city. Shared and equal.

Finally, I will share a jump into the water. One of the most important traditions of Mostar is the diving off of the Old Bridge, which has occurred since 1567. It used to be a ritual where young men dove off the bridge in order to prove their manliness and impress young women.
Later it became a tradition that was carried on from one generation of Mostar men to the next. Boys learnt step by step how to dive, to ultimately become skilled enough to jump off the Old Bridge. A diving contest is held every year, where the most famous international high board divers take the plunge.

In order to form a new operational architectural language in the ‘neutral’ zone, I propose a building that includes a diving school where citizens can learn step by step to dive from great heights with a descent
from the New Old Bridge as the final step. By designing such a place, an urban activity is made available to all the inhabitants of the city, regardless of their nationality, religion, gender, age or sexual orientation. It is not just the diving off the Old Bridge but also diving itself that is an old tradition. Diving is something atavistic. It is pre-religious. Historians question whether jumpers that can be found on pre-christian paintings could actually swim. Supposedly, this would mean that diving even pre-dates swimming.

In Mostar it is a tradition that comes from the origin, the very structure of the city. Without the existence of the Old Bridge the tradition would never have been there. Even after the war when the Old Bridge was demolished and before there was a support bridge, there was a springboard from which people could dive into the river. The jump is a form of survival for the inhabitants of Mostar, it is something they can hold on to, because it forms the foundation of being a Mostarac or Mostarka, not just a member of some district. The Dutch architecture historian Thomas A.P. van Leeuwen writes in The Springboard in the Pond (1998) that springboards were introduced into the domain of swimming to enrich “the feeling of weightlessness” and as “a springboard for the swimmers’ eternal play with death”. The sensation of weightlessness is the feeling of ‘eternity’, something without limits, infinite, oceanic. Furthermore, swimming is an important and meaningful part of diving. Swimming has to be taught or else one is bound to drown. Everything one undertakes to overcome this condition could be explained as the continuous battle against what one does best by nature: sink.

Swimming teaches us to keep our heads above water. The three-second long jump towards the water gives a feeling of weightlessness and freedom where one becomes detached from everything around him, including the tangled public space of Mostar. Perhaps the divers of Mostar can create their own communal immortal moment this way.
November 9, 1993
Stari Most stood for 427 years until it was destroyed during the siege.
IN THE 1980s WHEN THESE HOUSES WERE BUILT
(WITH ALL THOSE “SMALL & DENSE” DETAILS)
THEY REMINDED SOMEBODY OF A CITY
IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND SOON PEOPLE
STARTED CALLING THEM “BEIRUT”
NARRATIVES ARE CARVED INTO THE WALLS, PLASTERED ON THE HOUSES AND INGRAINED IN THE STREETS OF THE CITY
In "Beirut’s Heart—The Life of a Square" Rania Sassine contemplates the history of Beirut’s most public of spaces. Before the war Martyrs’ Square pumped the flow of public and civic life for the city; now it remains a vacuum sucking neither life nor death and attracting only the substances of emptiness.
LEBANON IS A COUNTRY WITH MULTIPLE FACETS. BEIRUT IS A CITY OF PARADOXES AND CONTRADICTIONS. THE MARTYRS’ SQUARE IS THE CITY’S HEART IN PERMANENT MUTATION.

BY RANIA SASSINE

BEIRUT IS MAD but the madness is balanced. Beirut is chaotic but the chaos is beautiful. Diverse in all perspectives: social, architectural, religious, political, economic, even archeological, Beirut is an intense patchwork of a city. In this overwhelming multiplicity there is a large public space that for many centuries functioned as the city’s heart and is now vast, central and vacant. How this is possible in a crowded, dense and noisy urban-scape, one can only guess.

Was it a miracle, fate, or political will?

Today the private sector is the main player in Lebanon’s economy and the main drive behind the country’s dynamism and life-force. Remains of a generosity to the public sector can still be found in the physical presence of some major public spaces in the capital, among them Horsh Beirut and Martyrs’ Square. Yet despite a terrible lack of
gathering spaces these two squares are somehow absent in the mind of Beirutis and therefore remain unused.

As for the Horsh Beirut, commonly known as Parc des Pins, the park has been deliberately made unavailable to the population, one needs a permit to access the park. On the other hand, the Martyrs’ Square is accessible to the public but from an urban perspective it is just another traveler’s void in the city, functioning only as a crossing point. The square that used to be the busiest in Beirut has been turned into a no man’s land.

*There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.*

*Jane Jacobs, Downtown is for People*

The Martyrs’ Square has a complex history echoed by the multitude of names given to it during different eras: Fakhreddine Gardens, Place des Canons, Sahat el Bourj. This square was once our ambassador to the world. In good times and in bad times, when dreamy postcards of a flourishing place on the Mediterranean Sea transformed into images of horror, destruction and war.
Martyrs’ Square somehow seems to be the thermometer for Lebanon, capturing the spirit of our country in different times. Its multifaceted life came about much long ago. In the seventeenth century a Tuscan palace was built with a tower on the east side of the Mediterranean called Fakhreddine. This tower was the reason the square was commonly known as Sahat Al Bourj, or Tower Square. Fundamentally this square was the core of the old town of Beirut and was surrounded by a wall with three of the main gates of the city opening into it. The name Sahat Al Bourj was kept until the breakout of the civil war in 1975.

During the glory days before the war Martyrs’ Square had developed into a civic space for a modern city. At the time it had all the ingredients needed to be a successful public area: streets, sidewalks, greenery, public transport, cultural and entertainment buildings. Then the civil war, or what the Lebanese journalist Ghassan Tueni named “a war for the others”, struck the country and in particular the capital (Tueni’s statement refers rightfully to the fact that the civil war was a war fought by other nationalities on Lebanese land: Palestinians fleeing their country, Syrians that received the green light from Lebanese parties to enter the country, subsequently never leaving and last but not least, is the Israeli bombing and invasion of southern Lebanon). Martyrs’ Square, on the demarcation line, was severely damaged. The buildings surrounding it were destroyed leaving a sad empty patch of desolation. Currently because of such historical interruptions in the governmental life of Lebanon and a lack of political priority, emptiness has come to dominate this emblematic square.

After the war the reconstruction task was undertaken by Solidere, the Lebanese company for the development and reconstruction of the Beirut Central District. A master plan for the area was created with a landfill extension on the waterfront. It had an optimal proportion of private versus public domain and a strong intention to put Beirut on the world map as a global city. Martyrs’ Square was part of this ambitious operation. The master plan design wanted to emphasize the square and make it an example of grandeur and splendor. What better model to follow than the Champs-Elysées in Paris, France? Therefore the size of Martyrs’ Square was to be adjusted to match the famous French avenue. Moreover the plan required a consistent view to the sea. To achieve this aim the demo-
lition of the iconic building Cinema Rivoli was seen as necessary.

New dimensions for new ambitions, the square was now 70 meters wide, 350 meters long and was only 650 meters away from the Mediterranean Sea which it faced directly. In this process the site had changed geometry, having been through different eras as a square and then a rectangle, it was now longitudinal. Even wider and longer, the effect unfortunately did not reach the imagined magnificence. The comfortable former geometry was of the kind that make public squares act as an urban saloon where people like to sit, walk and enjoy urban life. Because of the improper geometry this new shape rather made it seem and function as a vehicular corridor.

Throughout its history Martyrs’ Square never had a religious building on it, the spirit of the square was a civic and cultural one. Administrative buildings and three cinemas were the highlights of the place. One of the movie theaters was the emblematic City Center Dome or more commonly called “the Egg” by the Beirutis for its oval shape. The sacred buildings were diffused in the rest of the Downtown area. These mosques, churches and synagogues neighbored each other and were also successfully integrated into the urban fabric in scale and materials. The architecture of the sacred was not ostentatious but respectful of the other. This spirit was the same as the communal living that is essential and characteristic to the Middle East and in particular Lebanon, a country that even refers to itself in its constitution as “living together”.

Today we can observe that the most prominent building on the square is a mosque. The Mohamad al-Amine mosque is huge, omnipresent and visible from all streets and surrounding neighborhoods. We can also notice the emergence of an even taller bell tower belonging to the adjacent church that is still under construction.

Is this not a fatalist representation of a transformed society and most probably of a transformed world? Are we now crushing civic life, shared living, to point out our differences, the very same features that used to be our strengths? Why are we stating our faith so loudly? Are the mental and psychological trenches being dug again?

The absence of a new general master plan to tie the whole city of Beirut together in the reconstruction allowed Solidere to treat its downtown like a ‘paradise in a box’. To do so the company stripped the
district of its environment and installed a series of highways all around the Downtown isolating it from surroundings neighborhoods. With this lack of pedestrian connectivity the city center became inaccessible. The Solidere phasing strategy added to the perception that the downtown area was being torn away from the city.

Starting the reconstruction in the center of Downtown further enhanced the effect of an island surrounded by a desert and bordered by an uninviting road network. If the rebuilding process had started in a different way, for instance at the edges of the area, Downtown would have benefitted from the dynamism of an existing and lively city around it. This process would have meant starting off at the southern edge, Zaitunay bay linking Downtown to the Corniche and Ain-el-Mreisseh and at the northern edge, Martyrs’ Square connecting Downtown to Gemmayzeh and Achrafieh. By doing so a great number of citizens would have naturally come back to enjoy their lost city center and the social rebirth of the very heart of the city would have been easy to accomplish.
While the rest of the reconstruction was taking its course towards the center it would have brought life along with it in the most effortless way. But since the development process was done the way it was another event came to put Martyrs’ Square back into the center of Lebanese life.

*With cities, it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a rebus that conceals a desire or, its reverse, a fear. Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else.*

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*
14 March 2005, the death of the business tycoon and former prime minister, Rafic al Hariri, a month earlier spontaneously gathered people in the Martyrs’ Square. The outrage and anger of the population towards the Syrian regime that had been abusing the Lebanese and preventing the development of the country for quite a while culminated on that day.

It was called the Cedar revolution. One million people carrying the Lebanese flag were standing there: united. Ironically the 25,000 square meter of urban void at the edge of Downtown suddenly made full sense, for a while, like in the old times. The spontaneity of this gathering was a true sign and a true yell of hope that was produced by a population longing for a civic, democratic and independent political and urban life in Lebanon. It is true that for a long time we had obliterated even the thought of this. Soon again disappointment invaded the people’s hearts
and again we observed a loss of interest with the political scene due to the pettiness of politicians and their sectarianism and greediness. The square still got full from time to time but only to bear witness to our division: different flags, different affiliations and different visions. After that, the burst of patriotic feeling got diluted by the hardness of daily life with the permanent crisis that the country faced. Public life was unable to hang on to this vast space which seem to have no defined edges and limits, it had no identity and spirit. The square was back to its status as a no man’s land, a place where one passes through like a ghost. To Beirut its heart was just another crossing point.

\[ A \text{ nation’s strength ultimately consists in what it can do on its own and not in what it can borrow from others. } \]

Indira Gandhi

In June 2004 Solidere launched an international design competition for Martyrs’ Square grand axis. Antonis Noukakis & Partners Architects from Greece were the competition winners. In 2012 Renzo Piano Building Workshop from Paris completed an urban design study for the same axis but up until now nothing concrete has been completed. This remains a frustration for the Beirutis as the heart of their city is being wasted. Martyrs’ Square has become a place they cannot relate to and therefore will not enjoy.

Looking back at the history of this major public space in Beirut one may consider this current emptiness a bliss. Martyrs’ Square might be an opportunity for the citizens to recover their city center. This place should not be planned by French nor Ottoman, neither Greek nor Italian. Instead it could be a Lebanese laboratory of urban identity designed by the citizens themselves as an intrinsically Lebanese space: generous, extroverted and fun.

Can Martyrs’ Square be the site where the Lebanese, who are disconnected, once again come to gather and relearn the sharing of urban public life? Can a heart in permanent mutation help us create a civic vision for a common future? In its real dimensions with its limited geometry and substances, I believe it can be a starting point for that process.
Beirut Revolution

Free Your Mind

Now

Kill Your TV
“WHEREVER THERE IS A BODY THERE IS SOME SORT OF POWER IMPOSING ITSELF UPON IT. MARKING AND LABELING IT.” WRITES MICHAEL AZAR. IN HIS ESSAY “BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS”. AZAR CONTEMPLATES THE WAY PEOPLE TATTOO THEMSELVES WITH STORIES, LIKE LOGOS, IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AND OTHERS. EMPIRES, WEAKNESSES, POWER, LOGOS AND ZOMBIES, IT IS A TEXT THAT SCOURS THE UNDERWORLD OF HOW WE FORM OUR IDENTITY IN THE MODERN METROPOLISES OF THE URBAN COMMUNITY. OF HOW WE CAN COME TO BELIEVE WE ARE WHAT WE ARE, PERHAPS, EVEN WHEN WE ARE NOT.
IN HIS VISION of the ideal city the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle required that it should not only be self-sufficient and independent but also be “easily taken in at a glance”. Attempting to thwart the dangers of the invisibility of the soul and the potentially antagonistic parts of the polis he pleaded for a society where everybody knew everybody and where the flows of libido would be restrained within the confines of the citizens of the city. Aristotle thereby foreshadowed the logic of surveillance that thrives in the gradually unfolding pan-optical and bio-political regime. The crux is of course that there always seems to be a remainder, something that almost per definition slips out of the gaze and therefore hampers the dream of the totally transparent community. No technology up to date has been able provide the means for penetrating the invisible and elusive depths of the human soul. Modern life in its urban forms—characterized by “the ephemeral, the fugitive and the contingent” as the French poet Baudelaire would have it—always finds
out new ways to trick the eyes, new lines of flight in order to curb the all-embracing grip of Big Brother and new forms of pleasures beyond the alleged Common Good. Every city contains at least two cities: on the one hand the visible, predictable and controllable city, on the other hand the invisible, unforeseeable and indeterminable city.

*

Already from birth man is obliged to enter into an empire of signs, a written and spoken discourse, materialized in rituals and life forms that frame our existence. The empire of signs is the bedrock for an inexhaustible number of narratives, recounting the stories of our ancestors and drawing up the expectations that they have on our future. In the framework of the nation state our appearances are already marked out in accordance to certain prototypes, revealing the correct standards of the ideal citizen. Once again there is one glitch: that the inner life of human beings are invisible. Whereas the city is the arena where power, resources and pleasure are to be distributed, we are always in the grip of complicated procedures and rituals sorting out who is who and what is to be expected by whom.

The life of Man unfolds within the narratives that give his existence purpose, direction and a sense of belonging. It is by virtue of these narratives that both things and human beings become charged with meaning. By pervading our dreams and desires they convey to us what is worthy of love and hatred. They divide the world into different categories, marking out certain forms of existence from others. Narratives are the counterparts of the infrastructure of the cities into which we are flung. When we enter a city we enter a story and our destinies are conditioned by the way this story is designed and by the way it evolves due to our own intervention in it. It might isolate us, set up firm boundaries between the other and ourselves, or it might open up spaces for interaction and active participation. Occasionally, and this is the worst-case scenario, the story is already written and there is no way to change it. The usual fallout of such a narrative is isolation, a mentality that in all its stupidity views the world as formed, once and for all, by given essences.
Nevertheless, there is, at least for the most part, a space for creativity: we participate in writing the books in which our life stories are told. No one can hide from the storytelling that is at the root of human existence: from everywhere voices call upon us to be a part of one narrative or the other, they try to seduce us by offering us interesting tasks to fulfill, by promising us pleasures unheard of. Or they refuse us any kind of admission because of our accent, our looks and our background. The church bell, the muezzin, the university discourse, the media talk, the drivel and rumors of the streets, et cetera, all urge us to adopt one identity or another, sometimes by pitting them against each other ("It is either this or that!") but in other cases they can give rise to new forms of hybrid identifications. “Men are like rabbits, you have to catch them by the ears.”, as Comte de Mirabeau pointed out during the French revolution.

Narratives are carved into the walls, plastered on the houses and ingrained in the streets of the city. Occasionally one and the same city is engulfed in divergent and polarized stories that shatter it into parts. Different streets and monuments belong to contradicting empire of signs (to use an expression from the French writer Roland Barthes). During the civil war in Algeria the choice stood between the mosque and the bistro, symbols of two different perspectives of how to organize the very substance of life. Sometimes one and the same piece of matter gets inscribed into different narratives. Let us recall how the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul has gradually been overtaken by different rulers and thereby forced to abide in varying empires of signs. The site of the building (and parts of the building itself) that once served as a Greek Orthodox basilica were converted into a Roman Catholic cathedral and then into an imperial mosque during the Ottoman Empire. Now it serves as a museum initially secularized to the point that all kinds of worship were strictly prohibited (this ban has been modified in recent years). The power game of signs applies to everything from choosing the name of a street, to the construction of a new museum and the erection of a wall. Every city, and every part of it, is prone to be the object of competing stories
and their material counterparts. For every new church in
downtown Beirut and Mostar there must be a mosque.

Cities communicate with its people in different
ways. Sometimes its walls and houses whisper or shout,
sometimes it urges them to arm themselves or to escape
from it. Beirut’s residents use graffiti, political logos and
religious slogans in order to divide the city and to instill a
sense of security and unity within their own communities.
In an odd mixture of fear, distrustfulness and self-righ-
teousness they mark out their preserve and display that it
belongs to a certain party, an ideology, a clan or a religion.
Each district has its own graffiti plastered on its walls, de-
fining its territorial boundaries. The objective is to tat-
too as much of the city as possible with flags and statues,
posters and slogans, in order to clearly state the empire of
signs its people obey.

*

There are many layers of meaning condensed in a single
name and that is the reason as to why every new conqueror
changes the names of the streets in the city. During the
brief occupation of Beirut by the British, the legendary
Hamra Street was suddenly renamed London Street. The
list of examples is endless. When rival forces seize control
of key locations they attempt to wreck all remnants of the
old empire of signs (as was the case with the “Committee
for Removing Symbols of the Saddam Era” in post-invasion
Iraq). As long as there is no single ruler and as long as the
city remains politically divided you will have a variety of
names that stand in stark opposition to one another. In
cities that have been riven by civil strife it is very difficult
to find symbols to which all warring factions can subscribe.

In the City Park of Mostar we have an interesting
example: a life-sized bronze statue of Bruce Lee. After
months of intense debate the American martial artist of
Chinese descent was selected as a symbol of the fight against ethnic divisions. The project of the statue was spearheaded by the youth group Mostar Urban Movement, who saw the statue as “an attempt to question symbols, old and new, by mixing up high grandeur with mass culture and kung fu.” In Bruce Lee they found somebody who at the same time was “far enough away” from the Bosnian society (so that nobody for instance would ask on what side he took part in during World War II) and close enough to be a “part of our common idea of universal justice.” In the eyes of the immortalized Lee it doesn’t matter if you are Muslim, Serb or Croat. As one of the members of the Urban Movement put it: “We hope that the good feeling he gives will encourage communication between two divided sides of the city.”

* 

Let us consider this remarkable passage in the Book of Judges:

The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan River opposite Ephraim. Whenever an Ephraimite fugitive said, “Let me cross over,” the men of Gilead asked him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” If he said, “No”, then they said to him, “Say ‘Shibboleth!’” If he said, “Sibboleth” (and could not pronounce the word correctly), they grabbed him and executed him right there at the fords of the Jordan. On that day forty-two thousand Ephraimites fell dead. (Judges 12:5-6)

The incident presents a stunning staging of the logics at play in so-called identity conflicts. Firstly, it makes obvious that any set of signs can function as a marker of difference and partition. Your dialect, the color of your skin, your gender, what you eat, how you dress, the music you listen to, et cetera. They serve as passwords, opening up or closing down the space within which your life may evolve. It entails a double procedure: while inscribing some people into the community others are proscribed. The logic of inclusion is correlated with the logic of exclusion; together
IN THE EYES OF THE IMMORTALIZED LEE
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU ARE MUSLIM, SERB OR CROAT.
they form the never ending process of establishing the boundaries between different communities.

If the naked eye can’t disclose the soul of a certain body its hidden identity must be carved out on its surface by tattooing it with symbols, making it obvious to everybody that this particular body belongs to a certain group. The cross around a human neck, the number engraved on the camp prisoner’s limbs, the foreskin which is cut off—human bodies are the site of identification policies that inscribe them in contending empires of signs. Wherever there is a body there is some sort of power imposing itself upon it. Marking and labeling it.

Secondly, the scene reveals to us that the drawing up of boundaries may invade any kind of space—the river Jordan can be matched by an invisible line between trenches on the battlefield, a mountain range that separates two territories, a boulevard that splits a city in two parts,
a workplace that is closed to men with turbans or women wearing veils, a park-bench with the inscription Whites only or a nightclub that shuts the door on dark-skinned peoples. These dividing lines do not only decide who is who, they also organize the distribution of resources and delights, of power and rights. The urban space is imbued with both invisible and visible borders that tend to enhance the citizens’ distrust of each other and constantly remind them about the materialized zones of vulnerability in the urban landscape.

The interrogative logic of “Say ‘Shibboleth’” comes in many forms and many of us can easily remember the discriminatory measures that targeted ‘foreign-looking’ individuals throughout Sweden in the wake of Operation REVA (Rule of Law and Effective Enforcement Work). The law was issued in 2009 in order to render more efficient the deportation of undocumented immigrants. The police stepped up their efforts by questioning so called suspicious looking people in the transit systems of Malmö and Stockholm. Given that the aim of these procedures was to clearly identify the invisible mind of the Non-Swedish Other through the prism of the visible body, these identification checks promptly mirrored the practice of racial profiling. In the blink of an eye all seemingly non-Caucasian citizens were suddenly perceived as guilty until proven innocent. As one leading critic put it: “The police operations have turned the metro turnstiles into a life-threatening danger zone for the most vulnerable people in our society.”
It is not what an identity is that’s important, but what it is possible to do in and against its name. Not what a certain group really is or has been, but what is signed with its name. There is no such thing as a once and for all given identity—there is only the construal of identifications stirred up by the different empire of signs that surround and pervade our lives. Humans navigate in an uncertain terrain, constantly beset by birdcalls and warning cries, trying to both define and identify them: “Join us!”, “You are either with or against us”, “Stick to your own race”, et cetera. Through a certain way of life you take part in the narrative by confirming the logics of the boundaries that it proposes. At any rate, we are all delivering answers to the invisible questionnaire underpinning the community: Who is who? Who will do what? By adhering to a specific empire of signs you are adding your own life to a certain narrative that is in the process of being written. However, if you refuse to partake in the hegemonic narratives of your age you may uncover their contingent and imaginary character: remember the heroic acts of Rosa Parks in 1955 when she challenged the materialized infrastructure of the prevalent empire of signs by refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama. Rather than ranting about identities we would be better off if we conceived of communities as conjurations. We live our lives within the confines of more or less contingent coalitions, anchored in narratives that are set up in the historically conditioned interplay between different political forces and socioeconomic realities. This agonizing dependence compels the subject to erase the external conditions of its own existence: “I must forget the fragile foundation upon which my life is erected and close my eyes to the fact that no identification can ever—be entirely materialized nor reach and touch the totality of my existence.”
DEMONS, GHOSTS, ZOMBIES

THE CITY IS A PHANTOMPOLIS AND OUR DAILY LIVES REVOLVE AROUND THESE INVISIBLE INHABITANTS
Cities are besieged by the dead. The deceased somehow remain on the side of the living no matter how hard we try to send them off to the ‘other-side’. Sometimes it is through the very act of dying that somebody becomes more alive than ever before. That is why the struggle for the future always turns into a struggle about the past. Demons, ghosts, zombies—the city is a Phantomopolis and our daily lives revolve around these invisible inhabitants. They haunt our homes and dreams with their demand for retribution and rehabilitation. In the aftermath of a war people find themselves embodied in Prince Hamlet: the murdered find their strength in the survivor’s feeling of guilt. The crucial logic of martyrdom resides in this grim demand from the dead to the living: “Don’t let this sacrifice be in vain!” It falls upon us to render possible their resurrection on the battlefield and the taking of revenge upon their tormentors (this is for instance a central motive in the recurrent patriotic Serbian narrative about the slain heroes at the Battle of Kosovo Field in 1398).

In the wars of the living the deceased become pieces that move about in a rather unpredictable way. In divided and polarized cities—especially those on the brink of violent clashes—people seem to be convinced that the past can be altered. “Not even the dead”, writes the German philosopher Walter Benjamin, “will be safe from the enemy if he wins.” (One obvious example would be the large-scale devastation of the Partisan Memorial Cemetery during the shelling of Mostar, originally opened by Tito in 1965 in honor of the Yugoslav Partisans who were killed during World War II). In war-torn times conflicting groups nourish narratives in which the dead and the living are brought together as transhistorical subjects that oppose each other. The power of attraction of a political ideology appears to be less dependent on its internal rationality than on the blood that has been shed in its name. In the mental infrastructure of the city the dead walk again on the legs of the living. The martyr’s square, common to so many cities around the world, is one of the most prominent ways to materialize this imaginary community of the dead. The problem resides in deciding who is to be considered a martyr and for what specific reason.
In this way the city repeats its usual life by moving back and forth on its empty chessboard. The people constantly play the same scenes, but with different opponents, they repeat the same phrases but with different intonations, they yawn together with different mouths.

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (1972)

The politics of life (bio-politics) and death (thanato-politics) go hand in hand. The power of the prevailing order is set to work through this double movement: on the one hand it deals with destruction, subjugation and mere annihilation (with regard to its enemies); on the other hand it operates through the creation, construction and mobilization of new life forces (regarding its friends). Hence, while the enemies must learn to fear death (in order to remain in the grip of power) the friends must learn how to surmount their fear (in order to be able to sacrifice their particular lives for the preservation of the life of the nation, et cetera). In this manner death is put in the service of life, preferably of course the death of the Other. It is as stewards of life and survival, in respect to the conjurations of ‘race’, that so many regimes have considered the slaughtering of the enemy as vitally important. Even flagrant massacres of civilians and the laying waste of entire cities are thus proclaimed as necessary for the security of the nation.

Hence, the right to life is as conditioned as the prohibition against murder. By proclaiming a state of emergency, in the name of the security for a certain group, the door is set open for the annihilation of the Other. Even in our times of universal rights these states of exception flourish across the globe, increasing the authority of the governments by giving them a legal pretext to diminish, supersede or blatantly reject the rights of certain individuals or groups. These ‘outlaws’ (for instance the so-called terrorists and fanatics in the war on terror) are deprived of any legal rights, inside as well as outside a given polis, and are thus merged into some kind of nameless and unclassifiable being who only understands one language—violence.
To literally eradicate one part of the social body—the Other—is of course the most extreme form of trying to get rid of it. Yet, there are other more subtle ways to come to terms with the enemy. From Ancient Greece we inherit the devastating procedure of ostracism where the declared enemy of the state is exiled from society and in modern times we have seen how the camp in its various forms (from Goli Otok to Guantanamo) has been turned into an efficient way of depriving targeted groups of their legal rights. Marginalized from and reduced to silence in the urban scape they are converted into impotent spectators of their own destinies and identities. Not entirely dead yet, but diminished into living a zombie-like existence. The modern neoliberal state tends to administer these marginalizing procedures in a totally different way: by siding with capital and being deaf to the needs of the masses it renders possible the distribution of resources and pleasure to the already affluent while spreading the sense of powerlessness and isolation to the impoverished portions of the urban fabric. In the suburbs (which etymologically speaking means under the city) of the gentrified metropolises of Europe there is a growing fear of being reduced to powerlessness in the face of urban development. These people run the risk of ending up outside the field of vision, like invisible ghosts and zombies destined for silence and disappearance.

A staggering example from Beirut may shed some light over the mechanisms of the neoliberal state at its purest: on 16 February 1996, during the rebuilding of the old city center by the powerful private company Solidere, its bulldozers crushed a bombed-out home in order to build new houses and hotels for the well-to-do on its ruins. The only problem was that the edifice was occupied by a family of homeless Palestinians—and they were still in the building when it was razed. With their deaths it became clear to many that the new Beirut would in fact be two: one for the privileged and one for the country’s zombies.

A similar setting appears to be making its way into some of the most abandoned parts of the major urban centers of Europe. Instead of one polis for all, it is split in two, one for the wealthy and powerful and another for the powerless, and as in all blatant class-based societies this
division is not merely economic and political but also linked up with ethnic and racial differences. An essential part of the recurrent eruptions of riots and violence (from Clichy-sous-Bois in Paris to Husby in Stockholm) in socio-economically marginalized areas stems from this resentment.

* 

The call for ‘public order’ is a call for transparency. The invisible is to be made visible. No one shall be able to hide behind a veil, of any kind. Every single body of the community must be counted, be given a name, a number and a code. On the ontological level there is no abyss between inscribing a sign of power directly on the skin and identifying the subject through the DNA of his skin. Invisibility becomes synonymous to danger and risk. There is a constant dialectic between the level of visibility and invisibility in a society. The unknowable is then only conceived of as disorder.

When the call for order becomes more poignant every remnant of ambivalence—pertaining to the question of who is who and what is what—must be repressed. Obscurity and in-distinctiveness are banned. The discourse of security beleaguer the minds of the people. In such a city of panic everybody tends to make up imaginary worlds in order to feel safe from the turbulence outside. At the end of the day there seems to be only one emotion left in the urban space: fear. And fear is indeed a tremendous tool for scrupulous politicians as it feeds on the limitless vulnerability of humans.

It appears as though there are no boundaries for what we can allow ourselves to do in the name of our horrific fragility. To begin with nationalists of all sorts endeavor to turn the historical record into a narrative of self-justification. During the wars in former Yugoslavia the contestants had a particular interest in converting their history into fate, so that the past could serve to explain away their hatreds. The nationalists’ narratives of the past become part of the materialized infrastructure that galvanizes our memories of the wicked deeds of the Other while helping us to forget our own abominable crimes. The problem is of
course that even outside observers tend to subscribe to the stories. As a result everybody started repeating the tale that the roots of the wars between Serbs and Croats laid in the fact that the Croats were Catholic, European, and Austro-Hungarian in origin, while the Serbs were essentially Orthodox, Byzantine Slav, with an added tinge of Turkish cruelty and indolence. Yet it is not how the past dictates to the present, but how the present manipulates the past that is decisive.

* 

_The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities committed by his own side, but he has a remarkable capacity for not even hearing about them._

George Orwell, _Notes on Nationalism_ (1945)

* 

At times the slaughtering of people has in it a larger purpose beyond the act of killing itself: killing is administered in order to instill a visceral fear in the population and to display who is the true master of their destiny. When the climate of fear pervades a city its inner divisions erupt and the urban space turns into a site for trench warfare. There have been many instances where entire cities have been placed under siege. Let us recall that it didn’t take more than a couple of snipers to destabilize the state of Ohio, USA during the summer months of 2003. Schools and institutions shut down and an all-pervasive fear spread among the people. Just as in the case of the so-called “Laser-Man” who, in the early 1990s, targeted and killed ‘foreign-looking’ individuals in Sweden causing vast areas of the urban landscape to bear the traces of panic.

In the case of the besieged cities of Mostar and Beirut (and we must of course never forget the murderous assault on Sarajevo that lasted 1,395 days) its citizens came to understand that it was only by defying the imminent threat of death that they could overcome the growing feeling of impotence and the loss of inner dignity. Somehow life must go on. There
are occasions where fear itself might be shrugged off through the identification with something presumed greater than the individual; in its own right it might be the nation or the city. As one of the characters puts it in the movie Welcome to Sarajevo: “The siege is Sarajevo.” In the end only the city is real and lasting, everything else becomes more or less contingent and transient. The city itself is turned into the essential hero of the historical drama. The dialectic between fear and resistance, panic and resilience, pervades the city as though it were a living subject protecting itself from the impending urbicide of its aggressors.

*  

In one of his lectures Sigmund Freud recounts a story that pinpoints one of the essential mechanisms of group psychology. The blacksmith of a minor village has committed an atrocious crime that must be redeemed in order to restore harmony to the community. The problem is that the court soon realizes that there is only one blacksmith in the entire village and that he therefore is indispensable. After close scrutiny it is compelled to draw the stupendous conclusion: as the village has no less than three tailors the court selects one of them and passes him over to the hangman.

With his Jewish background Freud was well acquainted with the logic of the scapegoat within European Anti-Semitism and he constantly tried to unearth the way that this mechanism, which he called Verschiebung (i.e. displacement), operates. Instead of directly confronting the shortcomings
within a group, they are covered up by channelizing them onto an outer instance, this displacement enables a convenient outlet for the otherwise threatening inner aggression of a particular community. In addition, it consolidates the frail cohesion within the group. Freud remarks that “we are all but haphazard members of the herd” and concludes that it is only possible “to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness.”

*

One might wonder why the scapegoat has been such an essential feature of human strife and antagonism throughout the centuries. It is fascinating that so many repressed drives can be projected onto one and the same person or group. Freud took note of the fact that the act of displacement often is contiguous to what he called Verdichtung (i.e. condensation). We know for instance that racist discourse joyfully accuses the Other of being guilty both of stealing our jobs and exploiting the social allowances. He is, at once, disgusting and capable of stealing “our” women. At the same time too different. “He refuses to assimilate, to learn our language, to be a part of our way of life” and too look-a-like. “He pretends to be like us by behaving in strict accordance to our formal manners—but we know, of course, that behind the visible mask of the body there lurks the invisible and dreadful soul.” Whatever he or she does the Other can never be anything but almost the same, but not quite. No matter how much they want to change, they will remain essentially different.

The essential function of displacement is that of diverting attention from the real antagonisms of a society, its injustices and inequalities, its poverty and lack of democracy. The presumed Other is said to be not only a threat to our biology, our lives, by infusing disorder and diseases into the community, he also attempts to undermine the core of our social existence, our way of life, disrupting the narratives and practices by we which organize our enjoyment. It is through this image of the ominous Other that our own grandiose self-image is constructed.
It is indeed an arduous task to surpass this “narcissism of minor differences” that, according to Freud, is at the core of all kinds of identity conflicts. Sometimes even the most tiniest difference, which are hardly noteworthy before the conflict has erupted, is exalted to the point that it becomes an insurmountable obstacle for coexistence. It is apt in this context to quote the historian Michael Ignatieff: “The smaller the real difference is between two contending peoples the larger it is bound to loom in their imagination. Enemies need each other to remind themselves of who they are. “A Croat, thus, is someone who is not a Serb. A Serb is someone who is not a Croat.” The innumerable massacres perpetrated throughout history between different Christian sects is another daunting illustration of this Other, who indeed is almost the same, but not quite, and therefore comes to epitomize all that is evil, dirty, sick, ugly and disordered.

* 

The history of planning and urban management could be written as the attempt to manage fear in the city: generically, fear of disorder and fear of dis/ease, but specifically fear of those bodies thought to produce that order or dis/ease—at different historical moments and places these have included women, the working-class, gays, youths, and so on.

Leonie Sandercock, COSMOPOLIS II (2003)

* 

The vulnerability of the human species makes it very inventive. Never knowing entirely what’s going on inside the frontal lobes of the other we tend to construct our own version of it. As the dangers to our lives are manifold we must constantly be on our guard. The spreading of rumors flows from this predicament and it is one of the most injurious and dangerous mechanisms in any society. It can make the already frail fabric of our life burst at its seams. The interplay of harmful rumors and the murderous roaming of political speech are in themselves triggers for urban
disintegration. If the other is said to be gunning for your life you’d better strike first. The civil wars in Lebanon and former Yugoslavia are cases in point. A rumor has the enigmatic aptitude to be considered more truthful for every time it is pronounced. The rumor can change the very mental landscape within which people conceive themselves in the context of the urban milieu. The urban environment might be constructed out of steel and concrete but ultimately people shape their lives on the basis of the idea that they have of their city. For the citizens of Beirut it must have been a dreadful experience to observe how quickly the very notion of the city as a symbol for peace and freedom (“Beirut as the Paris of the Middle East”) was disrupted and transformed into its opposite: a space where bleeding bodies were scattered all over the streets. Here is how its citizens were portrayed in the guide, Album des guides blues, published just before the war broke out in 1975: “Welcoming, open, tolerant, these words that usually seem abstract in the extreme, permeate the Lebanese even in their most modest gestures and daily life.” Not long after the same people were characterized as barbarians, fanatics and terrorists. Through rumors blatant lies about the Other merge into self-fulfilling prophecies. In virtue of our inclination, to fear, unfounded suspicions lay the groundwork for new pugnacious empires of signs that permeate and divide the city. An old Arabic proverb remarks that the sword brings to a close what the tongue once started. Truly the words of the reckless can pierce like swords.

* * *

Overnight Beirut seemed to have been transformed from something beautiful and friendly, bordered by the sea, the sky and the trees, to a magnet that attracted even the needles that lay hiding in crevices and corners.

Hanan al-Shayk, BEIRUT BLUES (1992)
اليوم تبدأ اجتماعات المؤتمر الوطني الفلسطيني
القاهرة - 29 - الوكالات - يفتح هنا هذا المؤتمر الوطني الفلسطيني الذي تشارك فيه جميع الجماعات الدبلوماسية.
وذكرت بعض ممثلي هذه الجماعات أن أول مهمة مؤثرة ستكون تشكيل لجنة
العسكرية والسياسية المهمة ومسؤولة
عن تنفيذ المؤتمر قضية مساعدة المليارات
الإجنبية لدول أخرى تؤيد إسرائيل.
ومن المفترض أن المؤتمر سيراقب جيدا
على رفع اسم دولة سلطنة أردن.
الشرق الأوسط.
وستستند إلى المؤشر سيرجع تداعياته
إلى الدول العربية بفضلها تبحث المساعدات المالية والمادية.

غرارات إسرائيلية
على المواقع المصرية
القاهرة - 29 - الوكالات - سرح
ناظر بريطانى هنا بأن القوات المغادرة
النرويج تأتي بوساطة إسرائيلية.

لا يزال الجليل
دار الأردن

النرويج

ممثلة في تجمعات إسرائيلية في هلسنك
النرويج.

وينوي في نقطة ترفايا عسكري-
الثلاثة في القارة الأوروبية.
ويعتبر أن القوانين شرعت ومباشر
في بعض منظور هام وبينة
النرويج.

النرويج على الصفحة 8

لا يزال الجليل
دار الأردن

ممثلة في تجمعات إسرائيلية في هلسنك
النرويج.

وينوي في نقطة ترفايا عسكري-
الثلاثة في القارة الأوروبية.
ويعتبر أن القوانين شرعت ومباشر
في بعض منظور هام وبينة
النرويج.

لا يزال الجليل
دار الأردن

ممثلة في تجمعات إسرائيلية في هلسنك
النرويج.

وينوي في نقطة ترفايا عسكري-
الثلاثة في القارة الأوروبية.
ويعتبر أن القوانين شرعت ومباشر
في بعض منظور هام وبينة
النرويج.

لا يزال الجليل
دار الأردن

ممثلة في تجمعات إسرائيلية في هلسنك
النرويج.

وينوي في نقطة ترفايا عسكري-
الثلاثة في القارة الأوروبية.
ويعتبر أن القوانين شرعت ومباشر
في بعض منظور هام وبينة
النرويج.

لا يزال الجليل
دار الأردن

ممثلة في تجمعات إسرائيلية في هلسنك
النرويج.

وينوي في نقطة ترفايا عسكري-
الثلاثة في القارة الأوروبية.
ويعتبر أن القوانين شرعت ومباشر
في بعض منظور هام وبينة
النرويج.

لا يزال الجليل
دار الأردن

ممثلة في تجمعات إسرائيلية في هلسنك
النرويج.

وينوي في نقطة ترفايا عسكري-
الثلاثة في القارة الأوروبية.
ويعتبر أن القوانين شرعت ومباشر
في بعض منظور هام وبينة
النرويج.
How can we curb the fear of the Other and the narratives that turn the Other into an exception and a scapegoat that lawfully can be annihilated? How are we to overcome this mentality of isolation where everything and everybody is measured and estimated through the prism of difference and division? By what means can we restrain the spreading of fear and its sinister companion, the forming of spiteful rumors, from haunting the urban space? Are there ways to mend the tattered confidence between different communities within one and the same polis?

It seems to me that there are two chief ways of situating oneself in the world. The first one takes the autonomous and transparent subject as its point of departure. Introspection is the order of the day: first we know how we are, and after that we may continue our search for knowledge and truth by discovering things outside us. Step by step we move on, gradually from the center (ourselves) to the periphery, until we reach the most far flung regions of the world. This applies also to History: We are what we are and we have forever been the same (the transhistorical subject somehow lives through time as though time didn’t change the subject itself). At the beginning was the home and everything else is measured through the norms and standards of that which is already familiar. Life becomes more risky and complicated as we take on new things. In order to preserve the security of our community we need to shut off, and even annihilate, parts of the unknown world. As former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger once said: “Absolute security for one part means absolute insecurity for all others.”

By contrast, the other way introduces a radically different perspective: instead of starting out with some kind of absolute identity (the I, the We, the Here and the Now) everything is considered to be entangled in the intertwining of ages and places. If we wish to understand a certain element, it might be a human being or a political event, we can only grasp it in its historical and geographical context. In such a framing everything must be analyzed through the prism of, more or less, everything else: you can never understand yourself solely by introspection, you have to reflect yourself through others, through the political and economic realities of your surrounding and through the history that has
preceded you and shaped the very language and culture in which you are embedded.

Any genealogy of the self will hence reveal that you are not an essence but a relation and that this relation is mediated through the particular empire of signs in which you are formed. Here you don’t start off by separating yourself and your home from the rest of the world and then gradually expanding to understand what is outside it. Instead you understand that everything is connected in more or less boundless ways. There is no such thing as an isolated island of self cut off from the fluctuations of history and the vicissitudes of global political economy.

Hence, we must replace the notion of the local with the notion of the glocal, stressing the fact that the local is always already penetrated by the global, and supplant the idea that security can be achieved by separating ourselves from the other with the insight that it is only by assuring justice and dignity to everybody that there might be security for anybody. That our destinies are inextricably linked together—and that there are no walls or identity checkpoints that can help us escape this predicament, is more obvious than ever in the era of globalization and urbanization. Think about it, almost eighty percent of the world’s population will soon live in urbanized areas and the majority of them will be wired to the global state of affairs in one way or the other. This applies furthermore to the dead on the so-called ‘other-side’. There will never be a barrier between the present and the past that can prevent history from seeping into the present. Let us for instance recollect the still unfolding ramifications of what (allegedly) happened to a poor carpenter almost two thousand years ago. Or the uncontrollable and still ongoing reverberations of a single bullet in a tiny corner of our globe on the 28th of June in the year 1914.

* 

It is urgent that this shift of perspective from the local to the glocal resonates in urban planning and the way we organize our lives in the polis. First of all, we better move beyond the classic paradigm according to which every city, or country, must have one center where the values of
civilization are to be unified and condensed. This ranges from the spiri-
tual level (the churches, the mosques, et cetera) and the economic level
(the banks, the markets, the Exchange, the stores) to the levels of pow-
er, language and culture (the offices, the cafés, the theaters, et cetera.).
The idea of a centralized city bring about a narrative that tells us that
the city center is tantamount to truth, pleasure and meaning. Thereby
undercutting the poetic and creative potential of all other parts of the
cities and fostering a culture where there is only one narrative (or per-
haps a pocketful of them) instead of countless versions of what it is like
to be, to live and to explore life in an urbanized world. If the opposition
between center and periphery widens and becomes linked with ‘racial’
segregation, it will open the doors for a power struggle regarding exactly
how the center is to be formed and of which empire of signs, which coat
of arms, it shall bear the stamp.

On the contrary, decentralization may promote what Charles
Jencks coined as a heteropolis, where the architecture of the urban land-
scape responds to the pluralism of the glocal by creative and inclusive
eclecticism. For far too long the crucial question has been neglected:
how can the art of building and shaping cities reflect the essential polit-
ical features and challenges of the modern era? To begin with we must
supplant the traditional idea of integration (How are we to integrate the
stranger into the nation?) with the much broader task of fashioning the
city in accordance with the needs and hardships that afflict humanity
in its entirety. How can the dormant energies in all the narrow minded
local communities all over the world be transformed into glocal fields
of forces to jointly combat poverty, injustice and the threat of global
environmental disaster? Beyond the urge for control and unification the
heteropolis conveys an image of the city where every body can actively
partake in constructing it, by relating to it in ever-new ways and increas-
ing the number of readings of the city. Rendering possible a patchwork
of narratives where we are people that matter on places that matter.

As narratives speak to us, and about us, within the urban spaces
to which be belong, we must facilitate and foster our sense of partic-
ipation in these stories. No city should be allowed to speak with only
one voice. As the world is facing increasing urbanization the heteropolis
is bound to become a major urban form of the future. Instead of one
LJUBLJANSKA BANK TOWER, MOSTAR
— "THE SNIPER TOWER."
OCCUPIED BY SERB AND CROAT FORCES DURING THE WAR
HOLIDAY INN BEIRUT
— A SYMBOL OF LEBANON’S
GOLDEN AGE, BUT ALSO ITS
BRUTAL CIVIL WAR
single narrative these cities encourage a hotchpotch of narratives and gal-va

going a seemingly endless coupling of different empire of signs. Thereby
inventing new visions able to bring together twisted elements that were
not supposed to mix. The heteropolis of Jencks finds an interesting corre-
spondence in the heterotopia of Michel Foucault: a place that is “capable
of juxtaposing in a single real place several places and several stories that
are in themselves incompatible”. He exemplifies this with the theater: onto
one and the same stage it brings forth a whole series of places and
narratives, one after the other, however foreign to each other they might
be. The city converts into a polyglot and an ever changing stage.

There are certainly many hurdles to be jumped before we get to
there. There is no ground for any kind of unbridled enthusiasm just yet.
Let us for instance recall the imaginary status that Beirut occupied in
the Arab world before the civil war. In many ways Beirut was indeed a
form of heteropolis as it was founded upon the remarkable encounter
between all sorts of religions and ethnicities. And of course upon the
bringing together of two categories of fugitives: Arabs fleeing repression
in the neighboring countries and rural Lebanese fleeing from the closure
of their confessional and tribal origins. Beirut was a space for freedom
and individuality and for a long time considered as the Expatriate Cap-
it of the Arab world, being immensely generous and hospitable to a
whole generation of exiles. The problem was that Beirut was not able to
assume the consequences of the very modernity it had engendered and
to embrace the abundance of the unsettling and often revolutionary nar-
ratives that had entered the city. As the Lebanese writer Elias Khoury
succinctly puts it: by receiving all these rebellious Arab intellectuals “it
was in the throes of laying the groundwork for an explosive mixture that
threatened the whole region’s established order.” Lebanon failed to un-
derstand “that receiving requires starting over on new foundations and
that once started upon that road, there could be no going back, but only
carrying through to the end.” Accordingly the dream of revolution was
swiftly turned into the nightmare of the civil war.
Let us return to Mostar and Bruce Lee. There is indeed one other symbol that delineates a common ground for its citizens: the Old Bridge (Stari Most). It is already in itself a kind of heterotopia. In that single space there is the piecing together of all sorts of peoples and narratives. During its long history it has not only interconnected the two banks of the river Neretva (which in recent times has served as the materialized infrastructure that separates the different ethnic communities of the city) but it has also opened up a space where this polarized infrastructure is distorted. Suleiman the Magnificent commissioned the bridge in 1557 and according to some sources the name of the city itself means “bridge-keeper” (Mostari was the name given to the keepers of the guard towers on the two sides of the bridge). Consequently, when the city’s aggressors consciously destroyed the bridge on November 9th 1993, not only did they attack the bridge itself but also the very idea of Mostar. If the bombing of the bridge is illustrative of what might happen when fear of the Other (together with imperial dreams) come to dominate humanity, then the ancient and beautiful Stari Most, finally rebuilt in July 2004, symbolizes the opposite. Becoming both a glade where light and life trickle through and a handshake that stretches towards the unknown in both space and time.

* Of all the things man builds, nothing in my eyes is better and more valuable than bridges. Bridges are more important than the houses, brighter than the temples, because they are intended for a greater number of people; they are everybody’s property and equal to all, useful, always erected in a meaningful way, at the point where the highest number of human needs cross. 
Ivo Andrić, THE BRIDGE ON THE DRINA (1945)
In the beginning there was not the city, but the resistant shard; not the organic community, but more or less the cumbersome fragments. There has never been an original Whole into which all parts could once again harmoniously fit, but only antagonistic pieces that different forces try to exploit and put together in conflicting ways. Consequently there is no point in expecting or even compelling the citizens of a city to love each other (“Heterophilite or die!” as Jencks puts it). The crucial point is to find ways in which we can find meaning, value and even joy in coexistence, given that our destinies are intertwined in one way or the other—with or against our will. No matter how hard we try, there is no way to escape each other. Neither islands or walls can protect us from the insistent presence of the putative Other. Instead, we need to build (down to the last letter) on the fact that only mental confinement awaits us if we try to pull down the bridges over the troubled waters that surrounds us.

We know that there is a continuous dialectic between the material infrastructure and the mental infrastructure of a city. Institutions and imaginations, edifices and narratives, structures and dreams, interact and feed upon each other. The urban landscape is in itself capable of both fortifying and erasing social inequalities and racial segregation. Accordingly, the best way to strengthen the links between people is to promote justice, equality and the opportunity of genuine participation in the construction of the urban scenery. The occupy movement that spread throughout the world in the wake of the Arab spring taught us that any struggle for democracy requires a twofold strategy: not only do we need to have a say about the actual designing and organizing of the urban milieu, we also need to influence the very idea of the city in which we are supposed to live. “Architecture or revolution!” as the Swiss architect Le Corbusier put it.

A first step in such a direction would be to foster a vibrant and democratic urban culture that would also serve as a barrier to the growth of fear-ridden and vilifying rumors, lurking particularly in the parts of the city that are either abandoned (from impoverished suburbs to down-right urban slums) or particularly privileged (from gentrified neighborhoods to gated communities). If the petty and often simple-minded
passions of ethnicity and race, with all its narcissism and propensity for scapegoating, are allowed to suck up all space in the public debate, the singularity of our most beautiful passions and the most interesting prospects for the glocal urban fabric run the risk of dropping out. Few things are more vital to a viable city than an incessant critical outlook on its own political life, on its dreams and aspirations, its shortcomings and its assets. As we are all, from birth, too fragile for the world that we are thrown into, there are only a limited number of ways to make us feel somewhat safe in the city. It begins with the more or less convulsive identification with a certain group (the sense of protection that comes with the haphazard belonging to a we) and proceeds to the politics of isolation that may, or may not, follow out of this identification (the building of walls and procurement of arms to keep the Other at bay). Yet there is still the possibility of a creative culture, fertile enough to lead us out of the mentality of isolation by encouraging us to enrich our palette of emotions and thoughts so that our lives won’t be reduced to the pure dimension of fear and its ensuing companions: stupidity and paranoia.
STOCKTOWN BLUES

Railway dreams, gloomy visions
& roots that are not rooted in your soil.
Umbilical attachments I breathe these streets.
Concrete inhalations, every station has a blurred memory attached to it.
This is a one way trip to a center that is centered around neoclassical, rococo & renaissance.

Delightful ambiance where different periods of time collapse into each other
making my current surroundings a masterpiece for the tourist’s gallery.
Postcard fantasy.
Stockholm you are truly a rare Scandinavian beauty with a twisted soul.

Seeking for my essence in the middle of nowhere?
Where can I find someone like me?
But this heavenly environment got me mesmerised.
Daydreaming while I walk on these boulevards holding my mental & spiritual guard up high.

Tired of this pressure of being better & stronger.
I have the obligation to speak louder.
My vocal cords are fighting the voice of white money that echoes against restrictive buildings.
Structures that are aligning themselves against me, against us, against liberty.

I am chained to these streets serving a city that shows no gratitude but demands me to be thankful.
Powerhouses shout out senseless senses about unity but do not make room for more than one identity. I need to escape this Stocktown tragedy. S-town, Stresstown move to the beat of fast footsteps. My way back home, crooked back; back off I am leaving to take the train back to my sanctuary. My mind sings railway-wagon blues as the tunnels guide my thoughts to the right direction. We are transported in this public transport archipelago where subway lines & train tracks connect the islands.

Isolated

for we live in the cracks between segregation & gentrification. Between old & new/new & old but we have no say in this do we? Storytellers from the periphery, raising their fists and their stories.

Stockholm do you see us? Do you hear our voice? or must we raise the volume?

Nachla Libre is a poet from Stockholm.
THIS BOOK IS PUBLISHED, PRODUCED AND DISTRIBUTED BY FÄRGFABRIKEN, SWEDEN.

FÄRGFABRIKEN
LÖVHOLMSBRINKEN 1
SE - 117 43 STOCKHOLM
WWW.FARGFABRIKEN.SE

CREATIVE DIRECTOR  Joachim Granit
EDITOR AND HEAD OF NEW URBAN TOPOLOGIES  Daniel Urey
PROJECT COORDINATOR  Johanna Bratel
PROJECT COORDINATOR  Lara Fakhri
TEXT EDITING  Rebecka Gordan and José Alejandro Perez del Cid
ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITING  José Alejandro Perez del Cid
GRAPHIC DESIGN  Lina Josefina Lindqvist and Johanna Bratel

Copyright © Färgfabriken, 2015. All rights reserved. No parts of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical or otherwise without prior permission from the publisher or from the individual authors.

This publication is funded by PostkodLotteriets Kulturstiftelse.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FÄRGFABRIKEN WOULD LIKE TO THANK POSTKODLOTTERIETS KULTURSTIFTELSE IN STOCKHOLM FOR THEIR COLLABORATION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM "PATCHWORK OF NARRATIVES". A SPECIAL THANKS TO ANGELICA JOHNSSON GERDE, HANNA FELIX, JOSEFINE LINDSTRÖM, DAVID KOLLMERT AND NICKLAS LUND FROM POSTKODLOTTERIETS KULTURSTIFTELSE. FÄRGFABRIKEN WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK OUR PARTNERS IN MOSTAR SENADA DEMIROVIC, DZENANA DEDIC AND IN BEIRUT RANIA RAFEI, JINANE DAGHER, ALI BAIDOUN, NABIL CANAAN AND GHASSAN MAASRI. FINALLY WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK MICHAEL AZAR, ARNA MACKIC, RANIA SASSINE AND NACHLA LIBRE FOR THEIR VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION THAT MADE THIS PUBLICATION POSSIBLE.

IMAGE CREDITS

Johanna Bratel: PAGES 8, 9, 10, 12, 31, 39, 43, 50, 53, 55, 68-69, 78-79, 81, 86-87 & COVER
Lara Fakhri: PAGES 9 & 34
Joachim Granit: PAGES 15 & 29
Lina Josefina Lindqvist: PAGE 46
Arna Mackic: PAGES 18, 20-21, 25, 26, 28, 49 & 82
Daniel Urey: PAGE 44-45

PAGE 40-41: This image by the firm of Maison Bonfils depicts the city of Beirut, Lebanon, sometime in the last third of the 19th century. Maison Bonfils was the extraordinarily prolific venture of the French photographer Félix Bonfils (1831-85), his wife Marie-Lydie Cabanis Bonfils (1837-1918), and their son, Adrien Bonfils (1861-1928).


PAGES 56, 57, 60, 63 & 73: Found photographs and newspaper clippings.