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URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY

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Planning interventions and policies in cities can play supportive and even catalytic roles in regional and national peacebuilding. There exist several types of practical policy approaches able to move cities of deep ethnic and nationalistic conflict toward greater normalization of daily and political life. This discussion synthesizes findings from 17 years of research involving over 240 interviews with political leaders, planners, architects, community representatives, and academics in the politically contested cities of Jerusalem, Beirut, Belfast, Johannesburg, Nicosia, Sarajevo, Mostar, Bilbao, and Barcelona (Bollens 2012). These cities are ‘polarized’ where two or more ethnically-conscious groups—divided by religion, language, and/or culture and perceived history—have been or currently are in deep and intractable conflict. Ethnic identity and nationalism combine to create pressures for group rights, autonomy, or even territorial separation.

Cities matter amid nationalistic and ethnic inter-group conflict. Many immediate and existential foundations of inter-group conflict frequently lie in daily urban life and across local ethnic divides and, importantly, it is at this micro level that antagonisms can be most directly influenced by government interventions aimed at their amelioration. After overt conflict and war, debates over urban space and its remaking can become potent proxies for addressing unresolved and inflamed socio-political issues that are too difficult to directly confront after societal breakage (Rowe and Sarkis 1998). The city is important in peacebuilding because it is in the streets and neighborhoods of urban agglomerations that there is the negotiation over, and clarification of, abstract concepts such as democracy, fairness, and tolerance. Debates over proposed projects and discussion of physical place provide opportunities to anchor and negotiate dissonant meanings in a post-conflict society; indeed, there are few opportunities other than debates about urban life where these antagonistic impulses take such concrete forms in need of pragmatic negotiation. The city, asserts Berman (1988), offers perhaps the only kind of environment in which modern values such as tolerance and freedom can be realized. Peacebuilding in cities seeks not the well-publicized handshakes of national political elites, but rather the more mundane, yet ultimately more meaningful, nods of respect and recognition of ethnically diverse urban neighbors as they confront each other in their daily interactions.

Lefebvre (1996) views cities as the territorial locations most likely to generate democratic institutions and practices. The importance of the local place is brought out by Harvey (2009), who argues that globalization should be rooted in human experience and specific places rather than linked to illusory, universal ideals that cause more harm than good on the ground. He contends that processes aimed at justice and liberation ‘can never take place outside of space and time, outside of place making...’ (p. 260). Polese and Stren (2000) identify several local policy areas—including governance, social policies, public services, housing, transport, employment, and building of inclusive public spaces—that can be implemented in ways to increase institutional and territorial inclusion and help build durable urban bridges.

It is in a city where urban practitioners and leaders must do the hard work of creating the practical elements of a multinational democracy, one that avoids the extremes of an engineered and subordinating assimilation, on the one hand, and an unbounded and fracture-prone multinationalism, on the other. Such a balancing act takes place most fundamentally in decision-making forums and lived experiences grounded in the city. Through our shaping of the city, we construct the contours of multinational democracy.

But you cannot show me—even supposing democracy is possible between victors and the people they have captured—what a democratic space looks like. What effect can the mere shape of a wall, the curve of a street, lights and plants, have in weakening the grip of power or shaping the desire for justice?

Anwar Nusseibeh, in Sennett (1999: 274)

The politics of conflict is hard to relate to urban design.

Richard Sennett (1999: 274)

Planning practitioners intervening in ethnically volatile cities operate in a political labyrinth, confronting the ‘contradictory, idiosyncratic, and microscale territorial conflicts’ that characterize divided cities and rival groups (Calame and Charlesworth 2009: 172). They are faced with a challenging dilemma—to respond to group wishes and sharpen territorial identity or to focus on the commonalities of the city and lessen divisions. For some urban scholars, the key is for practitioners to become more attuned to group identity as a criterion within planning processes and decisions (Neill 2004; Amin 2002; Umemoto 2001; Burayidi 2000; Sandercock 1998). This implies an ‘expanded view’ of planning practice wherein planning plays a more deliberative role in improving intergroup relations (Umemoto 2003). For others, the critical objective is for planners to recognize but also help transcend such urban and societal divisions (Marcuse and van Kempen 2002; Baum 2000). Borja and Castells (1997) assert that city residents’ ability to maintain distinct cultural identities stimulates a sense of belonging that is needed amidst globalization; at the same, communication between cultures must be present to counter cultural fragmentation and local tribalism.

Cities, by definition, are about conflict and contested space. It’s how you manage conflict that is the issue.

Paul Sweeney (1995)

A common reaction by planners and policymakers in politically contested cities has been to create urban spaces that are anonymous or neutral in character, assuming that if space belongs to no one in particular that it can be used by everyone. Yet, Sennett (1993) cautions against such an approach, asserting that character-less neutrality actually helps us learn how to hide from difference. The open consideration of violence, of the 'other', in the making of urban form has been repressed and not openly acknowledged (Sennett 1993). Is there a way, alternatively, for policymakers to more openly acknowledge group-based differences and their important influences on urban life and function, and to build an urban policy framework for understanding and dealing with such differences in constructive ways? Can practitioners in urban polarized places go beyond the 'mantra of neutrality' and engage more explicitly with the challenge of multiple and contesting publics (Calame and Charlesworth 2009: 171)? It is to this possibility that I now turn.

I examine interventions and strategic approaches that employ urban planning and policy to advance urban peace and co-existence. Many of these strategies seek to enhance urban stability and mutual co-existence through manipulation of the built environment. Such modification of the built environment amid conflict and contestation is certainly not an end-all. Practitioners must not fall into an environmental determinist frame, believing that changes in the physical environment shape social behavior so extensively that urban peace will result. Planning actions will not turn around a society that is politically splintered or unraveled; they cannot create peace where it does not exist in people's hearts and souls. What urban policies can do, however, and it is significant, is to create physical and psychological spaces that can co-contribute to, and actualize, political stability and co-existence in cities. Deeply entrenched problems of nationalistic conflict are certainly not amenable to simple, one-dimensional solutions. Thus, urban planning interventions need to be part of a broader and multi-faceted approach addressing root issues of political grievance related to political disempowerment and institutional bias.

In the face of conflict and violence, the challenge is not whether public authorities should or should not take action amidst an unstable city. In almost all cities, governments take action when the personal safety of their middle and upper classes is threatened. Rather, the question becomes what types of governmental actions will be undertaken and how these can contribute to urban peace, stability, and mutual co-existence. A common response by politicians and developers in the midst of such crises is to build walls and dividers, increase police and military presence, and build gated communities that seal the middle class, elites and members of an advantaged in-group away from problems. Yet, actions that create physical segregation of groups or facilitate psychological separation may purchase short-term relief at the cost of long-term societal instability. An exclusionary, unequal metropolis does not enhance urban stability and co-existence. Rather, it is the increased interaction of diverse groups and individuals in the workplace and neighborhood and the normalization of urban fabric, *in combination with* a frontal assault upon the root issues of political grievance, that are critical elements in the strengthening of urban co-existence in politically contested cities.

Urban policymakers and practitioners in the fields of planning, urban design, and engineering have within their power the capacity to foster an 'unconventional' sense of urban stability, one built on sustainable co-existence rather than constructed through the more conventional means of police and military might and walled and divided districts.

Intervention strategies and tactics

I advance for consideration by local government administrators and nongovernmental organizations a set of city-building and urban design principles that aim to mitigate socio-economic and political tensions in situations of inter-group conflict.

Engage in equity planning that addresses underlying root issues

Material improvement in urban life is essential to enhancing human well-being for those least well off or historically disadvantaged, but is not sufficient in cities of nationalistic conflict if processes of political inclusion, acknowledgement and reconciliation are absent. It is crucial that policymaking aimed at alleviating the urban symptoms of poverty and inequality be linked with policies that directly confront the structural inequalities and power imbalances that are at the root of inter-group conflict and violence. Development interventions should not only address physical urban inequalities, but also seek to counter individual and group-based feelings of historic grievance, marginality, disempowerment, and discrimination. In post-conflict situations, reconstruction must not solely be physical but also address the social and psychological scars that remain after the active conflict period ends. The psychological and political insecurities that led to intergroup violence and physical division, if left unaddressed after active conflict, will obstruct spatial and political normalization over time.

Planning practitioners and policymakers should be cognizant of, and seek to counter, the structural causes of people's grievances—those pervasive factors that have become built into the policies, structures and fabric of a society and which create the pre-conditions for violent conflict (Africa Peace Forum et al. 2004). Urban strategies and interventions should be targeted in ways that address the local manifestations of long-term structural causes of conflict and tension. Development and planning priorities involving the allocation of basic infrastructure, services, and employment assistance should be used to counter individual and group-based feelings of marginality, disempowerment, and discrimination; in addition, they should address the meeting of basic human needs—public services, human rights, employment opportunities, food and shelter, and participation in decision-making. Several types of governance programs can compensate for past marginalization—employment equity initiatives, political inclusiveness mechanisms, municipal assistance to community organizations, increased access and equity in service delivery, anti-racism initiatives, and use of inclusive municipal images such as symbols and language (Good 2009). Building capacity for a historically disadvantaged group in the city may require some autonomy in city governance, sufficient and contiguous land available for development, mobility and permeability of city boundaries, and security.

The use of planning and policymaking to advance redistribution and reconciliation borrows from the 'equity planning' approach developed by American urban scholars Davidoff (1965) and Krumholz and Forester (1990), a strategy based on social justice goals that employs progressive planning actions to lessen urban inequalities.¹ Such an approach has been used in the conflict- and violence-prone Colombian cities of Medellin and Bogota, where there has been the purposeful and progressive use of public investment (in particular, parks, open space, and transit access) to enhance poorer areas

and lessen crime rates (Romero 2007; Kraul 2006). Under former Mayor Enrique Penalosa, Bogota positioned the re-direction of urban priorities and policies as key in promoting social equity and instituted a policymaking model based on equal rights of all people to transportation, education, and open space.

Use planning process and deliberations to empower marginalized groups

Urbanists and planners have power emanating from the fact that they engage at the interface between the built environment and political processes. Urbanists have the ability to connect the local/urban level to the national/political level, to link everyday problems faced by city residents to unjust political structures that underlie and produce these urban symptoms. In three of the cases I have studied, urbanists used neighborhood-based planning deliberations to empower marginalized groups and to connect to broader political opposition to existing regimes. In Johannesburg during the last years of the South African apartheid regime, protests over local payments for rent and city services in Greater Soweto were connected by local activists to more fundamental challenges of the apartheid state, in particular the need to restructure local government along non-racial lines. In Belfast, working-class neighborhood planning efforts countering plans for demolition and population displacement existed alongside the Catholic republican insurrection against the state and British direct rule (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006). And, in Barcelona, urbanists during the Franco regime helped local neighborhood groups connect local place-based problems to larger political ailments (Bollens 2007).

The process of planning and policymaking is itself important and should be used in a deliberate fashion to empower excluded groups and build civil society. Project design and interventions should empower those groups in the city working toward peaceful solutions and co-existence, and the process of project design should be structured to increase communication across different urban groups. In cities of competing nationalistic group identities, public participation from the start is vital in urbanism processes. Beyond the project benefits, this participation in deliberations is of vital significance in reconstructing a politically contested and fragmented city because it demonstrates how democratic deliberation works. The process of planning and urban development should be organized in ways that engage city residents across ethnic backgrounds in projects having common and shared benefits.

Inclusive processes can generate new relationships and new knowledge about how to cope with, and address, inter-group conflict. Concrete, tangible city building issues provide a laboratory and incubator for cross-ethnic intergroup dialogue, negotiations, and joint production of outcomes. In contrast to the common win-lose psychological dynamic associated with ideology, identity, and nationalism, negotiations over tangible urban projects and issues often allow for win-win situations. These inclusive processes should not be viewed as a one-time, project-based endeavor, but rather as sustained over time and ongoing. Such processes allow participants to get to know each other as pragmatic partners, even if nationalistic differences remain. The planning process should be positioned not as a technical exercise, but as a social, political, and organizational mechanism that can increase feelings of inclusion, recognition, and group self-worth.

Create flexibility and porosity of urban built form

Urban planning and policy interventions should seek as much flexibility of urban built form as possible, choosing spatial development paths that maximize future options. Except in conditions where extreme need dictates their use, walls, urban buffers, and other urban forms that delineate physical segregation of groups or facilitate psychological separation should not be built. This strategy allows for greater mixing and freedom of choice of populations in the future, if and when inter-group conflict abates and there can be some normalization of urban living. This does not constitute an integration or coercive assimilation strategy, but rather seeks to create an urban porosity that allows normal, healthier urban processes to occur when individuals and governments are ready.

The design of spaces to encourage interaction and positive behaviors should be prioritized ahead of design approaches that discourage unwanted behavior and commonly separate and contain antagonistic groups. In spaces constructed to encourage interaction, there should be an absence of undesirable, intimidating, and single group identifying artifacts. Instead, there should be functional and aesthetic equal treatment of different ethnic users of such facilities as community centers. Facilities and activity zones should be built that attract desired clientele who can crowd out undesirables. In terms of specific project or building design, there should be dual entry/exit ways for antagonistic communities so that a facility is perceived by all as located in shared space but is nonetheless functionally connected to ethnic space on either side. Uses that promote interaction are distinctly different from designs such as target hardening, access control, fences and physical boundaries, natural territorial enforcement, and natural surveillance that retard interaction.

A strategic intervention approach to increasing flexibility and porosity of urban form places premiums on actions at borders and interfaces that exist between different ethnic neighborhoods. It is at these places where different parts or layers of the city meet that hybridization can increase, connecting people and activities at 'points of intensity' and along 'thresholds' (Ellin 2006). Creation of urban porosity must take place, however, simultaneously with or after the addressing of core issues of political inequality, disempowerment, and group identity that ignites nationalistic conflict. Absent such engagement with root causes of conflict, interventions such as the building of streets in a way that encourages travel across different parts of the urban fabric or the creation of ethnically mixed housing complexes may actually stimulate violence and conflict (UNHSP 2007). It is critically important to address core issues prior to, or concurrent with, manipulation of urban built form. With core issues included as part of the strategy, urban interventions can increasingly knit different parts of the city together and have an increased chance to enhance mutual co-existence in residential and non-residential environments.

Creating flexibility and porosity of urban form should not be confused with integration of individuals and groups. Indeed, inter-group segregation is an important means for stability in the short term. Amid nationalistic conflict and material imbalances, the mixing of population is not possible in the short term and there often is the need to maintain group identity boundaries. Peace processes can make identity boundaries uncertain and permeable. Thus, in the short term, such boundaries should be respected so that feelings of fear and threat do not retard progress in peacebuilding. Usually interaction between urban ethnic groups would lessen conflict, but positive evolution

in intergroup relations that is natural in other cities is not possible in polarized cities if political root issues and grievances are unaddressed. Efforts to bring peoples together prematurely will increase—not attenuate—conflict, at least in the short term. At the same time, public interventions should not foreclose through the physical hardening of divisions the *option* of ethnic integration for those people and groups who are ready for such a move in the future if and when the city normalizes.

Intervene in city landscape with sensitivity to differences across sectarian geographies

When contemplating interventions into the polarized city, planners should be cognizant of differences between urban ethnic homelands and frontiers and between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ interfaces. In cities where ethnic and religious identity are primary drivers of political action, local authorities should, through their regulatory powers, locate sensitive land uses having cultural and historic salience (churches, mosques, private schools, cultural community centers) within urban ethnic homeland neighborhoods identified with specific cultural groups. At the same time, they should encourage in interface, or frontier, areas between cultural neighborhoods those types of land uses that encourage mixing of different groups in a supportive environment. Joint and mixed land uses (public space, residential, commercial) can be intentionally placed at interface areas between competing (potentially conflicting) groups of an ethnic or other identifiable nature. In this strategy, there is the creation of ‘everyman’s land’ of mutual use and benefit where each side can use or pass through to the other side without being cut off; continuity replaces cut-offs and enclaves; porosity replaces borders.

In order to combat hardened enclaving and partitioning created during conflict periods, policymakers should establish a clear spatial-tactical programming orientation to future urban interventions that includes prioritization and sequencing components. In some urban districts, connectivity across the ethnic divide is a suitable goal; in others, consolidation of ethnic neighborhoods should be pre-eminent. Where there exist ‘soft’, ambiguously delineated interfaces, the enhancement of permeability of spatial divisions through joint use and mixed activities should be a first priority. Interventions should seek connectivity and linkages building outward from middle class or ethnically mixed areas. In contrast, consolidation of ethnic territoriality and identity should be the guiding criterion where there exist ‘hard’ interfaces of strict definition, lingering violence, and the presence of ethnic militia guardians.

This interface strategy uses the ‘soft’ edges of sectarian territories to create common ground and cross-cultural meeting places (Khalaf 1998). There is the creation of ‘weak borders rather than strong walls’ and the enabling of uses and activities in certain neutral areas that will not give the impression that a particular community’s territory is being invaded (Khalaf 1998: 142). Illustrative of this thinking, Israeli planner A. Mazor (1994) uses the metaphor of a river whose banks are in separate sovereignties. Rather than being seen as a dividing line, the river can be viewed as providing mutual benefit, wherein ‘both sides can row together in the river without being regarded as crossing the border.’ Spaces are constructed malleably enough to permit constant alterations and shifts; porous and malleable demarcations are established rather than confining and exclusionary boundaries.²

In cities such as Belfast where there are efforts to advance national political progress through local actions, planners in housing and development agencies are debating the tactics and timing of interventions aimed at normalizing the hardened sectarian geographies of that city. The Northgate development strategy of the mid-1990s in volatile North Belfast illustrates the tactical introduction of a new development project to justify physical alterations to a potentially inflammatory interface area. It also shows how a public agency is capable of analyzing the potential social, spatial, political and psychological impacts of their actions on ethnic community identity. The analysis takes stock of each of the major participant groups in the urban sub-system and how negative public reaction may be mitigated within a contested, sectarianized environment.

The local problems in the planning area—Duncairn Gardens—were multiple and intense (DOENI 1990). A permanent peace wall was constructed during the sectarian ‘Troubles’ that divided the Catholic New Lodge neighborhood from the Protestant Tiger’s Bay neighborhood. Catholic housing stock, insufficient to meet demand, was endangered further by violence. Much of the Catholic housing fronting the peace wall had front sides grated to prevent damage from petrol bombs, and back doors were used instead for access. Tiger’s Bay was fast becoming a ghost town due to Protestant out-migration with major dereliction of building stock. The remaining Protestant population felt frightened, embattled, and insecure (Murtagh, 1995). Into this volatile ethnic environment, public authorities proposed an economic development district on the Protestant side that aspired to create neutral and mutually beneficial territory. There would also be redevelopment and consolidation of housing in Tiger’s Bay. The strategy overall was intended to soften the rigidity of this line of confrontation; as one government participant stated (identity withheld upon request), this represented a ‘novel approach for effectively fudging the line of division.’

The Northgate strategy employed a finely tuned sensitivity to sectarianism and its social, spatial and psychological correlates.³ Sectarian geography is mapped in detail, documenting potentially inflammatory Catholic residential incursion into formerly ‘mixed’ areas. The report states that ‘there is a collective perception in the Protestant Tiger’s Bay community of being gradually outflanked by Catholic territory.’ Most revealing of government’s awareness is the section examining the possible community responses—from local residents, local politicians, local church authorities, and local commercial interests—to DOENI’s economic and housing actions. The area is characterized as one of mutual suspicion, home to strong paramilitary organizations on both sides, and where Protestants are afraid of the Catholic spread into Tiger’s Bay. The major problem, cites the DOENI report, is that the project ‘might be opposed on sectarian grounds, as taking away too much of the former Tiger’s Bay area.’ The working group worries that ‘major irrational opposition could create significant obstacles; and that many of the local residents could be easily persuaded by individual politicians or others claiming to represent the community.’ To diffuse possible negative reaction, the report suggests that an existing Tiger’s Bay community group with views sympathetic to the project’s overall goals be nurtured and supported. In this way, local politicians and extremist residents may be effectively countered.

In order to guide public interventions toward more ethnically sensitive outcomes, planners should develop new methodologies that will evaluate in systematic ways the

effects on urban ethnic groups of proposed land uses of certain types (those having cultural importance) and in certain spatial areas (areas of interface and mixing). Ethnic impact assessments can explicitly account for potential social-psychological impacts of the proposed land use on the respective cultural communities of the city, and should be used in the decision-making process regarding development proposals. Planners should seek to understand the 'micro' structure of the city in terms of identity and people's perceptions of places and spaces. Special focus should be on 'spaces of risk' in the urban landscape—lived spaces that have low levels of trust and where people feel vulnerable and defenseless against conflict (Jabareen 2006). In such volatile areas, an ill-conceived project can activate latent urban tension to a more intense level.

Ethnic impact analysis at the urban level may borrow some of the nascent methodologies being developed by international and nongovernmental organizations. An example of conflict-sensitive analysis pertaining to public intervention is United Nations Development Programme (2003), which advocates for a better understanding of the linkages between development and conflict. It proposes a methodology, 'conflict-related development analysis', which focuses attention on the structural, underlying issues that lay the foundation for conflict and upon which more visible and immediate causes take place. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has proposed that a systematic 'peace and conflict impact assessment' (PCIA) be included in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all municipal activities in conflict-prone areas (Bush 2004). Meanwhile, a group of nongovernmental organizations recognizes that development can help prevent violent conflict, yet sometimes also inadvertently exacerbate it, and calls for greater 'conflict sensitivity' in humanitarian interventions and development project planning (Africa Peace Forum et al. 2004).

Protect and promote the collective public sphere

In order for the seed of urban stability and co-existence to grow, the public sphere should be developed physically. Planners should revitalize and redevelop public spaces, historic areas, and other urban public assets as places of interaction and neutrality that promote healthy inter-group and interpersonal life. Instead of focusing on the inflammatory choice between segregation versus integration of residential areas, concentration on improving public spaces offers a third approach that is less politically difficult. Here, there is the push for mixed public spaces rather than mixed neighborhoods. The goal is to enable increased cross-ethnic mingling in non-hostile, non-polarizing public environments rather than try the more contentious approach of having different ethnicities co-habitate residentially.

The physical creation of public spaces, as part of a comprehensive set of interventions that address root issues of conflict, can encourage activities that are the grounds for remaking an urban cross-ethnic citizenship. In Barcelona, in the early democratic years after Franco, architects and designers employed small-scale and context-sensitive improvements in numerous public spaces throughout working-class neighborhoods as a way to illuminate the benefits of the new democracy (Bollens 2007). Public areas can facilitate mix and contact among a heretofore fragmented populous, facilitate and provide avenues for collective expression, and can contribute to cohesion and social equality.

Emphasize short-term tactical physical interventions while articulating a peace-promoting long-range strategic vision

Planning and development agencies should balance emphasis on creating a peace-promoting long-range vision or plan with actions on short-term physical interventions that create and reinforce urban peacebuilding principles. Long-range visions should clearly demarcate a break from the past and articulate a shared city of co-existence. At the same time, for actions in the short term, development agencies should concentrate on specific interventions in the urban fabric that have palpable impacts on people's daily lives and make visible principles of inter-group mutual co-existence and tolerance. These improvements should have explicit and noticeable equalization objectives and be focused in poorer areas and in areas where aggrieved groups live.

A strategy of 'urban acupuncture' consists of 'catalytic small scale interventions with potentially wide-ranging impacts' which are realizable in a relatively short time (Frampton 2000). Acupuncture interventions in polarized cities should occur at strategic points in the urban fabric—points of hardening, stagnation, trauma, and dysfunction. These interventions contribute to activating places by making connections and caring for neglected or abandoned 'in between' spaces or 'no-man's lands' (Ellin 2006). Because urban acupuncture can be more responsive to site-specific social tensions, it is commonly more suited to politically contested cities than is long-range, comprehensive master planning with its efforts at control and order at a larger scale.

Small-scale tactical interventions should seek to modify or soften the rigidities of conflict-period community dynamics in a local area. Wood and Landry (2008) suggest that attention in particular should be paid to 'zones of encounter'—housing and neighborhoods, education, workplace, marketplace, sports, arts, and the public domain (both public space and public institutions). The making of intercultural spaces should focus on these domains of day-to-day exchange rather than try to create highly designed and engineered spaces that lack salience to everyday life.

Public interventions in the physical landscape should have a spatial-tactical orientation that both repairs past damage and disparities and sets the foundation for more organic integration of divided districts. Post-conflict urbanists will need to address city spaces of overt conflict and war that have robust psychological and symbolic meanings—places of loss, fear, resistance, martyrdom that often contain different and opposing interpretations (Purbrick, Aulich, and Dawson 2007). In its most blatant forms, the legacies of conflict consist of sites of domination and control that embed historical differences and create physical legacies of inequality and denial. In addressing reconciliation through urban interventions, there should be the acknowledgement of the co-existence of multiple groups and narratives rather than the inscription and imposition of only the victor's narrative in the built landscape.

Politically contested cities challenge us to confront whether we are hopeful or pessimistic about our ability to get along together. A puzzle faced by policymakers in multicultural cities—whether Beirut or Los Angeles, Sarajevo or New York, Jerusalem or Amsterdam, Johannesburg or Paris—is a basic one that forces us to confront our own beliefs and predilections. In an urban situation where there are antagonistic, or potentially antagonistic, ethnic or racial groups, do we as city-builders create opportunities for these groups to mix and interact or do we accommodate and reinforce the development of ethnically pure neighborhoods and districts? Decisions such as these will send emotive

symbols to future generations about what we either aspire to in hope or accept in resignation.

Notes

- 1 The United Nations uses the label “pro-poor” to describe such redistributive urban policy. Another example of the equity approach is the “inclusive city” strategy (UNHSP 2003).
- 2 Planners and policymakers should also seek to proactively counter development patterns that are potential precursors to physical partitioning in contested urban settings—biased urban service distribution, residential group clustering, growing symbolism of local residential territoriality, and emergence of informal ethnic demarcations in residential space (Calame and Charlesworth 2009).
- 3 This report by DOENI, *Northgate Enterprise Park: Interim Report*, was never published. This confidentiality is indicative of the perceived sensitivity of dealing with sectarianism in a candid way.

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