

Ahmed BURIĆ

For 'Writing In and Beyond The City'

A REPORT AFTER THE SIEGE OF THE CITY

Thirteen years have passed since
the siege of the city ended, and it befell me
to deliver this report.

The best of chroniclers have either died or gone,
so I, a simple seller of letters,
have the duty to write these lines.

Thirteen years have passed, I repeat, since the siege ended
and one could say that, in the eyes of the enemy,
it was almost a success. Jews and Christians have left,
a few of us strive to maintain the illusion of multiculturalism
imposed on us now as a surrogate for life.

Our king was no tyrant, indeed not, but God have mercy on his soul,
he was no wise man either, yet he placed his bet on that card,
having perhaps the gift of a saint, but that of a statesman – he lacked.
He lived five more years, but did not live to see us eat with "golden spoons", as he
had promised. Emptiness, almost like a metaphor about the city over which the sun
never properly shines.

Not even in May, when sun and rain together form
The most exact description of our state today.
The last of the peers crunch the country's treasure, and
Trick its people into the fear of the other ones
When they scent the coming riot.

We have no roads, but let alone roads, many have no bread.

The Sultan rarely looks upon us, he does so only
To warn us that we have done nothing for ourselves,
Or to cash the fact that he gave us freedom.
In a fratricidal war which obtained the status of national awakening,
In a tied game everyone, especially the judges,
Were, unscrupulously, declared winners.

On the outside, the city has not fallen, but it is far from free on the inside.
It is fenced off by a heavy duty of seeking attention,
After the great circus continued its show in the East.
It has a duty to collect influences from various sides
And maintain the status of an important city on the map of globalisation,

which is yet another name for vanishing varieties, for the shrinking world.

So, this would be a report after the siege of the city,
Written by a seller of letters, without a permanent address,
And it is just.

From the borders of the kingdom alarming news reach us,
The children at schools are divided, and riches are unequally shared.
A balance of voluptuous theft and fire was used to divide the land which there is no
one to plough.

Surely, honourable sirs, you will look for a consoling note in this letter,
Therefore I should say that children are pretty, pretty women covered with scarves
or dressed like Tuscan maids deliver them, the children are merry, they drink cheap
wine under the bridges and wait for another historical event – another siege of the
city to talk about to the future generations, like this chronicle, like this poor scribe is
telling them.