

## **Tanz im August Special Edition 2020**

### **Transkription | Arkadi Zaides | NECROPOLIS**

In order to gain the right to live in Necropolis,  
one has to die in an attempt to enter it.  
Citizenship is granted posthumously to dismembered, decomposing corpses.

By our death right, being already citizens of the Necropolis,  
we are fateful guardians of its territory.

Often, as we lounge along the beaches of the middle sea  
while enjoying the warm light arriving from the south,  
behind our sunglasses we are keeping an eye  
on the sparkling horizon across which  
fresh corpses are regularly delivered to our feet.

It is our responsibility to take care of those –  
perform rituals of forensic investigation over the scattered remains  
in order to collect biometric information  
necessary for the documents to be assembled.

If a name, a date, and the cause of a death can be established,  
we welcome newcomers with tears in our eyes:  
we process them at allocated plots  
where stone monuments are neatly assembled  
and inscribed at the entrance to each tomb.

Those whom we fail to identify are buried together in a mass grave.

Necropolis does not have a body other than a body of data –  
an ever-expanding archive of what is meticulously extracted from the rotting remains  
and inscribed across the landscape.

This growing funerary encyclopedia,  
this map which is the territory,  
is stretching in all directions across the space-time,  
interrelating mythologies, histories, geographies and anatomies  
of those to whom we have granted the entrance.

Necropolis, its map and its body  
are made out of dead data that we collect and memorize.

We are rebuilding it out of what (and whom) we choose to remember,  
we are maintaining it by sharing our memories with others  
and we are letting it crumble into disrepair  
by what (and whom) we individually and collectively forget.

About the others, those still alive outside,  
we know nothing.

At this very moment, as I write this report,  
I am dwelling inside a Necropolis  
and you are, by reading it, walking through it with me.

I would like to take you to this barren land depression in the heart of it.  
This is where those who died without being identified are disposed of  
under a condition of us, the living-dead, not recognizing them at all.

It is also a place where myriad of anonymous, forgotten deaths  
are in an ongoing process of becoming an empty territory.

On this no-man's land, we gather to (not) remember.  
In absence of a meaningful memory,  
here we dance ourselves into oblivion.

We live but we are not alive.  
We are dead but we never died.

The only thing we desire is to forget that we still have a body.

As we keep moving above around and through Necropolis let's not forget,  
everything that we see in this landscape of death is made of ourselves –

from the North:

crumbling glacier of border regulations and bureaucratic classification;

from the West:

a narrow gorge of falsified history,

of conquest and enslavement,

of abuse and exploitation,

of greed and betrayal;

from the East:

a dry wilderness of abandoned declarations,

of fantastic expectations

and malicious misinterpretations;

from the South:

sinuous, living assemblage of rotting flesh

resurrected forensically into a pulsating anatomy of cavernous orifices,

temporary dugouts and tightly sealed voids;

a dark, warm, damp network of underground passages

interrelating decomposing leftovers,

assembling all the corpses,

hundreds, thousands of them,

into a sprawling landscape made of hardened cartilage

and leathered skin,

into a raising architecture built on bones,

one shared organism,

a promise of eternal life

as exuberant and exhilarating as a violent death at sea:

the Leviathan open his muzzle,  
you pay gold to the boatmen while shivering in the cold,  
hopeful that he will carry you through,  
that he will deliver you to the other side before the beast close down its jaw upon you;  
you try and then you die  
and nobody ever explains  
that boatman is a thief stealing not your money but your life,  
because by his profession, he knows  
that the only way to enter Leviathans belly is to die of its teeth.

It is written over the main entrance to Necropolis: Leviathan.  
And over the west gate, it is written: Behemoth.  
And over the east: Ziz.

In the North all that is solid melts into air,  
all that is holy is profaned.  
An ancient skeleton of ignorance and panic  
is rising from the icy mud underneath, perfectly preserved.  
In the south, heat is scorching the earth,  
fire burning in the bellies of those that have nothing to lose,  
inflaming their imagination  
as they are dragging themselves through the desert to die at our doorsteps.

In its final gesture bureaucratic classification is classifying itself.

The database of the database,  
the algorithm of the algorithm.

At the end, we will all be buried together, anonymously,  
in the same unmarked grave and there will be none left to dance.