

THE
BLACK
EYES OF
BRUCE
LEE

From Normative to Descriptive &
Prescriptive Multiculturalism

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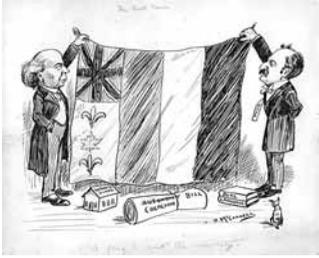
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PART

ONE

The Puzzle of Theories and thoughts

These parts are a review and puzzle of different related theories and thoughts of different thinkers that I have gone through. I was trying to make connections and find already connected themes to my position, thinking and find my own way through my project. It actually maps out my theoretical research, dealing with multiculturalism, polyculturalism, Balkanization that led me to experiment and experience them contextually with Bruce Lee and the city of Mostar.



1

- From Normative to Descriptive and Prescriptive Multicultural- ism

Multiculturalism or cultural pluralism is a policy, ideal, or reality that emphasizes the unique characteristics of different cultures in the world, especially as they relate to one another in immigrant receiving nations. The word was first used in 1957 to describe Switzerland¹ but first came into common currency in Canada in the late 1960s². It quickly spread to other English-speaking and western developed countries.

At the heart of the mythology of the nation remains a deep-seated if largely silent presumption that nations consist of homogenous, self-contained, and largely self-reproducing population groups. After all, what is a nation if it is not born of the like-spirited and like-bodied?

In this concept familiarity and familiarity run together; replication, cultural as much as biological, is the ground of nation-making. If we make ourselves through others, those others must be largely just like us for us to be who we really are collectively, "nationally". This might be called the cloning theory of nation-states.³

1. Multiculturalism & Will Kymlicka Geographical Approaches Iris Blom. 19-12-2006

2. Kymlicka, W. (2001), *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship*, Oxford University Press Inc., New York.

3. Willet, C. (1998), *Theorizing Multiculturalism, A Guide to the Current Debate*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

In this context, what might “multicultural” mean? Two versions are currently on offer. The first is “descriptive multiculturalism” that at the best grudgingly describes the increasing heterogeneity in most post-1945 societies as a result of global political economic changes and (in societies like Britain, France, the Netherlands, even Canada) the rapid migrations following the demise of formal colonial regimes in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia. The second is “normative multiculturalism” that insists on cultural diversity and a proliferation (even relativism) of values at the expense of ideas of national cohesion and unified norms. This entails an acknowledgment, occasionally even celebration, of descriptive diversity on the ethno-racial register. It places “ethnic and identity politics”, claims for right and restitution, and cultural sensitivity at the centre of the political agenda.

“The multicultural” has been being oscillating between these two understandings: description and prescription. Multiculturalism, in short, is assumed to be what happened to nations once their essential purity was challenged by the influx of racial others.⁴

If we take seriously the descriptive realities of heterogeneity, historically and spatially, we would have no need to multicultural insistence. Until then, however, multiculturalism can serve usefully as a bridge to an awareness of the exclusivities propagated in the name of purity (biological, social, political, cultural), and to point us towards more productive possibilities. So: multiculturalism provisionally, until we come to terms with heterogeneities, with impurity, with the nation – then and now, here and there, and all that they entail. It is

“THE MULTICULTURAL” HAS BEEN BEING OSCILLATING BETWEEN THESE TWO UNDERSTANDINGS: DESCRIPTION AND PRESCRIPTION.

the latter definition – that implies a timeless sanctity and impenetrableness of so-called unique, distinct and unchanging cultures; not the fact that societies can and should be inhabited by people from a variety of places and cultures around the world and that these people can and should find a way of living together and learning from each other. This is an important point and an important distinction, especially as its

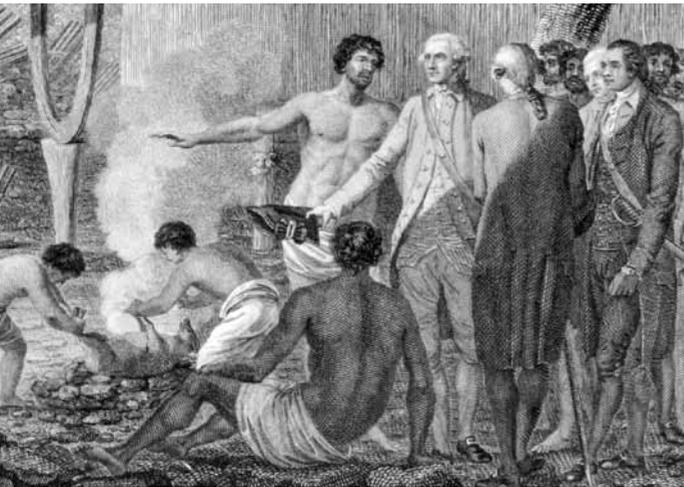
4. The space of multiculturalism, David Theo Goldberg, 15 September 2004, Open democracy

proponents some times mistakenly brand people who oppose normative multiculturalism, racists. The main problem with the monoculturalist, normative brand of multiculturalism is that its proponents often end up having to defend chauvinistic, homophobic bigots who argue that they have the right to promote more or less any reactionary idea, as long as it can be claimed to be part of their culture. The politicians, thinkers and even artists who don't believe in multiculturalism neither in any equality in cultures use this kind of generalization

in culture. In fact this kind of attitude helps the deep passivity in the society. As Zizek pointed out: when good people are tasteless passive and bad people have a strong critical position.⁵

Iranian feminist, Azar Nafisi says: "I very much resent it in the West when people – maybe with good intentions or from a progressive point of view – keep telling me, 'It's their culture' (...). It's like saying, the culture of Massachusetts is burning witches".⁶

THEY ASKED A NEARBY LOCAL: WHAT IS THIS CREATURE CALLED? THE LOCAL RESPONDED "KANGAROO" WHICH MEANS, "I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU". COOK TOOK IT AS THE NAME OF THE CREATURE.



This misunderstanding of culture reminds me the story of the name of Kangaroo. In 4th of August 1770 when Capitan James Cook and the naturalist sir Joseph Banks were exploring the bank of Endeavour River, they happened upon the animal. They asked a nearby local: What is this creature called? The local

5. Zizek, S. (2008). Violence. New York: St. Martin's page 24.

6. Azar Nafisi (in a 2004 interview by Robert. Birnbaum, identitytheory.com) 18 July 2005,

responded "Kangaroo" which means, "I don't understand you". Cook took it as the name of the creature.





2

- Multiculturalism and Balkanization

According to definition of Multiculturalism in Sweden, Multicultural society is recognized as a salad bowl.⁷ It means the identity of each person (culture) is pure as a vegetable. Normative Multiculturalism legitimizes all traditional beliefs that disadvantage women and gays, endorses an inward-looking separation of groups that seek to protect their own cultural purity, and focuses on differences between people and cultures instead of similarities. But cultures are not static and nor are they pure or uncontaminated. On the contrary, cultures intermingle with each other, learn from each other, and thereby remain progressive, vibrant and dynamic.

Normative multiculturalists claim that we should treat all cultures as being equal, since no value is better than another. But isn't a world-centric view better than an egocentric? Isn't an inclusive and progressive stance better than a racist? Isn't any definition of the boundaries of culture(s) impossible, as all cultures are porous and absorbent? And isn't multiculturalism as inherently self-defeating as any form of extreme relativism, because it is seen as superior even though its whole idea is based upon a value system where nothing is supposed to be superior?

7. Inglis, Ch. Multiculturalism: New Policy Response to Diversity. UNESCO. 25. In Sweden, the origins of multiculturalism as a policy, differed yet again. In contrast to Australia and Canada its national identity was not based on a view of itself as a nation of immigrant.



IN FACT BALKANIZATION IS THE SAME IDEA OF MULTICULTURALISM IN PRACTICE WHEN IT COMES TO THE IDEA OF STATE.

since few people in the world live in homogeneous zones, it behoove us all to be multiculturalists. In fact the tolerance, which we practice, should be based on a kind of "inspired adhocacy" where we make decision on the fly and not based on any regulated principle.⁸

In its crudest rendition then, Multiculturalism adopts a culture wherein culture is bounded into authentic zones with pure histories that need to be dignity by policies of diversity. In his work, *The Ticklish Subject*, Slavoj Žižek calls this attitude "racism with a distance". Since the benevolent multiculturalist treats the concept of culture as a homogeneous and a historical thing that can be appreciated, but then remains far outside the enclosed ambit of one's own culture box. This "racism with a distance"⁹

What we might hope for is that perhaps well meant, if not misguided, attempts of multiculturalists of striving for transcending Euro-centric universalism of colonialism (and post- and neo-colonialism for that matter) might lead to the gradual disappearance of the need for strong, inward looking cultural and national ties, and thus to a genuine global consciousness or cosmopolitanism. But for this to happen, we need to stop focusing on what separates us and start focusing on the many things that unite us.

Fish at his very best chapter of his book "The Trouble With Principle", "Boutique Multiculturalism." argues that

8. Fish, Stanley, *The Trouble With Principle*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press,

9. Žižek, Slavoj, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*, verso, 2009

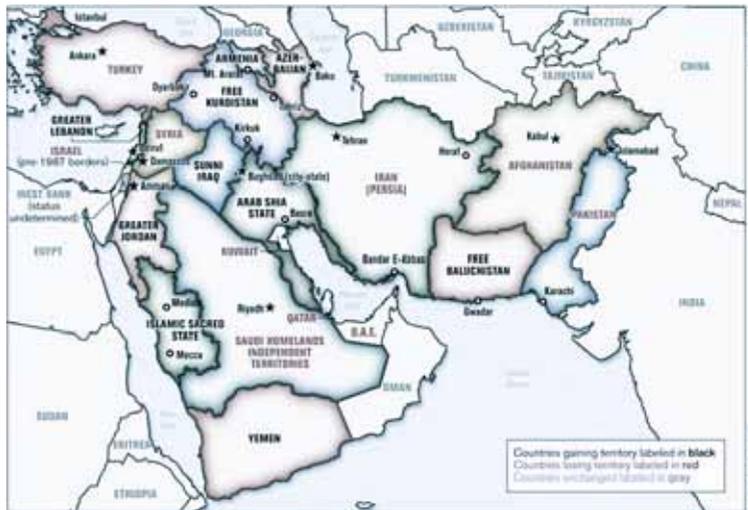
forgets our mulatto history, the long way history, the long way of linkage that tie people together in ways we tend to forget.

There is no clear link between the multiculturalism and the term that so called Balkanization. Balkanization is a geopolitical term, originally used to describe the process of fragmentation or division of a region or state into smaller regions or states. This term historically refers to the division of the Balkan peninsula, formerly ruled almost entirely by the Ottoman Empire, into a number of smaller states between 1817 and 1912.¹⁰ The term however came into common use in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, with reference to the numerous new states that arose from the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire.

In a short Balkanization means: division of a multinational state into smaller ethnically

homogeneous entities. The term also is used to refer to ethnic conflict within multiethnic states. In fact Balkanization is the same idea of Multiculturalism in practice when it comes to the idea of state. In this situation Theoretical multiculturalism loses its power. The idea of relativism will end up with war. The purity of culture (that is findable inside the different ways of reading it) will change his utopian character from utopia to dystopia.

This term is not just descriptive geopolitical term, in fact Understanding the metamorphosis of the utopian normative multiculturalism to dystopian prescriptive balkanization needs research in



10. Gelyny, Misha, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War & the Great Powers, 1804-1999*, Penguin, 2001

different environments. With the very quick view in a wider perspective, we can recognize that we have been surrounded by balkanized societies. The countries and societies that because of the inexorable prescriptive way of reading culture, are balkanized or are going to be. The concept of redrawn Middle East "The New Map of Middle East" is one of the official examples of the neoliberal-political map, according to the theory of balkanization. It has even been presented as a "humanitarian" and "righteous" arrangement that would benefit the people(s) of the Middle East and its peripheral regions.¹¹

In this situation the transformation of the prescriptive multiculturalism (the most idealistic), which is the aspect of the ideology, which provides "prescriptive assertions about an ideal type of society to be achieved some time in the future" and asking the question of "what should be", became a military tool to produce Stability of instability.

11. Peter, R. Blood borders How a better Middle East would look, (Armed Forces Journal, June 2006)



3

The polyculturalism and anti imperialism Bruce lee

International Studies scholar Vijay Prashad has written extensively on kung fu as an anti-racist philosophy. In his 2003, "Bruce Lee and the Anti-imperialism of Kung Fu: A Polycultural Adventure,"¹² in "East Asia Cultures Critique," Prashad says he is interested in "how an investigation of kung fu can help us move from a limited multicultural framework into an antiracist, polycultural one."

In his book "every body was Kung Fu fighting" he argues that Multiculturalism assumes that people come in cultural boxes that are hermetically sealed, that their culture is a thing that is immutable and pure." There was a time when this theory was valuable against the torrent of white supremacy, but now it is itself a problem and it is historically ridiculous. There is no culture that is pure; even those who live in "remote" areas share forms and manners transmitted through traders, etc.¹³

If we assume that cultures are pure and that people live within these cultural boxes, then any struggle on the terrain of race (now seen as culture) is sought to be managed by someone who is a cultural expert or a multicultural officer. This is most obvious on college campuses,

12. Prashad, V. Bruce Lee and the Anti-imperialism of Kung Fu: A Polycultural Adventure positions: east asia cultures critique -(Volume 11, Number 1, Spring 2003).

13. Prashad, V. Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity (Beacon Press, 2002)

where tensions are to be softened by education, which actually means a banal discussion about cultural stereotypes masking as cultural literacy. Multiculturalism fosters the idea of racial harmony, whereas I am more interested in anti-racism, in the struggle to abolish the

(whose content is often colonial ethnology) allows white supremacy to adjudge who is a real native, to say that the rebellious Asian, for example, is doing a disservice to Asian culture. He argues, A polyculturalist sees the world constituted by the interchange of cultural forms,

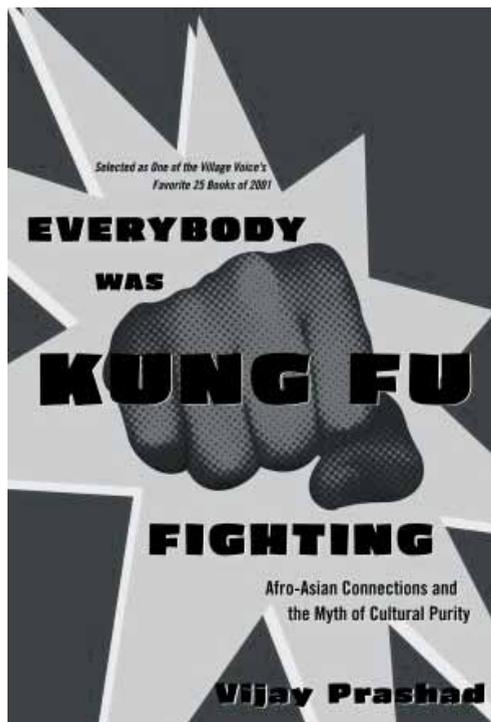
THERE IS NO CULTURE THAT IS PURE; EVEN THOSE WHO LIVE IN “REMOTE” AREAS SHARE FORMS AND MANNERS TRANSMITTED THROUGH TRADERS, ETC.

idea of racial hierarchy and of race itself. As an alternative he advocates something he calls “polyculturalism”:¹⁴

Polyculturalism, taken seriously, obliterates authenticity. The pose of authenticity offers the ruling elites of a “race” to attain demographic power vis-à-vis other “races,” to argue that they represent a group of people and because of “race” can speak for them. Authenticity allows race to top all other social fractures, and thereby give entrenched elites of color the power to be representative when all they are is compradors. Fanon’s diatribe on the “pitfalls of national consciousness” is an early smash at the idea of authenticity. By the way, the argument about the authentic

while multiculturalism (in most incarnations) sees the world as already constituted by different (and discrete) cultures that we can place into categories and study with respect.

14. Parshad, V. Ibid





4

Bruce Lee

Bruce Lee is hard. Bruce Lee is sexy. Bruce Lee is cool. Bruce Lee is not white. Bruce Lee is Asian. Bruce Lee kicks white, Americans, Russians, Japanese, Italians, imperialists, colonialists, capitalists, gangsters and indeed anyone and everyone's ass. This much we know. But is that it? Is that all there is?¹⁵

Born in San Francisco on November 27, 1940, the year of the dragon, Bruce Lee made his first U.S. film, *Golden Gate Girl*, at the age of three months. A child of Chinese opera stars (although his mother was a fourth German), he moved to Hong Kong in his childhood, where he starred in over twenty films, before returning to the United States as an undergraduate at the University of Washington. In Seattle, Bruce threw himself into the Asian American world, working in Chinatown as a busboy and as a teacher of his favorite art, Kung fu in the sticking hands method. He left college to marry Linda Emery, a white American of Swedish English ancestry, against her family's wishes. They soon had a son, Brandon, and a daughter, Shonnon. When he was asked about "racial barriers" he told a Hong Kong journalist in 1972: "I, Bruce Lee, am a man who never follows those fearful formulas... So no matter if your color is black or white, red or blue, I can still make friends



*Taken in the year
1945 in N. K.*

with you without any barrier." In fact, Bruce Lee was one of the first martial arts sifus ("master") to train non-Asians, including people such as Chuck Norris, Roman Polanski, and Karim Abdul-jabbar.

Bruce Lee is hard. Bruce Lee is sexy. Bruce Lee is cool. Bruce Lee is not white. Bruce Lee is Asian. Bruce Lee kicks white, Americans, Russians, Japanese, Italians, imperialists, colonialists, capitalists, gangsters and indeed anyone and everyone's ass.

The anti racism of Bruce Lee was not matched by the world in which he lived. " I am a yellow- faced Chinese. I cannot possibly become an idol for Americans, the white patriachs found their presence foul. Deemed to be nothing but labor (as a coolies). They came to be seen as a fundamentally alien rather than as assailable immigrant. Representation of these foreigners exaggerated certain attributes to render them not only strange, but also inferior.

These cultural stereotypes enable the mockery of a people by suggesting that they could never be part of the society, since they had too much alien culture. This was to change somewhat in the



1960s, as social movement against racism and state management of these movement-helped produce what was known today as multiculturalism.

Within film studies, cultural studies, postcolonial studies and various ethnic identity studies, this appears to be about the long and short of it. These are the main sorts of lessons that are regularly learned from and about Bruce Lee: lessons about identification, lack and desire, about cultural identity, the role of fantasy, about the body as bearer of ideology, the ambivalence of Bruce Lee's texts, the homo at the heart of the hetero, and so on).

By all accounts, in the 1979, Bruce Lee was the very symbol of postcolonial, diasporas multicultural energy (kato) the embodiment of what Rey Chow has called the protestant ethnic'. However, in the book from Tianamen to Time Square 2006 Gina Marchetti considers the waning of the affect of socio-political charge of the image and politics of Bruce Lee in America.¹⁶ Bruce Lee films contained or communicated or encoded in condensed and

displaced from several interlocking socio-political antagonism and hegemony, center and periphery, and, crucially perhaps, nation and belonging, or nation and longing.

Meaghan Morris tries to look at Bruce Lee 'otherwise' by focusing on the peculiar importance of pedagogy when it comes to grasping his significance.¹⁷ She points out the enduring centrality of pedagogy in martial arts films and the often-overlooked importance of Bruce Lee as a teacher. It is crucial to approach Bruce Lee in terms of pedagogy, argues Morris, because 'the overwhelming concern with "the body" in recent cultural criticism can obscure this aspect of (Western) Bruce Lee worship and narrow unduly our approach to action cinema in general.' So, Morris draws attention to the significant 'persistence of the training film in Hollywood cinema,' and to the ways that 'training films give us lessons in using aesthetics understood as a practical discipline – "the study of the mind and emotions in relation to the sense of beauty" – to overcome personal and social adversity'.¹⁸

16. Abbas, A. (1997), *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*, Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press.

17. Morris, M. (2001), 'Learning from Bruce Lee', in M. Tinkcom and A. Villarejo (eds), *Keyframes: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies*, London: Routledge, pp. 171-84.

18. Morris, M. (2001), 'Learning from Bruce Lee', in M. Tinkcom and A. Villarejo (eds), *Keyframes: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies*, London: Routledge, pp. 171-84.



DON'T FOLLOW LEADERS.



In September 1971, Black Belt Magazine published an article called 'Liberate Yourself from Classical Karate'¹⁹ Bruce Lee wrote it. Learning is not definitely mere imitation, nor is it the ability to accumulate and regurgitate fixed knowledge. Learning is a constant process of discovery, a process without end. In JKD we begin not by accumulation but by discovering the cause of our ignorance, a discovery that involves a shedding process.

Unfortunately, most students in the martial arts are conformists. Instead of learning to depending on them for expression; they blindly follow their instructors, no longer feeling alone, and finding security in mass imitation. The product of this imitation is a dependent mind. Independent inquiry, which is essential to genuine understanding, is sacrificed. Look around the martial arts and witness the assortment of routine performers, trick artists, desensitized robots, glorifiers of the past and so on – all followers or exponents of organized despair. The only help is self-help. Push yourself.

Know thyself. You already know yourself, in yourself. Subject all institutions to a deconstructive questioning. Don't follow leaders. Question all beliefs. Experiment with interdisciplinarity in the name of antidisciplinarity.



19. Lee, B. (1971), 'Liberate yourself from classical Karate', Black Belt Magazine, vol. 9, no. 9, September, p. 24, Rainbow Publications.





5

Mostar and Bruce Lee

Multiculturalism vs Polyculturalism

By the end of the most recent war, Mostar, a city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ended up divided in two parts, split between the two major communities (Croatian and Bosniak). Although currently the city is formally unified in a single municipality, the very painful process of reconstruction and reunification is still in progress. In this situation, urbanism exists as a 'prolonging of war using different means': each one of two constituent parts of the city is trying to endow 'their own' space with 'their own' characteristics, to 'posses' it even more by constructing their own religious and cultural objects and symbols. Wanting to change its image, the city erected a statue of the Hong Kong martial arts legend Bruce Lee at the dividing line between the Croat and Bosnian sections of the city on Nov. 26, the day before what would have been Lee's 65th birthday. City leaders said that Lee symbolized their resistance against ethnic strife. At the unveiling, members of a martial arts club exhibited their kung fu skills for about 200 citizens from both ethnic communities who attended the ceremony. Bruce Lee was an activist for equality and civil rights in more than one way. He refused to maintain traditional ideas of excluding non-Chinese from his martial arts classes. During his sojourn in Los Angeles, he unsuccessfully challenged the Hollywood establishment's discrimination against Asian actors.





He created the concept for the American television series "Kung Fu". However the leading role went to a white actor instead of Lee, a practice that was common then and called "yellow-face" in Asian-American circles. He returned to Hong Kong because of the not-glass ceiling he hit repeatedly in Los Angeles. He was the first master of Kung fu who said: Kung Fu is not belonging to Chinese; every body should learn kung fu. But in the first night after ceremony the statue was vandalized with black spray and the part of it was taken. It had been keeping in the storage place belonging to

municipality of the city.

Hito Steyerl takes the Bruce Lee monument as an exercise in getting rid of culture:²⁰

"The Bruce lee project in Mo-star was, at least to my interpretation, not a cultural project; rather, it was an exercise in getting rid of culture in order, to be able to breathe again."

In her interpretation, Bruce Lee monument is not Lee's affiliation or Martial arts The monument was not built in reverence either to Lee's culture affiliation or to Martial arts (whatever culture might

20. Steyerl, Hito, The archive of the lost object, page 59

21. Detta är en förkortad version av en text som först publicerats i Carl Bergström (Red.), Konsten mitt ibland oss – Gävles offentliga konst, Gävle 2008.

represent), but because Lee is a person who appeals to members of all the so called ethnicities in Bosnia- That is to say Croats, Serbs, Muslims, Gypsies, Jew and so on. The breadth of his appeal arises not because he incorporates any specific culture, but because he embodies values like honesty, hatred of corruption, loyalty, friendship and sense of justice which' according to the producers of the statue, are severely lacking in Bosnia and beyond. Thus, this statue symbolizes significance in Bosnia, where existing segregation is enforced and upheld. This public artwork transcend ethnically in the quest for a new ethnic, demonstration that Bosnia is not only avant- grade in relation to the dystopia of deeply segregated country which is represent, but also in regard to the search for ways to overcome the theatrics of discrimination and segregation.

Carl Bergström in his article "Functional Sculpture" added another point.²¹ He used the term "Hyperpoliticized" which Nino Raspudic one of the cofounder of urban movement group in Mostar uses, in order to describe the situation in Mostar:

"The situation after the war was characterized by a "hyper-politicized space"²² (hyper-politicized social climate) where any action or motion immediately associated with one or the other side of the previous conflict. Culture and public spaces must first of all clean up before they could be started again."

He argues that the monument went to the other direction that is called communication:



"... but it turned out to be a fruitful way to begin the communication process between the former warring factions. The purpose of the monument is "to defend life, non-political sphere in order to thereby give it dignity."²³ An entire generation, regardless of ethnicity, perceived Bruce Lee as his childhood hero. The

21. Detta är en förkortad version av en text som först publicerats i Carl Bergström (Red.), *Konsten mitt ibland oss – Gävles offentliga konst*, Gävle 2008.

22. Nino Raspudic and Dunja Blazevic, quotes from different texts in <http://www.projekt-relations.de/en/explore/deconstruction/index.php>.

characters that he portrayed represent primarily the need to fight for justice."

He ends up with the other examples which according to him they are related to the concept of Bruce Lee statue in Mostar. The statues like: Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone)

statues that he mentioned. In his interpretation the idea of communication didn't go further that presenting statue of celebrities in public space. The statues of Rocky, Fox or the others are just simply function as a tourist attraction and not more than it.



alone) statue in Žitište, a Samantha Fox statue in Cacak and a Tarzan (Johnny Weissmuller) statue is currently being planned in Meda. But the missing point in this analogy is the context. The idea of making statue of celebrities or pop stars, is similar just in surface but conceptually are far from each other. Although Bruce Lee was pop star but according to the logic of cultural communication that I was speaking about is not comparable with the other

The important point is that in the English web resources there is no information regarding this damage and it one can misunderstand that "Bruce Lee" is still standing in Zrinjski Park in the middle of Mostar, looking to the north...

PART

TWO

The Project



1

- Starting Point

My artistic practice in general is mainly based on research within the field of transformation of culture in recent historical experiences through the necessity of everyday life and media. It is a practice to represent the presentation of the unknown that is recognized as known, in the history, culture of the others and everyday life. It is the recombination of the realities with political approach, the clarity and obscurity; presenting the fragments of communication, division and separation within the recent history, and contemporary media. I try to position my self as a third person who tries to present the known unknown to learn from the process. Not according to how Walter Benjamin defines the storyteller :

"...The storyteller is the person who has the story from far land..."

nor the way Zizek defines enemy in the new world:

"...The enemy is the person who has the story that you already know."

The starting point of the project was individual problem and the way that you should present yourself as an Iranian artist in Europe. How society wants or needs to see the bloody picture from somewhere else and you as an artist should pictures the problem as bloody as

24. Walter Benjamin. The Storyteller Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov, 1936.

25. Zizek, S. Violence: six sideways reflections, Verso London, 2009, P.39

you can, under the cover of political art project. In fact when we are speaking about hyperpolitized realms, where any action or motion immediately is associated with one or the other side of the previous conflict, the presentation of political art and culture goes in parallel. In this case when you, as an artist, present the picture of political problem, at the same time you are representing the people in that specific place in order to visualize the situation. In fact in these artistic projects and documentaries, the rare concept of culture will be used to annihilate art and culture. It is important to say that most of them have been covered up under the concept of so called multiculturalism.

I divide my project to three separate and interconnected parts:

First: Searching for the statue and making a short video; 4min

Second: Searching for the statue in Mostar, Zagreb and Sarajevo, finding it and bring it back to the public

Third: Making a narrative from the searching process to the end and using different footage from youtube.

2

- The Short Video from Youtube

The duration of the first video that I made was 4 minutes. All the footage was from youtube. In fact in that period of time, I was influenced by the bad quality of youtube clips. In the first step without having any manuscript, I started to juxtapose different footages, in order to make (tell) the story, which already exists. In this metacognitive experience my position wasn't the person who has a story from far land according to the way that Walter Benjamin defined storyteller nor the way Zizek defines enemy as a person who has the unheard story. In fact I was position myself as a third person who is trying to know the known again.

I tried to find Nino Raspudic, Vaseelin Gatalo, Ivan Fiolic and the others who were somehow connected to the statue in Mostar trough facebook. I became a member of the group that is called "Bruce Lee Monument in Mostar". Eldina Jaganjac the producer of the page helped me to find the statue in Mostar before I went there.

...

Dear Behzad,

I have been asking around, and I found out that the company that removed Bruce is called Komos, and is in charge of cleaning the town.
(<http://www.komos.co.ba/>)

Do you want me to call them and ask, if they know where the monument is?

...

Regards,
Eldina

...

Dear Behzad,

Well, we found out that Bruce Lee is stored in Komos. The telephone number of the secretary who can give you more information is ...

- or would you like me to call her?

They also said the the moument is safe and in good shape

Regards,
Eldina

...



3

-

Mostar

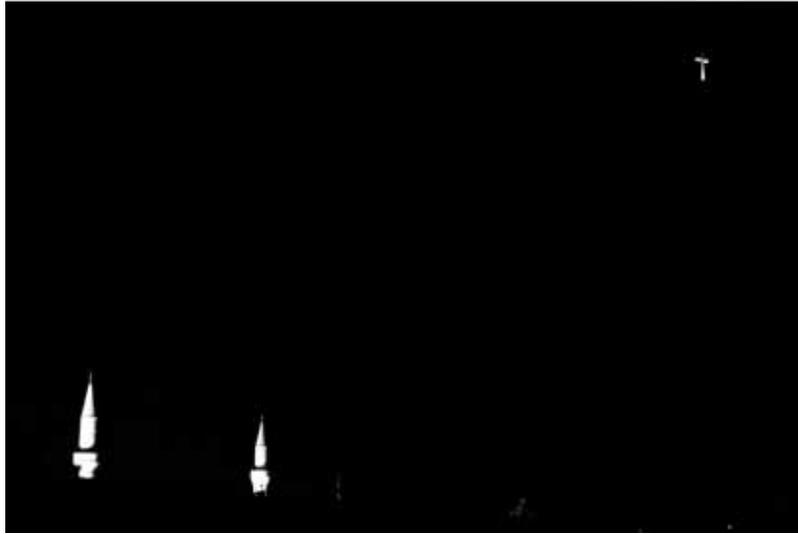
Photo-Diary











DON'T
FORGET
'93





4

-

Mostar From Youtube to Youtube Again

It was a question in front of me about why I should go to Mostar when I am practicing video through youtube?

There was two missing points in this attitude. First: the role of artist from the realm of public to the actuality. I believe that every single act in the virtual world should have an effect to the actual society. Everyday you can see a lot of radical ideas in the virtual world but the main important part is to think how it is possible to practice these ideas in the actuality. Sticking to the virtual world can keep you critical. But the relation between them and the way that you can practice it in different contexts need the other methodology, which is not accessible just through Internet.

The earth is still sphere

The Flat Earth model is a belief that the Earth's shape is a plane or disk. Most ancient cultures have had conceptions of a flat Earth. But is not just ancient belief. In the new world when traveling became a banality earth the shape of the earth has come back to the ancient model purely flat. On the other hand traveling has been irrelevant by the pictures from global mass media as well. But the question is: Is earth flat for everyone? The answer to this question brings the idea of nationality and geopolitical discourses again. Travelling to Bosnia and Croatia for me could be the

answer of new flat earth thinkers. When going to Bosnia demands of Swedish permission and for getting Swedish permission you should wait for three months may be more.

As Hito Streyel pointed out, Bruce lee Monument was an artistic exercise, Although it

seems that has been failed but going there and trying to find the statue and bring it back for me in a most Negativity was an exercise to be a witness of the capitalist and Neo-liberal model for my origin region.

So I went to Mostar to find the possibility to move the statue back In 9th of Feb 2011, after almost 3 weeks hardsearching in the small divided city, I found the statue and brought it back to the public. The statue came out of exile after six years. It became an event. During this unplanned event, Journalists and Bosnian television came and made reports. After several days I found myself in youtube.



Edit info

Edit video

Edit annotations

Edit captions/subtitles

AudioSwap

Analytics

Bruce Lee in Mostar again

behzadkhosravi

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5

- The Video

I came back and I found myself in front of a lot of materials: Photos, interviews, sounds, etc. I started to digitalized the films and put them in the final cut timeline and started to ask these questions:

- How should I present the whole concept?
- How much should I present the main concept of the project?
- And the main question was how can I make my story?

I started to follow very simple method I can call it: The Final-cut timeline as a playground for making story. The editing part was simply an artistic game for me. Harun Farrocki defines video essay pointed something more than simple game:

He dwells on the physical relationship between the editing process and the hand (while cutting film), and the mechanical production of copying frames of film for video. The very process of editing establishes the basic filmic language where "images comment on images".²⁶

Until now there is two main points in my practice within the realm of editing:

Playfulness and relation between image and image and artist and image.

Hans Richter had called in 1940 for a type of post- documentary filmmaking that would, in effect, broach the problem of the im/perceptible. By making "problems, thoughts, even ideas" visible, he sought "to render visible what is not visible." He dubbed the resulting film genre "essay," since "also in literature 'essay'²⁷ means dealing with difficult themes in generally comprehensible form' - albeit, in surrealist Richter's case, this desire for accessibility meant freeing film from "the depiction of external phenomena and the constraints of chronological sequence."²⁸ Richter's term has been adopted only comparatively recently (in discussions in the early 1980s of the work of Chris Marker, a self-described "essayist")²⁹ ; generally essay films have maintained more balance between feature and documentary than Richter's own practice implied. Astruc, promoting his notion of *camira stylo* [camera-stylus], argued that filmmakers must:

"...break free from the tyranny of what is visual, from the

27. Hans Richter, "Der Filmessay: Eine neue Art des Dokumentarfilms," Schreiben Bilder Sprechen: Texte rum essayistischen Film, ed. Christa Bliirnlinger and Constantin Wulf (1940; Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1992) 197-98.

28. See Birgit Kamper, "Sans Soleil -ein Film erinnert sich selbst," Schreiben Bilder Sprechen 33-59.

29. Astruc, 'The Birth of a New Avant-Garden 18 and 19. The actual inscription of words on celluloid images raises the interesting epistemological question of whether we are to understand images or words as preexisting the other, or rather as bi-conditionally producing a new, third term -perhaps a "dialectical image" in the sense debated by Adorno and Benjamin. Astruc did not deal adequately with this question, nor have many



*the
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The Black Eyes of Bruce Lee

image for its own sake, from the immediate and concrete demands of the narrative, to become a means of writing just as flexible and subtle as written language...The cinema is now moving towards a form, which is making it such a precise language that it will soon be possible to write ideas directly onto film."

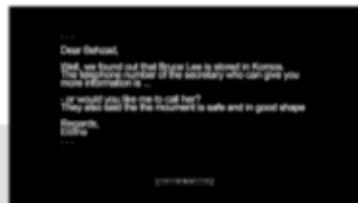
But there is a sweep between image itself and experience of talk. As I mentioned before, during the first experience of making short video, I was inspired by the bad quality of the clips in youtube. I started to exaggerate the pixilation of the youtube clips with digital zoom. There was some sort of relation between

the talk and the picture but I would like to call it again playfulness within the editing.

Vaselin Gatalo is the character that I played this game with. Vaselin himself was the brilliant actor and playing with his images for me put something more to his way of action. At the end I can named the whole video a collage video or the mind mapping in the timeline base material.



He fought for justice
all of his life.





6

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Exhibition







...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



After the night of the 1968 election



Dark Street
The light
The light of the night
The light of the night



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of

...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



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...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



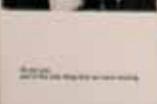
...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



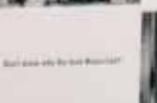
...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of



...and the other night we saw the "Light" of





C'mon now, Bruce Lee is a facist or terroris???
Who is responsible?
Who is to blame, you, we or them???

**I want to use this opportunity to
send my regards to my friend Bruce
Lee and to wish him a fast return
to the park so we can do karate
together there,
Aaaaaa- tsaal!**

Hey, don't fucking joke with me!
I'll give you Bruce Lee for the weekend, for fuck's sake!
What'd we need Bruce Lee? Give us Tito.
At least we know who he was and who he still is.

He came to visit us, just for a day



7

- Afterwards

For the people of Mostar and also whoever I met when I was in Bosnia and Croatia, Bruce Lee was not just a memory of their childhood as Nino pointed out. As far as I understood, Bruce Lee is a big positive character in Balkan.

To remember Bruce Lee was not to wane into nostalgia for the past. Our Bruce Lee is alive, and like those being before and coming after him, still in the fight for justice.

But there is still some missing point about the Bruce Lee Monument in Mostar as an art project or whatever.

Could it solve the problem between two groups of people?

Is it possible to just clean everything in the past and start over? Wasn't just simple populist public art project that got so much attention? If we are speaking about hero, just we have Bruce Lee? There is no one in that region that can play the role of hero for them?

And the last and the most essential question is: What is the logic of art in, from or about hyperpolitized societies?

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