A VISION OF ALEPPO

Brandeis University Design Lab

BY:
Hauke Ziessler, Masters in Conflict Resolution and Coexistence/Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, ‘18 (Design Lab Facilitator)
Maggie Ziegel, BA ‘18 (Teaching Assistant)

WITH:
Cynthia Cohen, PhD, Director, Brandeis Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts
Kristin Parker, Interim Director, The Rose Art Museum, and Cultural Heritage First Responder
A Vision of Aleppo: Brandeis University Design Lab

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Executive Summary

Overview
Design labs thrive on the mindsets that creative people bring to problems and possibilities: willingness to learn from failure; confidence in our creative capacities; empathy (both for the others on the team and the people with whom and for whom we create proposals); eagerness to embrace ambiguity and paradox; optimism and a belief that we do have the capacity to improve conditions, at least to some extent; a willingness to try, and try, and try again. With these thoughts in mind “A Vision of Aleppo” was a collaboration among undergraduate students in Brandeis’ program in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST), and professionals from the fields of conflict transformation, cultural preservation, arts and cultural work, and architecture. Through the process, students were introduced to the role that preservation of tangible heritage plays in the recovery of identity and community in pre- and post-violence environments. It also explored more broadly the role that artists and cultural workers play in rebuilding trust in the aftermath of violence and in engaging members of diaspora communities in remembering and imagining. Equally as important as student learning, a goal of the Design Lab was to brainstorm innovative, feasible, concrete strategies for recovery in Aleppo, which could be shared with the Aleppo Project.

Aleppo has been a central focus of the media covering the Syrian war and crisis. With the recent ceasefire, the western media seems to be suggesting a step towards peace. Yet the reality is one of desperation and destruction on the ground (Chulov & Shaheen, 2016). Cultural heritage, monuments and memories are being destroyed daily through diverse tactics used by all sides. A few organizations have begun to capture, preserve and protect the rich cultural heritage, or at least create records of images, sounds and stories, before things are destroyed. But projects have struggled with a vast number of obstacles and thus are constantly rethinking new and innovative strategies to try and capture, protect and restore cultural heritage for multiple purposes, including education for refugees and members of host country communities. At Brandeis University, the Vision of Aleppo Design Lab was set up to create a space of innovative, collaborative thinking that would result in concrete project ideas for the Aleppo Project. This Report

- introduces the reader to key concepts that animated the design lab, drawn from the fields of Arts and Social Transformation and First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis
- describes the methodology of the Design Lab Process
- highlights recommendations that emerged
Theoretical Frameworks from the field of Culture, Arts and Social Transformation

The design lab on Aleppo was informed by theory and practice emerging from the fields of conflict transformation as well as arts and social transformation. We drew on the following frameworks:

- **The moral imagination** as the cultivation of four disciplines:
  - Creating spaces for others’ creativity
  - Taking risks to reach out to, and be vulnerable to, enemies, adversaries, others
  - Remembering interdependence
  - Cultivating curiosity about the paradoxical nature of things that initially seem in opposition

- **Reconciliation** as the gradual processes of rebuilding trust in the aftermath of a period of alienation in relationships, including re-humanization of the ‘other’, mourning losses, sharing stories, addressing injustices, letting go of bitterness, and imagining a better future.

- **Minimizing risks of harm**

- **The permeable membrane** between art and society, a framework designed to facilitate communication between artists and other change agents by focusing attention on socio-political dynamics (the context and the effects of arts-based interventions) as well as transformations that take place within the aesthetic realm, the bounded spaces of creative processes. This framework invites attention to:
  - untapped sources of resilience
  - the nature of the transformations – in beliefs, attitudes, values, consciousness, relationships among people and abstract elements, etc. – that take place within the space of creativity
  - the depth, breadth and creativity with which transformations that take place within creative spaces are “cast back” into society, including the project’s reach and the nature of the transformations in the consciousness, relationships and actions of members of communities (in addition to participants, witnesses, and audience members).

Ideas from these four frameworks informed the structuring of the design lab, and the recommendations that it produced.

**Key Concepts from First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis**

Preservation of cultural heritage has the ability to unite people divided by war or disaster, providing a sense of belonging through shared memories and cultural and social practices; tangible and intangible heritage and are inextricably linked together. Access to cultural heritage is also linked to the right to freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of thought and economic freedom, which allow for self-determination and social cohesion. Cultural heritage in all its forms embodies diversity, something most at risk during complex emergencies, “for modern conflicts are often associated with identity politics, ethnic exclusivism or/and religious fundamentalism” (See Celine Yvonne, *Ethics for an Emerging Field*, pg. 14. To be published, Brandenburg University Press: March 2017).
The Hague Convention of 1945 requires participant States to abide by standards that protect cultural property during conflict, refraining from hostility against it. The destruction of identity - or cultural cleansing - through the destruction of heritage, is often the first weapon of war, aggravating conflict and obstructing reconciliation and dialogue. The framework of First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis (FAC) aims to incorporate cultural recovery into the humanitarian cluster system, aligning with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, ensuring a people-centered first aid informed by an inclusive attitude and respect for diversity, and generating context specific responses. Aspects of this framework were incorporated into the design lab to ensure recommendations that are people-centered, inclusive and respect the diversity of the context.

Sponsors and Involved Parties

The ‘A Vision for Aleppo’ Design Lab was hosted by two different units at Brandeis:

- The minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST), an academic program launched by the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, based at The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life.
- The Rose Art Museum

They worked in conjunction with the Aleppo Project, based in Budapest at the Shattuck Center on Conflict, Negotiation and Recovery at the Central European University. The Aleppo Project aims to address three issues: 1) How can donors better help those trying to survive amid destruction and how can that aid help rebuild communities and cities? 2) How can refugees maintain a voice in what happens to their cities while balancing the need to redevelop healthier communities? 3) What can we learn from the recent reconstruction of cities such as Beirut, Kabul and Sarajevo? The core principle is to support the people who generally are shut out of decisions on aid and reconstruction, particularly refugees and women, find a voice.

Participants included:

- Robert Templer, Director, Center on Conflict Negotiation and Recovery, Aleppo Project
- AlHakam Shaar, CCNR Fellow, Aleppo Project
- Rim Lababidi, Architect, originally from Aleppo
- Eylem Ertürk, administrator from Anadolu Kultur, Turkish arts organization
- Kristin Parker, Acting Director, Rose Art Museum; Cultural Heritage First Responder
- Madhawa Palihapitiya, Assoc. Director, Mass Office of Public Collaboration, Brandeis alumnus
- Jane Wilburn Sapp, Artist in Residence
- Dan Feldman, Vice President of Institutional Planning, Brandeis
- Myriam Marcuello-Lopez, Shadi Sheickh Saraf, Hauke Ziessler, MA in Coexistence and Conflict Undergraduate students and assistants from CAST minor
Methodology

The design lab methodology brings various constituencies related to a problem, issue or possibility into creative conversation that works to design structures, processes or expressions that solve problems, resolve conflicts or expand on possibilities. CAST design labs are designed to engage students and give them experience to become experts in efforts toward more just, peaceful, resilient, and vibrant communities.

‘A Vision for Aleppo’ was comprised of various experts with knowledge of Aleppo and of arts, design and peacebuilding, as well as facilitators and the undergraduate and graduate Brandeis students of the CAST introductory course. (See Page 9 for the full list of participants). Design thinking requires three key elements: teamwork, the design process, and a collaborative work space (D-Forge Bremen, 2016). The key is making the human aspect of problem solving the central building block of the process (Dorst, 2011). The Design lab took place during three 3-hour sessions of the class CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation.

The first session focused on building the expertise of the participants, through presentations and discussion of articles. For the next session of ideation, following a presentation, participants were divided into four groups; each of which tackled one of the following questions with support from a facilitator and experts.

- What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities consider distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?
- After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?
- For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?
- How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

In the final session of the design lab, the groups presented short creative pitches to two experts who participated virtually. The experts responded to each idea and explored the given prototypes with the participants (see Appendix 2).
Recommendations

The Vision for Aleppo design lab devised four broad recommendations related to arts, culture and the rebuilding of the city, and proposed possible action steps for each. These ideas are elaborated in the body of the report.

1. **Preserve the Possibility of Memory**
   
   In war-torn cities, such as Aleppo, a great deal of cultural heritage has been destroyed. For a culturally resonant city to be rebuilt in the future, steps must be taken to preserve memories of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage now, even as violence continues. These preservation activities can take place both within Syria and in refugee and diaspora communities.

   **Action 1:** Document the cultural heritage (environment, artifacts, sounds, art and music, etc.) of the city with film and pictures.

   **Action 2:** Build an interactive database (either offline or online) that is open source where diaspora, refugees and locals can begin uploading all their files (including photos, sound clips, videos, oral history interviews, etc.)

   **Action 3:** Collect a resource list of case studies of other projects consciously building platforms where memories can be shared.

   **Action 4:** Setup income generating projects in refugee and diaspora communities related to cultural heritage and oral history work.

2. **Reimagine and Rebuild the City**

   After the mass destruction, public spaces have changed from places of celebration and culture to triggers of trauma and devastation. In recreating the city, it is important both to imagine what the city could be, and remember what the city once was. Therefore, while it is important to meet local infrastructural needs, it is also important to root new building in memories of what the community once had. These public spaces can then again become hubs of intercommunal interaction and celebration of community.

   **Action 1:** Start a festival in public spaces shaped around rebuilding the destroyed Shuks and spaces of interaction. Foci can be Food, Music and traditional crafts that transcend boundaries.

   **Action 2:** Develop community centers and creative spaces

   **Action 3:** Create vocational training centers that develop local skills and bring them into the rebuilding process.

3. **Acknowledge Trauma and Address it in part through Arts and Culture**

   The aftershock and effects felt by stakeholders of crisis and war inhibit open dialogue and act as roadblocks to rebuilding and moving forward. If trauma exists unaddressed, trust cannot be built. Therefore, it is important to create spaces and opportunities for victims to process and heal, in both uni-communal and heterogeneous contexts. Arts and culture have unique resources to offer trauma-healing initiatives.

   **Action 1:** Use the National Museums and existing cultural groups to showcase the arts and shared cultural heritage, and create spaces for rituals of mourning, dialogue, and envisioning the future.
**Action 2:** Collect stories using existing YouTube channels to capture songs, stories and poems of the refugee diaspora. Highlight expressions that dignify and share expressions of grief without encouraging attachment to victim narratives. Juxtapose expressions in ways that acknowledge the suffering of people on all sides.

**Action 3:** Start art therapy and other groups for orphans and children who have lost important family members.

4. **Rebuild Trust**

Just as it is important to rebuild physical monuments and infrastructure, it is just as important to work toward the rebuilding trust, so that people from adversary communities can collaborate in the rebuilding, and so the possibility of safety and peace is felt by stakeholders. The previous three recommendations should be implemented in ways that consider breakdowns in trust, and possibilities for rebuilding trust beginning in the planning stage. The processes of preserving memory, imagining the future, and addressing trauma can all be designed to facilitate the redevelopment of trust.

**Action 1:** Built relationships across lines of enmity and culture in the processes of preserving memory, reimagining the city, and when possible, addressing issues of trauma.

**Action 2:** Use theater and art projects in public spaces to create opportunities of open and constructive dialogue and communal trauma relief.

**Action 3:** Set up a camp for young people run by local people, offering opportunities for fun as well as vocational training and trauma healing.

**Acting 4:** Engage individuals from all sides of the conflict working together to produce an oral history project.

**Conclusion**

Students and other members of the Brandeis community who were engaged in “A Vision for Aleppo” felt privileged to be involved in a project of such scope and significance as the rebuilding of an ancient city. Working on the design lab brought us close to the suffering of Aleppo’s people and the destruction of its cultural treasures. While students worked hard to understand the cultural heritage of the city and the dynamics of the conflict, they realize that they are outsiders and novices, and trust that recommendations will be considered in that light. If any of the ideas developed in this process prove useful to those responsible for the redesign of Aleppo, it would be our honor to have contributed.

**Appendices**

I. A list of all documentation available
II. Methodology of design lab
III. Introductory and instruction texts for facilitators and Participants
IV. Notes taken by Teaching Assistants throughout the Design Lab process
V. Student rapporteur notes and photos
A Vision of Aleppo: Full Report

Introduction

Aleppo has been a central focus of the media covering the Syrian war and crisis. With a ceasefire brokered the western media seems to be suggesting a step towards peace yet the reality is one of desperation and destruction on the ground (Chulov & Shaheen, 2016).

In amongst this destruction the cultural heritage, monuments and memories are being destroyed daily through the diverse tactics used by all sides. A select few organizations have begun to capture, preserve and protect the rich cultural heritage before it is destroyed. But projects have struggled with a vast number of obstacles and thus are constantly rethinking new and innovative strategies to try and capture, protect and restore cultural heritage for a diversity of uses, education for refugees and their host countries being one such use. At Brandeis University, a Design Lab was setup as part of the introductory course of the Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) minor, to tackle this problem and create a space of innovative, collaborative thinking that would result in concrete project ideas and recommendations for future projects of the Rose Art Museum, the Aleppo Project and CAST minor. This Report introduces the reader to key concepts from the fields of Creative Peacebuilding and Cultural Heritage as a Human Right, describe the methodology of the Design Lab Process, and finally highlight the recommendations emerging from the process.

Key Concepts from the field of Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation

by Cynthia Cohen

The design lab on Aleppo was informed by theory and practice emerging from the fields of conflict transformation as well as arts and social transformation. We drew on the following frameworks:

- **The moral imagination** as the ability to stay grounded in the real world, with its suffering and injustice, while simultaneously imagining and working toward a more just, less violent, more vibrant world. This concept, as elucidated by John Paul Lederach (2005), involves the cultivation of four disciplines:
  - Creating spaces for others’ creativity
  - Taking risks to reach out to, and be vulnerable to, enemies, adversaries, others
  - Remember interdependence, in the sense that the well-being of one’s grandchildren is contingent on the well-being of one’s adversary’s grandchildren
  - Cultivating curiosity about the paradoxical nature of things that initially seem in opposition

- **Reconciliation** as the gradual processes of rebuilding trust in the aftermath of a breach, and/or a period of alienation, in relationships, especially through creative opportunities for people and communities to:
  - Rehumanize themselves and each other
  - Share stories, construct more complex stories and identities
  - Mourn losses
  - Empathize with each other’s suffering
  - Address injustices
• Let go of bitterness
• Imagine and substantiate a new future (Cohen, 2005)

Minimizing risks of harm, by, for instance,
• Minimizing the risk of engaging in epistemic violence (understood as injury to local ways of knowing, cultural practices, forms of expression, etc.)
• Minimizing the risk of worsening divisions between conflicting groups
• Minimizing the risk of re-traumatizing communities and individuals that have suffered from violence
• Minimizing the risk of undermining artistic integrity
• Minimizing the risk of creating or perpetuating injurious power dynamics
• Minimizing the risks to artists, cultural workers and project participants, particularly those working in contexts of government repression or polarized paramilitary formations
(Cohen, Varea and Walker, 2011)

The permeable membrane between art and society, a framework designed to facilitate communication between artists and other change agents by focusing attention of socio-political dynamics (the context and the effects of arts-based interventions) as well as transformations that take place within the aesthetic realm, the bounded spaces of creative processes. This framework invites attention to:
• untapped sources of resilience as well as untold stories, unexpressed remorse, suppressed feelings of guilt, rage, shame and fear, etc.
• the aesthetic and ethical sensibilities of those responsible for cultural productions
• the non-conscious as well as conscious processes by which the elements within a society are brought into creative spaces for focused and creative attention
• the preparation of the creative space
• the nature of the transformations – in beliefs, attitudes, values, consciousness, relationships among people and abstract elements, etc. – that take place within the space of creativity
• the depth, breadth and creativity with which transformations that take place within creative spaces are “cast back” into society, including whether many people and key people have been reached, and the nature of the transformations in the consciousness, relationships and actions of participants, witnesses, and audience members. (What changes because of the cultural production?)
• The extent to which risks of harm have been minimized
(Cohen, Varea and Walker, 2011)

Ideas from these four frameworks informed the structuring of the design lab, and the recommendations that it produced.
Key Concepts from the field of First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis

by Kristin Parker

The Hague Convention of 1945 requires participant States to abide by standards that protect cultural property during conflict, refraining from hostility against it (UNESCO, n.d.). The destruction of identity - or cultural cleansing - through the destruction of cultural heritage is often a weapon of war, aggravating conflict and reducing the ability of reconciliation and dialogue. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims, “Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.” Caring for cultural heritage ensures this right and promotes societal wellbeing (UN, 1948).

Cultural first aid refers to the protection, stabilization and security of tangible and intangible heritage, which are inextricably linked to human rights: the right to freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of thought and economic freedom, all which support self-determination and social cohesion. Through protection of heritage during and post-conflict, communities may recover their cultural practices more readily, which contributes to reconstruction and social cohesion.

The framework of First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis (FAC) for cultural preservation was established by the International Committee for the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, with support from three nations - the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, the Smithsonian Institution and the Prince Claus Fund Cultural Emergency program (Tandon, 2015). This capacity building has been created in response to the unprecedented increase in both natural and manmade disasters over the past ten years (such as the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and war in Iraq and Syria). The mission of cultural first aid is to stabilize and secure heritage at risk during complex emergencies and to incorporate cultural recovery into the humanitarian cluster system. The guiding principles align with humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence as followed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (UNOCHA, 2011). Those trained in cultural first aid abide by the following principles. They are:

- Proactive yet sensitive to human needs
- Respectful of the local context
- Capable of building trust and understanding amongst people with different views
- Ability to implement first aid operations for protecting cultural heritage in coordination with government, NGO, military and humanitarian agencies
- Ability to build and manage recovery teams
- Capable of assessing and mitigating future risks to ensure recovery

Taking a people-centric approach, allowing local communities to inform and secure their own heritage, is, surprisingly, not the tradition within the heritage recovery field. Historically, there is a top down approach, with large cultural institutions deciding for a community what is most important to preserve for posterity, often citing “universal value” as a justification to direct resources to project, led by large institutions who are often from outside the communities impacted. However:
statistics indicate that in most disasters, local communities are the first to respond and secure their cultural heritage. For example, during the 2012 conflict in Northern Mali, privately held ancient manuscripts were kept safe through traditional inter-communal networks. Moreover, communities have time-tested coping mechanisms and a wealth of knowledge (e.g., traditional building methods) that could be utilized in reconstruction and recovery. Thus, involvement of the local communities is essential to the planning and implementation of first aid to cultural heritage”. (Tandon, 2015)

Aspects of this cultural framework were incorporated into the A Vision of Aleppo Design Lab, introduced through readings and case studies. Specific principles that were addressed by participants included:

- people-centered first aid – local communities are often the first to respond to secure their heritage, and their knowledge is essential to any recovery process;
- an inclusive attitude and respect for diversity - necessary to build trust and encourage cooperation;
- context specific response – there is no single approach when addressing complex emergencies. Careful assessments must be made to analyze immediate needs and identify the wide variety of actors involved to protect cultural heritage.

Sponsors and Involved Partners

The 'A Vision for Aleppo' Design Lab was hosted by two different units at Brandeis. The first is the minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST), an academic program launched by the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, based at The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. Now in its third year, the CAST minor offers students an opportunity to explore theory and practice at the nexus of arts, culture, social justice and conflict transformation. The faculty committee of the minor is co-chaired by Dr. Tom King and Dr. Cynthia Cohen; Cohen, who has published widely on the aesthetics and reconciliation, is the instructor of the introductory course.

The second is the The Rose Art Museum, which is Brandeis University’s on-campus Art Museum founded in 1961. The Rose Art Museum is an educational and cultural institution dedicated to collecting, preserving and exhibiting modern and contemporary art and making it accessible to the community. The Museum is currently working with the Aleppo Project, housed at the Shattuck Center on Conflict, Negotiation and Recovery, led in part, by AlHakam Shaar (Member of the Aleppo Citadel Friends Society) and Robert Templer (expert on public policy and conflict resolution) on brainstorming new strategies to their work.

The Shattuck Center on Conflict, Negotiation and Recovery's Aleppo Project aims to address three issues: 1) How can donors better help those trying to survive amid destruction and how can that aid help rebuild communities as well as cities? 2) How can refugees maintain a voice in what happens to their cities while balancing the need to redevelop healthier communities? 3) What can we learn from the recent reconstruction of cities such as Beirut, Kabul and Sarajevo?
The Aleppo Project aims to come up with policy tools and ideas that enhance the power of communities to determine their own futures and helps donors do more with less. The core principle is to help people, particularly refugees and women who are shut out of decisions on aid and reconstruction, find a voice.

Participants and Guests

To help facilitate the process effectively and ensure the students had access to a plethora of diverse opinions and experts. Different guests were invited at specific points in time during each of the sessions to aid the process. The following people were participants or experts at different points in time:

**Experts with knowledge of Aleppo:**
- Rim Lababidi – Syrian Architect
- AlHakam Shaar (as mentioned)
- Robert Templer (as mentioned)

**Experts with knowledge of Arts, Design and Change:**
- Eylem Ertürk (Anadolu Kultur) – Turkish Arts Administrator
- Kristin Parker – The Rose Art Museum Interim Director
- Madhawa Palihapitiya – Associate Director at the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration
- Jane Sapp – Composer, Artist-in-Residence
- Cindy Cohen – Director of Brandeis’ Peace Building and the Arts Program
- Dan Feldman – VP of Institutional Planning, Brandeis

**Facilitators:**
- Myriam Marcuello-Lopez – MA in COEX and NEJS ‘17
- Madhawa Palihapitiya (as mentioned)
- Shadi Sheikh Saraf – MA in COEX, ‘16
- Hauke Ziessler – MA in COEX and NEJS ‘18 (facilitator and logistical support)
- Maggie Ziegel – BA ‘18 (facilitator and logistical support)

**Participants:**
- Students from the Fall 2016 CAST 150B course – “Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation
- Jennifer Largaespeda – ‘16 (documentation)
Background of Design Lab Method

The business world has become adaptive and creative in innovative approaches of problem solving with structures such as Design Thinking or the Flexons approach. With the advent of social businesses and the distancing from traditional means of funding, (such as grants) NGOs are also looking to business models for inspiration to problem solve. The idea of these approaches is to center the process in a horizontal, open, collaborative and experimental structure that leaves space for “out-of-the-box” thinking (Mckinsey, 2016). The design thinking process is especially popular with universities and businesses as it creates an interactive and new approach to problems that have become seemingly intractable (Dorst, 2011). Design thinking involves three key elements; teamwork, the design process and a collaborative work space (D-Forge Bremen, 2016). The key is making the human aspect of problem solving the central building block of the process (Dorst, 2011).

1. Team work

As mentioned human interaction is the key component of design-thinking and thus the methodology used in the process is very interactive ranging in approaches to accommodate and define spaces for different dispositions (Fierst, Diefenthaler & Diefenthaler, 2011). The idea is that the process is rooted in a deep empathy for the human needs inherent in the problem that is tackled. By creating a horizontal environment experts, managers, secretaries and the various other positions tackle the problem on an even playing field where no idea takes precedence over another (Dorst, 2011). To create a conducive environment where this is possible, the right setup is essential.

2. The Work Space

Change teams often meet in rigid meeting room settings where a creative thought process, candid dialogue and ideation is not promoted. Hence, the Design lab requires a conducive working environment that gives sufficient space for creative thought and dynamic structure. Through movable furniture and an array of visual materials (e.g. post-its, flipcharts, colored pencils, markers, whiteboards etc.) a dynamic and interactive environment is created (Stanford, 2016). The key is to make the ideas and processes more tangible for the participants (Fierst, Diefenthaler & Diefenthaler, 2011).

3. The Process

As can be seen in Figure 1 the process is both flexible and structured in the same sense. While the participants move forward in a step by step format there are always possibilities in returning to the drawing board retesting and recreating. The process begins with discovery where the participants attempt to understand and establish a baseline of expertise for all participants in the design thinking lab and to begin a process of acclimatizing the participants to a problem-solving thought process. From this, questions are defined that will be used to directly tackle the problem and to begin defining a focus within the next steps. With these questions participants move into the empathy and ideation phase where through an open-minded approach brainstorming is promoted. This phase requires empathy as no ideas are wrong and out-of-the-box-thinking is rewarded. Here ideas are developed and consolidated to define concrete answers to the posed questions. This is vital as to enter the next phase
of exploration a solid prototype, can only be established, if the brainstorming has defined an all-encompassing backdrop. An effective way this can be done, is by shaping the thought process around models such as the Business Model Canvas and the SWOT Analysis (Fierst, Diefenthaler & Diefenthaler, 2011).

4. Exploration

It is important then when the phase of exploration is entered, the project idea is not only answering the questions that are being tackled but, that through experimentation, they can be tested. The next step is to take the idea that resulted from the previous exercises and begin concretely brainstorming a timeline and plan on exactly when and how the new solution will be implemented, with direct calls to actions for the change teams. By defining a roadmap of the next steps one can constantly test the progress of the implemented ideas, exploring its success and revisiting prior steps of the design thinking process in further workshops, if the idea fails to be effective. This is represented by the black arrows in figure 1, which show a dynamic interaction between the design thinking steps. By returning to the well documented process and reanalyzing one’s steps, future problems can be reassessed and redefined. Furthermore, the innovative approach of testing, returning, redefining and retesting creates an interactive and constantly adaptive approach to building an organization or project idea.

As shown above the design lab methodology brings various constituencies related to a problem, issue or possibility, into creative conversation to design structures, processes or expressions that solve problems, resolve conflicts or expand on possibilities. CAST design labs are designed to engage students and experts in exercises toward more just, peaceful, resilient, and vibrant communities. This is an interesting approach to adapt to the class, as a constantly changing environment, such as Aleppo, requires an adaptable process, where past activities can be integrated into newer developments. Finally creating a storyline that intertwines the diverse approaches to solving the problems at hand, will help establish a constantly adapting project.
The Methodology and Structure of “A Vision of Aleppo” Design Lab

As mentioned the methodology is deeply rooted in the design thinking process. The entire process was structured in 3 three hour sessions as part of the class. This gave the process a difficult time constraint, in which, the groups had to work with efficiency. The first 3-hour session was centered in raising the expertise of the students and exploring the matter at hand. The second session revolved around ideation with the students, using their knowledge from the readings and previous sessions to explore the questions provided to them. While, the final session focused on presenting the ideas, collecting feedback and realigning the efforts of the different groups together with key experts in the field. The second session was based in smaller group activities which each tackled one of the questions referenced below in Process.

For more detailed information of the exact methodology consolidate appendix 2. With these questions in mind one can now explore the process and the results of each group.

Process

To understand how the above-mentioned structure and methodology resulted in the recommendations listed and to also explore the successes and limitations of the process one should unpack each group’s results and how they proceeded through the given method. From this a set of recommendations will be given and finally the limitations will be explored further.

Group 1:

Question: What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities consider distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?

The group working with this question were facilitated by Hauke Ziessler and supported by Kristin Parker, an expert in the field of restoring and protecting cultural heritage and memory. The group progressed through the steps quite well and worked effectively to come up with a solid project idea. They were not able to finish the entire list of the Business Model Canvas but were able to touch on very important potential risks and dynamics, which the project needed to consider. The results of the process were particularly interesting as the project was very concrete in its plan and had many elements of thinking out of the box.

The entire result of the group can be harnessed by their catchphrase: “Preserving the past to create pathways to the future”. The idea was to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the city in a number of ways.

a. Giving many groups from the local population cameras to capture and map as much of the architecture and city as possible and to create localized agency.

b. Film not only people and their stories but also record cultural events such as music and dance or just capture sound recordings to create a vast database of their culture to preserve it to the best of their abilities despite the tough conditions.
c. Written history is also valuable. Thus, it was proposed that oral history stories are captured of the old, young, refugees and locals to preserve memory. The key is to create a history through the people by the people. They define their culture and determine what their culture is.

d. All this will be collected on a database that will become an interactive website where access is given to all, but not associating it with a cloud, to protect the local people’s identity.

e. The database can be used by external partners to get a better idea of the situation and thus plan and implement effective projects within the country e.g. UNHCR.

f. The program can create a pathway to invite a sense of hope among the young people, through various education projects. The key is to connect the different diaspora through technology to bring the fragmented communities together. By intertwining educational programs with refugee communities abroad and within the country, peoples’ stories are connected across boundaries.

g. The database can be used to tell the stories of the refugees and help them to capture their memories to work through their trauma

h. The database is also a way to transfer skills to the Syrian refugees.

i. One idea is to begin a project based on the vast information in the database to rebuild the city, virtually, utilizing the documentation, therein, to establish a future rebuilding plan of the city.

(See Appendix 5 for additional notes)

Open questions that were offered by students and the experts were quite interesting as they expanded on the ideas and are important to consider when moving forward on concrete suggestions:

1. How do we go about the documentation process in a way that people are not endangered?

2. How to find educators and connect the different groups to interact with the groups? And how to facilitate such a project?

3. Who could maintain and write such a database considering biases and language barriers?

4. To what extent are memories shared memories? And how are they filtered through the conflict discourses? Who gets to decide what memories are shared?

It can be seen, while the time constraints did not give space to explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the idea, it was apparent that the students thought of a wide spectrum of ideas. While the short presentation the group offered during the third session did not reveal the entire discussion they had, it can be seen in the notes of this group that there was an extensive exchange of tactics and ideas on how exactly the photography approach, the database and the education projects should be structured (See Appendix 5 for additional notes). But it is fascinating to see this link between the old and the new and the diaspora and the local population. The clear attempt to bring the different sides together is an interesting one to explore further.

Group 2:

**Question:** After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?
This group was facilitated by Madhawa Palihapitiya and joined by the expert Rim Lababidi. They focused on the rebuilding process and did this by proposing a weekly festival that celebrates the culture, art and music of the city. By recapturing public spaces such as the largely destroyed markets they worked on making public spaces an integral part of the rebuilding process.

They proposed using the concepts of Dahab (the famous crafts of the city), Kebab (the unique food of the city) and Terab (the famous music of the city). The idea is to use these traditional practices to restore the heritage, to capture and reinvent the public spaces and turn them into vibrant hubs of collaboration instead of spaces that spread fear and hatred as they have in the past. The group especially focused on the following valuable assets the festival could contribute:

1. It is an economic stimulus for artists, farmers and local populations
2. It can be educational in restrengthening lost practices
3. It can restore the interest and trust for the other
4. Job creation

From this, 3 elements were proposed that the festival will concentrate on:

1. Kebab- food can bring people together through a farmer’s market where cooking lessons are offered to inspire rehumanization
2. Terab- Music is a good vehicle to bring the past together with the present. While it brings back past traditional folk songs and dances, it can also be innovative as it adapts to tell the stories of the modern local populations.
3. Dahab. Crafts can bring people together to interact in a collaborative manner, by collaborating in artistic projects and beautifying the surroundings. Equally it can celebrate long lost traditional arts and crafts and can begin educational projects to revitalize the traditions.

The goal therefore is to create a space of engagement with the other where emotions are exchanged and safe spaces are born. See Appendix 4+5 for more details.

Through the comments of both the experts and the students interesting aspects were added that gave a new depth to the idea. Space should be given for the project to form dynamically, within the communities, to help the new generations invent a public space that suits them and that promotes their interests. It was then added that perhaps Virtual Reality could become a new format of experiencing the festival. As events are recorded with 360° cameras the events can be experienced in spaces where only ruins exist, to document the spaces and reimagine what could be done to rebuild and revision the city.

The fact that it is a longitudinal process is vital as a once off festival will not instill trust but the process should be a long ever growing process. By bringing in young voices the very festival could be organized by locals from different backgrounds to make the very event planning process one of cross-cultural interaction.

The group struggled with the procedure as they ran out of time. With their avid brainstorming process, they got side tracked a lot and felt that there was not enough time to formulate and concretely explore their project idea. The notes seen in the Appendix 5 are a very speedy and rough overview of the idea showing the lack of time available. This was a problem many of the groups faced.
Group 3:

**Question:** For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?

This group was headed by Eylem Ertuk and struggled to get to a concrete idea as they began to explore the topic of identity, within their group, exploring whose memories are captured and how the dynamics between the different groups may develop, with any project that you would impose on the region. Hence they desired to create a process that would be locally owned and flexible to the local situation.

Their idea was shaped around a form of storytelling which could be collected over a medium such as a YouTube channel to capture songs, stories and poems of the refugee diaspora. This would allow the refugees to reclaim their voice that were suppressed. The arts and its diverse outlets of expression would be the platform used. As a tool for integration, to help create an avenue of understanding in their host countries, storytelling projects could be used as a tool to build a bridge to the host communities and to build hope for the refugees by putting the refugees in a more positive light.

The group was very effective in not only exploring their own shortcomings but the challenges that their project idea would face. These are a few of their critical questions:

1. How to protect the safety of the individuals? Perhaps through a podcast, radio station or using USB sticks where people can load their memories onto a stick in an anonymous fashion. This may be a good way to get stories out of Syria as USB sticks are easy to move without detection.

2. How to reach out to people to share their stories? Here they mentioned that a credible source should be found.

3. Their idea, to ensure that it is not just merely another website in the sea of information that is online, was to use already existing networks such as [Humans of New York](https://www.humansofnewyork.com/) or [Storycorps](https://www.storycorps.org/). This way the followers of the groups can be utilized.

4. In what language, would the material be given? Here the question was if original Arabic language or English would be used. Translating material to make it more relatable would be rather time consuming. A blog with both the original and translated text could be valuable.

In the feedback, some interesting information was added. Two potential partners were mentioned. [The Human Library](http://www.humanlibrary.org/) which is a place where one can loan a person’s story like a book creating an open space of candid dialogue and the second being [Humans of Aleppo](https://www.humansofaleppo.com/). It was also added that one should consider people with no access to the internet and that perhaps through books and journals these people could be reached and interacted with. And finally, it is important to consider whose stories you are telling and why you are telling their story? It is important to consider building such projects with the maximum amount of ownership by the people themselves to make it a genuine and relevant project.
Group 4:

**Question:** How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

This group was led by Jane Sapp and Shadi Sheikh Saraf. The group struggled to focus on the task and as can be seen in the final notes which branched out in a wide array of topics (Appendix 5). They were constantly thinking out of the box trying to find new and innovative ways of tackling the question. Especially interesting was their connection to other regions to explore how they could tackle the topic. What especially stood out was they were one of the only groups that took the opportunity to give a very creative spin to their project pitch.

Their project proposal was a camp for young people with a large participation of the local populations that would:

- Create an opportunity to connect.
- To work towards a post war sense of hope
- A method to work through trauma and anxiety about the future.
- A way to remove kids from the reality of a post-war situation
- Rebuild trust with others in the community.
- Create a safe space of dialogue.
- To facilitate intergenerational interaction between youths and local populations that could teach youths what peace is and how to work through their trauma.
- To help youths to interact and regain a cultural identity
- Provide vocational training

The idea originates from a program led by the national museum in the Ivory Coast where the camp had many small camps spread out around the entire country. Once a smaller and personal identity was restored the camps congregated for a very large national camp bringing youths of all walks of life together. A large shortcoming the group themselves identified was the safety of the youths as such camps would be very susceptible to terrorist attacks. Hence, the idea is, to setup day camps where children could go home in the evenings to ensure their safety which would in turn be a logistical challenge. The focus of this camp would be after the war, once the situation is stable.

Some key comments coming out of their presentation was to ensure that in the process trauma is effectively addressed. It is important to not only provide entertainment as a way to get the youths out of their contexts but to also work through their trauma. The benefit can, in this process, be mutual both for adults and youths as the resilience in children can truly motivate adults to also work through their own trauma. This is where the question of what the longitudinal impact of a once off camp is and how one could ensure that once the youths go back to the outside world they are not crushed again by the tough environment that they enter. How can one perhaps integrate them into a connected social project that will help them cope with daily life.
Their proposed solution only tackled the after-war situation but their notes revealed far more depth into the topic which can be shaped around Cohen’s seven steps of reconciliation (previously mentioned):

- **Rehumanize themselves and each other**
  - Create food events where people cook together creating a buffet where people can share in the experience and food together
  - Use the National Museums and already existent cultural groups to organize art exhibit showcases in different parts of the country, to help educate and universalize different parts of the country via art.
  - Develop community centers and creative spaces, to build a place for civilians to share views in a community forum style and, ultimately, set up an art convention where both individual art but also group art projects can be developed. Can funding come from the government?

- **Share stories, construct more complex stories and identities**
  - Use theater as a medium to tell the stories and narratives of diverse groups which are ultimately combined into a larger overarching play or work of art, highlighting the individual narratives but working to create a new group identity.
  - Build musical projects where the children in communities’ bond through musically bonding with each other and stories are told through song.
  - Setup a sports league where the different sides should work and play together to make it a success

- **Mourn losses**
  - Start mourning and trauma relief groups for orphans or children that have lost important family members.
  - Issue a call to Syrian artists, at home and in diaspora communities, to create works that address the legacy of the violence, including all its losses.

- **Empathize with each other’s suffering**
  - Build workshops with men that learn traditionally feminine activities together, e.g. cook, paint or sing, specifically men of conflicting groups.
  - Begin female intergenerational potlucks where young women and older women are partnered in a mentor style program
  - Stories (see second bullet point, just above) can be curated and juxtaposed to help people on all sides of the conflict empathize with each other. Visual art, narrative and performative media can be used to present stories.

- **Address injustices**
  - Perhaps the ceasefire can also be strengthened, by not only highlighting the need to preserve life and restore the basic infrastructure, but also to create ownership of the protection of art and cultural heritage in the city.

- **Let go of bitterness**
  - Initiate an Open Mic event where young people can openly address issues and congregate across social boundaries.

- **Imagine and substantiate a new future**
- Vocational training and development: by providing training for civilians and allowing skill development during the war new networks are built and vital jobs needed for rebuilding the city can be developed.
- Publish a regular anonymous zine publication

Overall it was very interesting and fascinating what the students came up with when working together. Using the wealth of knowledge and ideas that came out of this design lab this report has established a list of concrete recommendations that can be used by the Aleppo Project, the Rose Art Museum and the CAST program to plan the next steps in the projects to restore, protect and capture the cultural heritage of Syria and begin planning the rebuilding process of the cities and the people.
Recommendations

These recommendations compartmentalize the findings into easily manageable categories for the ease of assessment. While reading the recommendations, it is advisable to relate them back to both Parker’s and Cohen’s theoretical outline to see how these recommendations meet the theory and expand on the proposed impact. Especially interesting is to explore how the seven forms of reconciliation are met with many of the processes suggested below. To keep the recommendations focused and relevant they will be divided into recommendations that could be implemented immediately, in the future, in Syria and in the Diaspora and Refugee populations. The following four foci were decided to be the most vital in making recommendations and approaching the situation from a bottom-up grassroots approach.

Preserve the Possibility of Memory

In war-torn cities, such as Syria, where a plethora of actors have been involved, cultural heritage and memory has heavily suffered. Thus, for the communities to thrive, these memories and experience need to permeate through the entirety of the rebuilding process. The preservation of memory and experience gives each stakeholder ownership of their rich heritage, and enables the community as a whole to move forward.

**Action 1:** Document the cultural heritage (environment, artifacts, sounds, art and music, etc.) of the city with film and pictures.

**Purpose:** To recreate and preserve the cultural heritage of Aleppo. This documentation will also serve as a resource to the people and to the actors working on recreating the city.

**Constituencies:** All citizens and stakeholders of Aleppo and Syria.

**Output:** A large database of documentation of Aleppo.

**Outcome:** A source of heritage and identity to be used now and through the future of rebuilding Aleppo.

**Action 2:** Build an interactive database (either offline or online) that is open source where diaspora, refugees and locals can begin uploading all their files (including photos, sound clips, videos, oral history interviews, etc.)

**Purpose:** To create a collaborative platform where all Syrians can participate to capture the memory and cultural heritage of the city.

**Constituencies:** All Syrians whether local, diaspora or refugee.

**Output:** A repository of the history and cultural heritage of Syria.

**Outcome:** A source of unity and collective identity accessible to all and contributed to by many.

**Action 3:** Collect a resource list of case studies in consciously building platforms where memories can be shared.

**Purpose:** Consolidation of approaches to capturing memories and the organizations already working in the field.

**Constituencies:** International Organizations, funders and artists in the diaspora and host countries.

**Output:** A concise list of recommendations for funders and to engage artists.

**Outcome:** A clear and easily accessible vision founded in solid theory and past practices.
**Action 4:** Setup income generating projects in doing cultural heritage work or oral history work.

**Purpose:** Empower refugee and diaspora people to help build intercommunal relationships with host communities around the world and document memories.

**Constituencies:** Host communities and Diaspora

**Output:** A rich database and collection of oral history interviews of refugees and their stories and the empowerment of refugees, as well as job creation.

**Outcome:** Finding purpose through self-empowerment and self-trust by exploring one’s own culture and heritage in a way that is valuable.

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**Reimagine and Rebuild the City**

After the mass destruction, public spaces have changed from places of celebration and culture to triggers of trauma and devastation. In recreating the city, it is important to hold two truths: what the city could be, and what the city once was. Therefore, while it is important to meet local infrastructural needs, it is also important to root these ideals in those that the community once had. These public spaces can then again become hubs of intercommunal interaction and celebration of community.

**Action 1:** Start a festival in public spaces shaped around rebuilding the destroyed Shuks and spaces of interaction. Foci can be Food, Music and traditional crafts that transcend boundaries.

**Purpose:** Capture and reinvent the public spaces and turn them into vibrant hubs of collaboration

**Constituencies:** Local Populations of Syrian cities especially the Shuk owners and artists.

**Output:** A restoration of lost arts, traditional unifying factors and the recapture of public spaces once used for violence.

**Outcome:** Rebuilt lively city centers rooted in the history of Syria and what once was.

**Action 2:** Develop community centers and creative spaces

**Purpose:** Build Platforms where open dialogue is promoted in a community forum style.

**Constituencies:** Local Populations of Syrian cities.

**Output:** A space to begin redefining common goals to tackle the rebuilding process across barriers of mistrust and divisions.

**Outcome:** A newfound sense of community and validation of the importance of each citizen’s voice and opinions in a positive, safe and open space.

**Action 3:** Create vocational training centers that develop local skills and bring them into the rebuilding process.

**Purpose:** Build new networks of interaction and empower local stakeholders to involve themselves in the rebuilding of the city.

**Constituencies:** Local uneducated/unemployed Syrian populations of warring groups.

**Output:** Restructured networks are built and vital jobs needed for rebuilding the city can be developed and made available to local citizens.

**Outcome:** A strong foundation within the community at the beginning and hopefully throughout the rebuilding process through contribution to labor and community empowerment.
Acknowledge Trauma and Address it in Part through Arts and Culture

The aftershock and effects felt by stakeholders of crisis and war inhibits open dialogue and acts as a roadblock to rebuilding and moving forward. If trauma exists unaddressed, trust cannot be built. Therefore, it is important to create spaces and opportunities for victims to process, heal and learn together.

**Action 1:** Use the National Museums and already existent cultural groups to organize art showcases in Syria.

**Purpose:** To teach and build commonalities between all Syrian and otherwise affected people to root them in culture to address the prevailing trauma nationwide.

**Constituencies:** Local Syrian artists, creators and collaborators.

**Output:** A revival of art culture as a tool for trauma relief and sense of heritage.

**Outcome:** Interactive coordination of museums to protect memory and cultural heritage. Building trust as ownership of the rebuilding process is jointly organized through combined goals.

**Action 2:** Collection of stories using existing YouTube channels to capture songs, stories and poems of the refugee diaspora.

**Purpose:** To build joint access to cultural heritage and memory as a tool for collective healing.

**Constituencies:** Diaspora and refugee communities of Syria around the world.

**Output:** A large database and well publicized collection of the rich cultural heritage of Syrian refugees and document their stories.

**Outcome:** A sense of collective hope and community to challenge the despair and loneliness felt by displaced persons through art and creation.

**Action 3:** Start mourning and trauma relief groups for orphans or children that have lost important family members.

**Purpose:** To build intercommunal relationships and create space and opportunity for collective healing and processing.

**Constituencies:** Diaspora and refugee communities

**Output:** Widely accessible trauma relief groups with a target of helping people through their mourning processes.

**Outcome:** A sense of collective hope and community to challenge the despair and loneliness felt by displaced persons through being in community with people going through similar losses.

Rebuild Trust

Just as it is important to rebuild physical monuments and infrastructure, it is just as important to rebuild trust within the society to foster the possibility of safety and peace felt by stakeholders. Ideally, the previous three foci would keep the idea of rebuilding trust in mind through each step, and building trust would be the ultimate outcome of resurrecting this community.

**Action 1:** Use theater and art projects in public spaces to create opportunities of open and constructive dialogue and communal trauma relief.

**Purpose:** To challenge and work against the deeply polarized rhetoric and mistrust that is present.
**Constituencies:** Residents in Aleppo and other Syrian cities.

**Output:** Public spaces that flourish community theatre, art and healing.

**Outcome:** Reconciliation through finding common goals, mourning loss and exploring new frontiers through art and collaboration.

**Action 2:** Setup a camp for young people run by locals that would provide vocational training and trauma healing.

**Purpose:** Build intra and intercommunity safe spaces to foster trust between different groups of people affected by the same trauma as well as provide space within which people can heal with their own communities.

**Constituencies:** Local Syrian Populations of warring groups, focusing on youth.

**Output:** Various camps in different areas of Syria which foster healing and equip people with the tools they need to rebuild their city.

**Outcome:** Foundations of a longitudinal trust building process are laid out by sharing in mourning and rehumanizing the other.

**Action 3:** Setup a sports league where the different sides could work and play together.

**Purpose:** Build trust and foster healthy relationships while teaching vital skills to youth such as teamwork and empathy.

**Constituencies:** Local Syrian Populations of warring groups, focusing on youth.

**Output:** Revitalization of local sports through many different teams and athletic outputs.

**Outcome:** Trust channeled through finding commonalities via alternative methods.

**Action 4:** Use different individuals from all sides of the conflict working together to produce an oral history project.

**Purpose:** Build trust through the arts.

**Constituencies:** Local Syrian Populations of warring groups, targeting women, youth, elders, disabled people and other marginalized groups to make them stakeholders in the trust building process.

**Output:** Joined programs that have an impact on rebuilding community and telling the stories of the other through interactive methods.

**Outcome:** A common goal and connection between people currently polarized in their communities, experiences and/or beliefs.

Questions that should be explored further

1. To what extent are memories shared memories? And how are they filtered through the conflict discourses? Who gets to decide what memories are shared?
2. German and French universities have a strong presence in Syria. How have they preserved sites from looting?
3. How do we streamline documentation in a way that people are not endangered?
4. Who could maintain and write the proposed database considering biases and language barriers?
5. How to reach out to people to share their stories?
Suggestions of Improvements to the Process

- Stronger prior coordination of the facilitators to ensure that they are all unified in information on process, aims, logistics and structure. To ensure there is a pedagogical commonality between the different groups.
- Allot more time for the process to give space for more idea development.
- A more in depth exploration phase would have ensured stronger connections between the ideas formed and the theories and prior readings given.

Conclusion

With the destruction that has and may still happen in Syria and Aleppo the design lab brainstormed interesting, out-of-the-box and innovative ideas for potential projects to tackle the future problems with building peace in this war torn country. For this work, issues of identity, cultural heritage, empathy and trauma relief are integral. Through the interactive and dynamic structure of the design lab a list of diverse ideas were brought forward to help brainstorm future projects of the Rose Art Museum, the Aleppo Project and the Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation Program. The students through their astute knowledge of the situation and the course were able to not only identify the important linkages within the country that need to be restored but also the role of the Diaspora refugee groups that will be vital in restoring and rebuilding what has been destroyed politically, socially, economically and physically. We hope this report advances the field and provides a concise and inspiring overview of the Design Lab Process and its effectiveness in coming up with concrete and implementable plans for future projects. With that it is vital to thank the sponsors and involved organizations without whom is would not have been successful:

- The Rose Art Museum
- The minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) an academic program launched by the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, based at The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life
- the Aleppo Project, housed at the Shattuck Center on Conflict, Negotiation and Recovery
Appendices:

Appendix 1

A list of all Documentation Available

- Appendix 2: Methodology and structure of “A vision of Aleppo”
- Appendix 3: Introductory and instruction text for facilitators and Participants (including References)
- Appendix 4: Notes taken by Teaching Assistants throughout the Design Lab process
- Appendix 5: Student rapporteur notes and photos by participants
- Video and Photos documenting the design lab
- Student Reflections on Design Lab Process (Excluded due to confidentiality of students)

Appendix 2

Methodology of design lab

Methodology and Structure

The Design lab took place during three 3-hour sessions of the class CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation. A pool of experts participated and consulted in the process. During this time participants, would work through the design thinking process using a fictional context that was given to them in the first session (see appendix 3 for the full scenario). The fictional context had many similarities to Aleppo but aimed to remove the participants from the situational context, which had the potential to overwhelm students (Appendix 3). As Aleppo and the Syrian war is extremely complex there was a danger that students would get caught in the details instead of exploring concrete solutions. By removing the participant from this direct situation, it is pedagogically easier to think-out-of-the-box and not be hampered by small details, which may divert from the deeper issues.

With the constraints of time, the design thinking process had to be adapted, to be pedagogically valuable for the students but also produce high quality results for future projects. Hence each session was set up to address one of the four phases of the design thinking process, with the fourth phase of testing left open to the programs, NGOs and partners that will use the recommendations of the design lab for future project development.

The first session focused on building the expertise of the participants and getting them ready for the next phase of ideation. For the next session of ideation, the participants were divided into four groups which each tackled one question with support from a facilitator and expert. In the final session, the groups were given some time to prepare a short creative pitch to present the project idea to two
experts that called in via skype, giving comments on each idea and explore the given prototypes with the participants. To understand this process deeper each session will be unpacked in more detail.

The video footage of the class’ panel discussion can be seen upon request through coexistence@brandeis.edu.

Session 1: Building Expertise
The first session on November, 1, 2016 focused on preparation for the lab and defining a foundational shared knowledge for all participants. This session was set up in 3 phases:

Step 1:
A presentation and discussion with Robert Templer, Director of the Shattuck Center on Conflict Negotiation and Recovery at the Central European University, expert on public policy and conflict transformation, and a member of the Aleppo Project team; and Kristin Parker, Interim Director of The Rose Art Museum, and expert on cultural heritage preservation and rescue. These two presentations were introductory presentations that helped participants understand the context and help define a theoretical basis of knowledge of what factors may make work more difficult and what the needs are on the ground regarding cultural heritage work.

Step 2:
The students were required to report on various readings related to cultural heritage and violence prevention in municipalities, as well as case studies from Beirut and Mostar before class in line with a small reflection they had to write for their class requirements. In the session, each group was required to present their reading and give a 1 minute synopsis of the main arguments. These were then discussed to explore how cultural heritage was restored in other parts of the world. This further deepened the knowledge of each participant and ensured everyone had a toolbox, with which the next sessions could be tackled effectively.

Step 3:
The last step was a Presentation by Eylum Ertürk, a visiting arts administrator from Istanbul, Turkey, who presented and discussed the topic of “Arts, Culture and Dialogue for Diversity and Conflict Transformation in Turkey,” also looking at work with Syrian refugees in Turkey undertaken by her organization Anadolu Kültür. From this rich foundational session students were asked to work on a reflection that would further work through various readings that were given to each of the specific groups.

Session 2: Ideation
On November 8th, the session focused on the process of ideation. The session was split into two parts, a whole group discussion to consolidate and refocus the class to the themes of the design lab, and then small groups that would tackle four questions.
Step 1:

Rim Lababidi, architect from Aleppo and Kristin Parker presented research on heritage damage in Aleppo to bring the participants back to the fundamentals. Rim ended her presentation with the concrete next steps of the session by reading the synopsis of the fictitious context the participants worked with (See Appendix 3).

Subsequently the groups split up into the four groups around the four questions outlined below. Each group was accompanied by a facilitator and an expert who would assist in the process as guides and sources of deeper information. Additionally, one of the students was appointed to be a rapporteur to take notes and capture the development of the different group’s ideas. The idea was to work towards developing project ideas for the reconstruction of a hypothetical city, in response to the following questions:

- What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities consider distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?
- After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?
- For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?
- How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

The process looked as follows:

1. Participants work in silence on separate sticky notes writing quick broad project ideas that could answer their given question.
   - Each sticky note had to have two parts;
     - What constituency or group does the proposed idea address?
     - What is the idea?
   - Participants were asked to post these notes on a flipchart grouping similar ideas and thinking about how they could be mapped visually. The key was not quality it was quantity. They could draw or write. The goal was to establish groupings of ideas for further discussion.

- The floor was then opened, within each group, to honest and open dialogue to revise the ideas and clusters. The goal was to find two concrete ideas that the students could work with going forward. The idea to advance, should include both the concept of the idea and the constituency. Some questions given to moderators meant to stimulate open plan ideation were:
  - Notice these ideas (picking two in particular) have both similarities and differences. What value does the idea have and what differences are there?
  - What other cluster might specific ideas be grouped with and why?
Which ideas do you think are most powerful and have the most potential?

Put a mark by the ideas you would like to explore further; you could put your mark by up to three ideas. You will work with the two that have the most marks.

Step 2:

Using their non-dominant hand, each participant was asked to draw an image of one of the two selected ideas in action, completing the drawing in 3 – 5 minutes. Discuss if any concrete ideas and/or anything new emerges from this exercise.
Step 3:

In this task the **Business Canvas Model** and **SWOT Analysis** were combined to give the participants a set of questions to setup a concrete plan for their project idea (Figure 2). The positive element of this process is that as each step is tackled, one, is automatically reassessing the previous steps, trying and testing, as the project idea develops in an interactive manner. Here, a flip chart was provided with the headings, seen in Figure 2, and participants were asked to use the materials given to them to interactively discuss their project idea using the headings given. Some questions given to the moderators to stimulate the process were:

- Why would we be doing this project? What problems or possibilities would it address?
- What methodologies would be used? What activities and actions would take place?
- Who will be involved in the project and in what roles? (beneficiaries? Staff? Facilitators?)
- What do you imagine would be the project’s strengths and possible vulnerabilities or weaknesses?
- What conditions external to the project create opportunities and might advance the project? What conditions external to the project might threaten its ability to succeed?
- What are the outputs? (What concrete things are created?)
- What are the outcomes and impact?

The class concluded with this activity and the groups were left with the information that they should use the week, until the next section, to reflect, with their group, on the session and plan how their idea could be pitched to a panel of experts.

**Session 3: The Exploration Phase**

This last session was designed to tackle the final step of prototype exploration. Here groups were given some time to meet and come up with a creative project pitch. Subsequently each group had exactly 5 minutes to present their project idea in front of two experts that joined the session virtually via the platform BlueJeans. One was Rim Lababidi who they had met in person and second was AlHakam Shaar who was also previously mentioned in this paper. Each group was then given a round of comments and question by the experts and the other participants.

After all groups, had presented a feedback round was opened where participants could reflect and share their thoughts on the process, the design lab and what they learnt through the process.
Appendix 3

Introductory text for Facilitators and Participants

Instruction Outline for Participants

November 8 and 15, 2016
CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation

For November 8:
General resources for the Whole Class:
About cultural heritage and Syria:
1. Watch Trailer and Clips from the film “The Destruction of Memory”
   http://destructionofmemoryfilm.com/trailer
2. Inside Aleppo: The tale of the flower seller
   http://spiralclips.teammiraculous.com/video/116455/inside-aleppo-the-tale-of-the-flower-seller (6 minutes -- very beautiful and very sad)
3. Watch “Home Within”: Syrian clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and Syrian Armenian visual artist Kevork Mourad perform together at the Kennedy Center. https://m.kennedy-center.org/home/play/M6818

Optional about design labs:
1. “What is Human Centered Design?” and Facilitators’ Guide
   http://www.designkit.org

Reflection #9: Due on Sunday, November 6, midnight
Contact the student members of your group and decide how you want to divide up the preparation for the design lab. Read, watch and listen to the resources you are responsible for; or explore all the resources listed for your group. Identify 5 ideas from these resources that are relevant to the question your group is addressing. These could take the form of a quote and your commentary on it; or a caution based on reports from contexts other than Aleppo; important data; or an image or phrase that could spark creativity among the group members.

RESOURCES FOR EACH OF THE FOUR SMALL GROUPS.
(Note: these resources are intended to give participants in the small groups ideas about what is already happening, in relation to Aleppo and other war-torn parts of the world, to stimulate people’s thinking for the design lab. You do not have to read or watch each entry in its entirety. The best approach would be to divide up the entries among members of the group, so the group as a whole can benefit from the key ideas. Another option would be to skim all of the entries assigned to your group, and choose those that seem most promising to engage with more deeply.

Groups have been composed to bring a range of different perspectives and capacities to each question. Feel free to peruse the resources for other groups besides your own.)

Group 1: Participant #1 (rapporteur), Participant #2, Participant #3; Kristin Parker, resource person
What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities take into account distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?

1. The Destruction of Memory: Conversation about film:
   http://library.fora.tv/2016/01/28/The_Destruction_of_Memory

2. “Emergency preservation completed at Syria’s Ma’arra Mosaic Museum”

3. “How to save the arts in times of war”

4. “US Troops saved art as the Monuments Men of Iraq”

5. Palmyra Castle illustrating technique of photogrammetry
   http://ack-project.com/project/palmyra-castle
   and a small library of other Palmyra objects of cultural heritage
   http://thearckives.org


8. Websites that document extent of damage:
Group 2: Participant #1 (rapporteur), Participant #2, Participant #3; Rim Labibidi, Architect as resource person

After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?

1. “How Syria’s architecture laid the foundation for brutal war” Ted Talk by Marwa Al-Sabouni:
   https://www.ted.com/talks/marwa_al_sabouni_how_syria_s_architecture_laid_the_foundatio
   n_for_brutal_war
2. “Conflict urbanism: Aleppo”
   http://c4sr.columbia.edu/projects/conflict-urbanism-aleppo
3. Saving books from the Syrian War:
5. “Armed Conflicts, peace culture and protection of cultural heritage in West Africa,” chapter 10 in Cultural Heritage in Postwar Recovery [Note in particular the various constituencies addressed on p.104]
6. “Promoting cultural heritage in post-war recovery: El Salvador,” chapter 12 in Cultural Heritage in Postwar Recovery
7. Saddam Husseins Basra Palace Transformed into Museum
   http://www.npr.org/2016/09/30/496032457/saddam-husseins-basra-palace-transformed-into-museum
   http://thisisbiladi.org/?p=1061
9. The dancer and Cambodian History,” Toni Shapiro-Phim
   http://www.pcah.us/media/files/d90d3f492a8365efbae616c35b2a4458.pdf

Group 3: Participant #1 (rapporteur), Participant #2, Participant #3, Eylem Ertürk as resource person.

For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?

1. Refugee Support Map – Map of organizations working with/for refugees in Europe:
   http://refugeesmap.info
2. Syrian Musicians in Istanbul/Sounds Beyond the Border
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uu8IRFM7yW0
3. Small Projects Istanbul
https://www.smallprojectsistanbul.org
4. “And, Programme” digital commission program of the British Council
https://syria.britishcouncil.org/en/programmes/arts/and-syria
5. “Syria: Third Space Programme,” British Council
https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/syria-third-space/
6. “What are Syrian artists showing us about the conflict?”
https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/what-are-syrian-artists-showing-us-about-conflict
7. “Books and Games for Children on Syrian Cultural Heritage,”
8. Fighting to save the region’s cultural heritage (Beirut)
https://en.qantara.de/content/the-national-museum-in-beirut-fighting-to-save-the-regions-cultural-heritage
9. Berlin museum tours inspire Mid-East Refugees
10. “Hmong postwar identity production: heritage maintenance and cultural reinterpretation,” chapter 5 in Cultural Heritage in Postwar Recovery
11. “Using poetry to shed light on the worst of memories, including genocide” Interview with Peter Balakian
12. Avenues of Change (about the Philadelphia Folklore Project and Liberian Women’s Chorus for Change, and dance amongst Cambodian refugees)
http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/library-authors/2016_01_CatherineFilloux_AvenuesOfChange.pdf
Group 4: Participant #1 (rapporteur), Participant #2, Participant #3; with Maggie Ziegler as facilitator and Jane Sapp as resource person.

How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

1. Review: “Creative Approaches to Reconciliation,” the 7 elements of reconciliation, and why the arts and cultural initiatives are uniquely well-suited for the rebuilding of trust
https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/CreativeApproaches.pdf

2. “One foot in the door of the Levant” about Amr Al-Azm: https://www.good.is/features/issue-36-amr-al-azm

3. “Dr. Sarmast’s Music School – Witness”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_AEVuYQ00

4. Afghan Children’s Anthem 2015,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1R8jkHhGpXA&feature=youtu.be

5. “Political conflict and recovery of cultural heritage in Palestine,” chapter 7 in Cultural Heritage in Postwar Recovery


Assignment for November 15th
Reflection #9: Due midnight, November 13th:
Return to the resources for the previous two weeks and/or find additional resources that will help you strengthen the ideas developed for projects in your small groups. Working independently or together,
each group should complete the project planning chart for 1 – 3 projects. These will become the basis for creative presentations that you will develop during the November 15th class session.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Project 1</th>
<th>Project 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose/intention</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Methodologies, activities, actions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What groups of people will be involved in what roles?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Anticipated strengths</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Anticipated weaknesses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Anticipated opportunities (external to the project)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Anticipated threats (external to the project)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Outputs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Anticipated outcomes/impacts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Potential partners</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Potential sources of support</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Questions to be addressed</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Additional notes</strong></td>
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**Facilitator Guide**

**November 8th class:**
2:05 - 2:45 Presentation by Rima and Kristin and discussion
2:45 – 3:00 Setting up small groups; distributing pencils, paper, markers, etc. Move furniture as necessary
3:00 - 4:50 Small groups (including break)

**November 15th class:**
2:00 - 2:45 Students in small groups reconvene to develop 1–2 minute creative “advertisements” for one or two project ideas.
2:45 - 4:15 Creative presentations are shared with class and discussed; Experts from Aleppo project skypes in to watch and comment on presentations.

4:15 - 4:40 Whole group discussion: Where do we go from here? What’s next

4:40 - 4:50 Reflections on design lab process. What worked well? What could be different?

Proposed roles/assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Cindy</th>
<th>Hauke</th>
<th>Kristin</th>
<th>Eylem</th>
<th>Rim</th>
<th>Maggie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>Introduce class and manage flow of three segments</td>
<td>Co-presents with Kristin on chapter</td>
<td>Introduces Bob, sets the stage on cultural heritage</td>
<td>Presentation on your work, 4 - 4:50</td>
<td>Introduction to design Lab</td>
<td>Take notes on whole class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manages overall flow of session with Hauke</td>
<td>Manages overall flow of session with Cindy</td>
<td>Introduces Rim</td>
<td>Serves as resource person for Group #3; Back-up facilitator if we can identify alternative</td>
<td>Serves as resource person for group #2; Back-up facilitate if we can’t identify alternative</td>
<td>Takes notes on Rim’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 8</td>
<td>Manages overall flow of session with Hauke</td>
<td>Manages overall flow of session with Cindy</td>
<td>Supports group 1 in developing creative presentation</td>
<td>Supports group 3 in developing creative presentation</td>
<td>Supports group 4 to</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Manages overall flow of session with Hauke</td>
<td>Manages overall flow of session with Cindy</td>
<td>Supports group 1 in developing creative presentation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session (if you wish, find a student to assist you)</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Develop creative presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gather raw notes from each rapporteur at end of class (disseminate notes to group members and Hauke and Cindy)</td>
<td>Services as facilitator for Group #4</td>
<td>Video tape creative presentations?</td>
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<td>Takes notes on wrap-up and reflection sessions</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jane</th>
<th>Active participation</th>
<th>Serves as resource person for group #4</th>
<th>N/A --</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Templer</td>
<td>Presentation with Kristin - 2 - 2:50</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond briefly - to chapter presentations?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attend reception 5 - 5:45</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert Person From Aleppo Project</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Skypes in to listen to student presentations and responds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Student rapporteurs | Take notes on small group sessions and submit these to Maggie at end of class on November 8 | | |
Assignment of roles for small groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>Resource people</th>
<th>Students</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What can be done now, while the war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories?</td>
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<td>Sub-question: How should such activities take into account distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hauke</td>
<td>Kristin</td>
<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-question: How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madhawa</td>
<td>Rima</td>
<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>For people who have been displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-question: How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?</td>
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<td>Miriam</td>
<td>Eylem</td>
<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadi</td>
<td>Jane Sapp</td>
<td>XXX</td>
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</table>
Process for small groups on November 8:
3:00 - 3:05: Introductions

3:05 - 3:15 Working in silence, on separate sticky notes, brainstorm answers (ideas) to your group’s question.
Your answer should have two parts:
   a. What constituency or group does your proposed idea address?
   b. What is your idea?
Post your ideas on the wall or white board, placing the sticky notes near others that are similar in terms of the idea. Write as many ideas as you can. The key is not quality it is quantity. You may draw or write. The goal is to establish groupings of ideas for further discussion.

3:15 - 3:45 Continue to identify and adjust groupings of ideas, and discuss, with your group, the different clusters, to find commonalities and to explore differences. The goal is to find two concrete ideas to advance. These ideas to advance should include both the concept and the constituency.
Possible questions for moderators:
   · Notice these ideas (picking two in particular) have both similarities and differences. Please discuss the differences.
   · What other cluster might this idea be grouped with and why?
   · Which ideas do you think are most powerful and have the most potential?
   · Put a mark by the ideas you would like to explore further; you could put your mark by up to three ideas. We will work with the two that have the most marks.

3:45 - 3:50 Using their non-dominant hand, each participant draws an image of one of the two selected ideas in action, completing the drawing in 3 – 5 minutes. Discuss if any concrete ideas and /or anything new emerges from this exercise.

3:50 - 4:40 Comparing two ideas to be developed as a project or initiative.
   Why would we be doing this project? What problems or possibilities would it address?
   What methodologies would be used? What activities and actions would take place?
   Who will be involved in the project and in what roles? (beneficiaries? Staff? Facilitators?
   Audience members?)
   What do you imagine would be the project’s strengths and possible vulnerabilities or weaknesses? What conditions external to the project create opportunities and might advance the project? What conditions external to the project might threaten its ability to succeed?
   What are the outputs? (What concrete things are created?)
   What are the outcomes and impact?
Note:
Strengths: Strengths describe the positive attributes, tangible and intangible, internal to your organization. They are within your control.

Weaknesses are aspects of your business that detract from the value you offer or place you at a competitive disadvantage. You need to enhance these areas in order to compete with your best competitor.

Opportunities are external attractive factors that represent reasons your business is likely to prosper.

Threats include external factors beyond your control that could place your strategy, or the business itself, at risk. You have no control over these, but you may benefit by having contingency plans to address them if they should occur.

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4:40
Whole group reconvenes to make plans until next class

**November 15th**

2:00 - 2:45
Small groups reconvene and engage in creative work to prepare 1 minute “advertisement” for either one or both of their ideas

2:45 - 3:15
2 small groups present their advertisements; whole group discussion of their ideas

3:15 - 3:30 BREAK

3:30 – 4:00
2 small groups present their advertisements; whole group discussion of their ideas

4:00 - 4:50
Wrap-up of design lab process:
- Process for reporting on the design lab
- Plans for follow-up lab during ‘Deis Impact
- Learning about the war in Syria and the conditions faced by refugees, what could we at Brandeis do in relation to Aleppo and the war in Syria?
- What have we learned about the process of creating and implementing design labs

**Introduction Text for Participants**

**A City Under Siege: The Context**

Bantar is an ancient city of about 250,000 residents, the second largest city in the country of Ullfor. The country is known for its diverse cultural heritage, with centuries old trade routes that have developed between neighboring countries. Bantar is known around the world for its rich and unique literary, musical, architectural and artistic traditions that have developed due to the cross-pollination of many cultures over time.

In Bantar the markets serve as social centers, and it is known around the world for its ornate public gardens, ancient amphitheaters and a beautiful national library containing important historic manuscripts that describe the rich cultural heritage of the country. There are various centers of worship, embedded within different neighborhoods, and many museums. Historically, Ullfor has welcomed displaced people from neighboring countries and is known for its tolerance and hospitality. Many different cultural groups have co-existed there, respectfully.
Over the last twenty-five years, reserves of oil have been discovered and this has become the main source of export for the country and encouraged many new big business interests from other countries. This new industry has diverted government resources away from local education and healthcare, towards supporting this new oil industry and its infrastructure. A political party - the Wellington Party led by President Montague - has been in power during this time. His government has been limiting freedom of expression, putting restrictions on internet access, banning certain songs from playing on the radio, and requiring a certain kind of dress code for women, asserting great control over this traditionally tolerant society. Any citizen that questions the central government is put at risk of being imprisoned.

Three years ago, several cities in Ullfor staged large scale protests, demanding freedom of expression and access to information. The government responded by targeting the national library in Bantar, setting it on fire in an act of symbolic control over knowledge.

Taking advantage of this civil unrest, an extremist organization from a neighboring country, known as The Real Front, has declared allegiance to the government, invading Bantar neighborhoods to support local police forces who are allies of the government. Many formerly peaceful activists have taken up weapons to defend themselves against these extremist forces embedded within their neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has its own brigade made up of former activists and civilians. Some of these neighborhood brigades have allied themselves with The Real Front, who have lured them with promises of resources such as food, shelter and more weapons. A full-scale war broke out two years ago involving civilian brigades against government forces, Real Front allied brigades against regular civilian brigades.

Since that time, there has been extreme loss of civilian life including many women, elderly and children. Over 75% of the city of Bantar has been physically damaged due to bombing. Hospitals and markets have been destroyed by government bombs. Access to schools is impossible due to the daily bombing and risk of snipers. The local university has been taken over by the remaining activist community to be used as a communications center, and the grand central park has been turned into a graveyard for civilians killed. The ancient amphitheater has become a government prison to house activists and anyone else who opposes the government.

Before the violence, people of different religious communities and political allegiances lived in proximity to each other and interacted regularly, particularly through the market. Now, however, the city has become segregated, with people from different communities living in different regions of the city. The war has given rise to multiple narratives, and has forced civilians to pick sides to survive. Despite this, civilians are endangered by all sides of the conflict as the city’s neighborhoods have become battlefields. Therefore, mistrust is rampant and different groups have become polarized.

Despite the daily violence, civilians are attempting to maintain a normal life. Some schools have been set up in the basements of houses. An underground library was created using books collected from bombed out houses, and vegetable sellers still bring their food to the markets, despite the risk of bombs. The
ruins of the oldest church in the city, which was nearly destroyed, is still used for a variety of rituals. A wedding recently took place among the ruins.

A cease fire has been called for by the international community who are outraged by the continuing violence and consider the destruction of this important city a matter of world interest. You have been asked to participate in a task force to conceive of a plan to rebuild the city, and to engage local citizens in envision a future that will allow civilians to return to normal life.

The task force will address four questions:

• What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities take into account distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?
• After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?
• For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?
• How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?
Appendix 4

Notes taken by Teaching Assistants throughout the Design Lab process

Notes Taken By Maggie Ziegel, TA #1
11/01/2016 – First class

Guests: Robert Templer (presenter), Kristin Parker, Jane Sapp, Eylem Erturk (presenter), Elaine Reuben ‘63, Miriam (graduate student)

Robert Templer: the Aleppo Project

Are you all American?
Among the Americans here, how many of you have family members who fought in a war?
- Most of our lives are shaped by war in one way or another
- Most people directly impacted by conflict express the shock of what happened, all feels very sudden
- When war strikes, it strikes with incredible speed and destroys absolutely everything about people’s lives
- Profound impact on individuals
- Important to understand scale of change
- War in Aleppo was also very sudden
- Only in 2012 that you began seeing major protests in Aleppo, very rapid descent into violence as govt. began shooting at people, arresting many people, torturing people who had been arrested. This caused a huge response (Free Syrian Army)
- Eastern half of Aleppo- now controlled by Syrian Army
  o Largely made up of migrants
  o ‘Shanty towns’
- Western half of Aleppo - Home to cultural heritage
  o Profound division between these two sides. Many people have never even been to the Eastern side of the city
- Therefore, Aleppo is unique in its separation. Very neglected by the govt.
- 2006-2010= severe drought that hit Eastern half intensely. Longest drought since records have been kept in Syria. Substantial change in climate in Middle East
- People felt they had nothing to lose rising up against Assad. Enormous demands for change.
- Eastern side of Aleppo begins being bombed. Simply to destroy the city and clear out the population to deprive any groups fighting there of any support. Also, to remove the poor and those of political opposition from the city and from Syria. It was aimed at creating refugees
- We see a process of expulsion happening all over the world like this
  o Kill city as a location of protest, uprising
  o Destroy culture. Destroy things people have in common
  o Polarize identity. "Identity becomes something that you’re willing to kill for" – this is created and driven by political actors.
- In Syria, there were many divisions. In Aleppo- the biggest one was of wealth. Also religion/religious sects. 10th of population is Christian (also many sects)
- Divisions existed before, but were not extremely important before conflict.
- Fairly diverse population who at one point worked together quite well with its own culture, economy, etc. (in Aleppo)
- People are attempting to push aside identities that may link people together. Dehumanization, attempt to ferment and drive violence.
- Eastern half of the city still has quarter of a million people living among wreckage
- Center of Eastern half (last perfectly preserved Medieval Arab city) has now been severely damaged
- Enormous loss and dispersal of heritage in all of its forms. A city that had a very rich culture of music, plays, TV series, language, teaching, sophisticated and cosmopolitan city that had brought together people from across the Middle East through being a trading city. Extremely damaged through this expulsion of people and the divisions that have hardened across it.
- There is now literally a physical barrier of abandoned busses etc. that divides the city from the East and the West
- Eastern half is now under siege by the government and is still being bombed.
- Quite possibly the oldest continuous inhabited city on earth is now being destroyed. Tons of damage to a rich and important culture that we are all connected to.
- Aleppo was important to Christianity, Judaism and Islam.
- The renaissance basically came out of Aleppo and Damascus
- Reconciliation and Recovery for this city. Any process of rebuilding is going to be enormously complicated
  - Security challenges are still very real
- “Rebuild the collective identity of a city”
  - What makes a city work/enjoyable?
    - Art, Architecture, Humanities, History and Culture
    - Public Spaces (vital to engagement to each other and sense of other people in your world, peaceful relationships between people of different identities)
    - Effort to **address** the long history of this conflict and violence (50+ years of very deep violence against the people of this country)
- How to rebuild the life of a city?
- Look at other cities that have been recovering from conflict. (Beirut, Baghdad, Lebanon) – how to not fail in reconciliation in recreating/saving Aleppo
- Cities that have recovered more effectively have seen arts and culture and expressive forms of life play quite an important role in rebuilding links/relationships.
- **Culture is extremely important in rebuilding.** We need to move away from rigid ideas of reconstruction and prioritize culture to recreate what is essential about a city. **HUMAN ENGAGEMENT- ability to go out and find an amazing array of things to engagement in that space.**
- Need engagement to be successful.
- Aleppo will be an immense challenge to bring back many of these vital cultural things.
  - Physical infrastructure
  - Severe resistance (from funders)
  - Human division

**Student:** You mentioned Russia, what other international players have participated in either side?
- Very many
  - Turkey
  - United Arab Emirates
  - Russia
- Different countries are supporting different rebel groups and are therefore now fighting each other

- Self-Identified groups fighting
  - Ranges from a few guys to some very significant organizations
  - Cover a wide spectrum of religious and political positions
  - Supported by different groups

- ISIS – main gas and oil producing area of Syria and mistreats others
- Much more complicated and global than a 2-sided conflict
- More than 18 different countries on the Rebel side
- Afghans, Iranians, Ukrainians all on the govt. side
- Caused a terrible worsening in violence in Aleppo as most of the violence happening in Aleppo is being done by people with no ties to the country or history (outside agents)
- Therefore, level of violence has been very extreme and severely destructive. Absolute brutality and the extent of violations of international law.
- The idea of war being held between two different countries abiding by the Geneva convention is no longer what the definition of war is
- Geneva and Hague conventions have been disregarded by all sides in Syria
- We will see an Urban future (more people living in cities)
- Nearly all conflict now takes place in cities – more opportunity for destruction
- Cities are the repositories of culture

**Student:** With so many parties involved, when the conflict is over there is going to be a certain party that is seen as the ‘winner’ or takes control. How does rebuilding the city (and the ‘winner’) impact the city and how does this also impact the culture?
- Really massive impact
- Many studies been done on this, (ex. why did certain German cities recover faster than others?)
- A lot of success has to do with willingness of local authorities to listen to people and accept the input of people. A lot depends on whether you have an govt. authority who is willing to listen rather than dictate.
- We have no idea how the Syrian crisis will end.
- Examples of Soeul

**Prof. Cohen:** Some groups in Aleppo now represent some of these different communities that are actually thinking together about the future of the city. It is important for us to be aware of them, what they are like, how many, etc.

- Local coordinating committees in Syria
  - Committees that emerged as people began to take over land and government small cities
  - Developed a lot of fairly democratic processes. Tried to incorporate participatory
  - Giving out food, administering housing
  - Worked with schools and aid agencies
- Functioned as a local government and been quite successful- but squeezed by Jihad organizations (ISIS), and the Assad regime
- There are groups out working in these ways, but both sides are attempting to get rid of reasonable people. Therefore, these people are very squeezed! Level of violence directed against them is horrendous
- Started out as activists
**Prof Cohen:** We know that in many places in Syria there have been small groups of women who have been able to have ceasefire in certain places. What is the role of women in reconstruction?
- Women have been extremely important in many of these groups
- Aleppo had very low numbers of women in workforce before war
- Women were constrained from public sphere
- Little consideration of the spaces women occupy, ex. Putting wells in the communities to prevent the walks to get water. Women then vandalized these wells as the walk for water was very important and sacred to them
- Women will be largely important for many reasons
  - So many men have been killed- women will now need to be breadwinners

**Student:** In the planning of the rebuilding of the city, are you expecting people who have fled Aleppo to come back to Aleppo? How do we consider this in our planning?
- Yes. We did survey work a few months ago where 70% of Aleppians in Turkey wanted to come back
- The further away the refugees are the less likely they are to want to come back
- Majority of refugees are in neighbouring three countries
- People do want ‘go home,’ many are already returning to Aleppo
- There is a very strong correlation between education and returning. The least educated people are the most likely to return.

**Student:** We should think about this in the midst of the war, but if we are doing this now how do we engage and involve the Syrians and people living in Aleppo now?
- There is a very strong identity among Aleppians, they were somewhat ‘snobbish’ and therefore we think they will be very involved in the re-planning
- 200 different phrases and words in Aleppo for calling someone stupid!
- Very strong identity and pride in Aleppo
- Astonishingly beautiful history with amazing heritage
- Therefore, amidst all the horror there is still a desire to find some sort of way to think about reconstruction and about everything else

**Student:** Not just about building the city but building the life of the city, from your experience, how often to city planners consider this?
- Urban planners very unlikely to address cultural issues
- Wanted to just wipe out Eastern Aleppo
- Love the idea of erasing everything and just building up. Love the idea of a ‘blank slate’
- Architects tend to be very resistant to thinking about intricacies of post-conflict redevelopment and how every building will be contested in many ways.

**Student:** Are you asking us to think about cities as very separate from each other? Return to the city-state as a way of reimagining our work or are we thinking of a country, nationality, one city impacting another city? What is our focus?
- You may see something like city-states in Syria. In certain ways, the city is increasingly separate. It’s own kind of country with it’s own interests
- Global separation of urban life and the scale of urban life.
- Lack of opportunity
Summary presentation (2min) by students on their readings: Chapter 1
- Introduction to Cultural Heritage- looking at the idea of what we should be doing as a top-down approach or a bottom-up approach
- Criticizing public displays of reconciliation that have the possibility of further marginalization/silencing
- Respecting the people’s choice of what ‘home’ is rather than having the large groups/corporations decide what is best.

Chapter 2
- Identity and culture in a city, and how destruction of cultural landmarks affects the people living there. Destruction of symbols that are meant to outlive everyone and symbolize culture threatens the safety of the culture.
- ‘don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone’ the destruction of landmarks brings a type of mortality even if you didn’t appreciate the landmark prior to destruction.
- People forced out of their home often find home and solace in these landmarks, destruction can be even more damaging to these people
- Intangible heritage that people have through their stories, art, etc. and how do we preserve and protect this?

Chapter 3
- Cultural heritage and post-war recovery

Chapter 4
- Physical partitions and how they are a physical barrier between planners and community members.

Eylem Erturk: Arts, Culture and Dialogue for Diversity and Conflict Transformation in Turkey
- Raising awareness on cultural diversity of heritage for many years. (+15)
- World is becoming more and more polarizing
- This work can make differences in people’s lives
- How local issues are dealt with in Turkey:
  o Turkey is less than 100yrs old
  o Many people have always lived in their own cultures, issues of exile
- Context
  o There used to be 2million Arabs living in Ottoman empire, now less than 100, 000 in Turkey
  o Conflict with Armenia over region of land- closed border in 1990s
  o Issue with terrorists. Fighting for autonomy and cultural rights within Turkey
  o Summer of 2015, conflict resumed after long ceasefire, moving into city centers meaning there was lots of death and destruction of cultural heritage
  o Whole Middle East has been going through uprising of conflict, violence, war and mass migrations
    • Since 2011 (after outbreak of Syrian war) an estimated 1 million have left their homes, 6 million have been displaced, others have fled to other countries
- Turkey now hosts more than 2 million Syrian refugees
  - Many Syrians bringing their culture and heritage to Turkey
  - Freedom of expression has always been a problem in Turkey
  - Government shuts down internet
- Activists and Artists attempting to preserve culture
- Organization:
  - Established in 2002
  - Aim to do projects with idea that cultural exchange can lead to mutual understanding
  - Try to contribute to social and cultural positive change
  - New Film Fund
    - Human Rights Documentary Film Support Program
    - Organizes screenings, discussions, classes, etc.
    - Films generally about human rights issues, war, conflict, peace, LGBT issues, ecology, urban transformation, etc.
    - Empowering filmmakers to contribute to free world and help bring human rights issues into focus
  - Trying to keep Syrian Culture alive
  - Syrian Cultural Heritage
    - Preparing bilingual books and games for children
    - Countries should apologize for horrible acts they have committed
  - Using art is a very effective way of discussing many issues and understanding the ‘other’
s point of view
  - Cultural Managers Exchange Program
  - Bak (look) revealing the City’s through memory
    - Brings people ages 18 – 28 from all cities of Turkey
    - Conduct artistic projects to have young people work together and document stories from daily life with daily struggle (whatever they see in their cities)
- Creative Story Telling
  - Artistic practice while also discussing why this work is important and why/how it should continue being done.
- Working to understand the other, spending time together, having the common goal of production and having to listen to one another
- Raising awareness- hardest part to measure, and extremely vital
  - Call in the people who are not normally going into exhibition spaces, who are not normally seeing this

11/08/2016 - Second Class Summary notes

Group 1: 3 students (Kristin and Hauke)

Question: What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities take into account distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?

Idea #1: Recording history around major events in Aleppo from elderly.
Providing cameras to document their current experience.
Create a database that is accessible to everyone

Idea #2: Curriculum amongst Syrian refugee camps that are geared toward Aleppian history.
Workshops that talk about the future
Live interactions/ group projects between different schools

**Group 2**: (Rim, Madhawa)

Question: After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?

Idea #1: A series of outside marketplace, festivals, display of arts and culture, and food stations
Idea #2: An art exhibition about corruption. It will talk about how to deal with corruption, what it is, and how to reclaim your power

**Group 3**: 3 students (Eylem, Miriam)

Question: For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?

Idea #1: Utilize forms of storytelling and creative expression to tell the stories of those whose voices are so often suppressed or dismissed
Idea #2: After-school program that caters specifically to refugees

**Group 4**: 3 students (Jane and Shadi)

Question: How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

Idea #1: Summer Camp: Create a safe-haven for kids and young adults to play and enjoy each other’s company. To give a life outside of the conflict.
Idea #2: Art Buffet: Appreciate and define each group’s identity and form a community inclusive of all of the groups through art pieces and food.

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**11/15/2016 - Third Class**

Guests: AlHakam Shaar, Rim Lababidi, Dan Feldman, Elyem Arturk

**Group 1**: 3 Students (Kristin, Hauke)

Question: What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities take into account distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?

Idea #1: Recording history around major events in Aleppo from elderly. Providing cameras to document their current experience. Create a database that is accessible to everyone

Feedback:
Rim: Documenting what is happening under a dictatorship can be very dangerous, these people are often specifically targeted. We need to think about the factor of safety for the people that will be doing this.
- What are the experiences that we are trying to make possible again? Focusing on that in OH interviews
- Atmosphere, feelings and sensations are critical in preserving people's stories and recreating culture
- Should people be interviewing people different from themselves? (i.e. old/young, East side/West side)

**Group 2: 3 Students (+Rim)**

**Question:** After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?

**Idea #1:** a series of outside marketplace, festivals, display of arts and culture, and food stations

**Feedback:**

*Rim:* music and public spaces are going to be a common ground between everyone regardless of any differences/prejudices

*AlHakam:* dealing with food and music will likely be easier than dealing with crafts!

*Student:* Interesting to look at new ways of capturing a space/feeling (i.e. virtual reality)

*Dan:* building a momentum of enthusiasm in the community- finding a way to spread this idea to have more and more people coming each time

**Group 3: 3 Students (Eylem, Miriam)**

**Question:** For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?

**Idea #1:** utilize forms of storytelling and creative expression to tell the stories of those whose voices are so often suppressed or dismissed, specifically for refugees that have immigrated to safe spaces so that they can express themselves and their voices through art. (i.e. Youtube channel, facebook page, etc.)

**Feedback:**

*Student:* Blogs are helpful as they are an online journal/diary that can document the history of the culture. Serves as an archive. Acts as an online museum

*Kristin:* Critical and smart that you are choosing to partner with preexisting organizations.

*Cindy:* check out *The Human Library.* Finding a way to humanize people to each other

*Student:* To increase access to this platform, it may be interesting to make a book/series of zines. This way, those who do not have access to the internet will have access to this platform.

*Rim:* There is already a "Humans of Aleppo" Facebook page that would be great to access all the people/allies that we can find. The UN has a refugee-specific program as well. Would be good to partner with many organizations. Wonderful idea with a lot of potential!

*AlHakam:* Loved a lot of the ideas presented. If you want to partner up with a group that is in English, then you have the challenge of translation. How will you find the resources to translate? How would you prioritize stories? To what level/extent do we have the right to choose what goes on the website?

**Group 4: Student (+Jane/Maggie)**

**Question:** How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?
**Idea #1:** Summer Camp: Create a safe-haven for kids and young adults to play, enjoy each other’s company and preserve culture. To give a life outside of the conflict. For children but involving as many members from the local community as well. Regaining a cultural identity through art and music in a safe place.

**Feedback:**

*Rim:* I think this is feasible in very few areas as the majority of Aleppo is being extensively bombed constantly. Would be difficult to keep safe. Would need to happen after the war.

*AlHakam:* Good call to keep it as an open structure so that there is freedom of each community can shape this themselves. Important that this camp does not remain only open to people of privilege.

*Kristin:* I was really impressed by the presentation, and was glad you addressed the impact of trauma that we had not yet heard. Real opportunity in refugee camps- something like this could have a lot of potential. Great change from 'waiting for the next bomb'.

*Eylem:* During the war in the places of war and conflict, can art play a role under such circumstances and how? Maybe we should be trying to first understand the circumstances people are living in, and how can people express themselves during this trauma? Using the artistic tools for people to get their space so they do not lose their minds. How to build trust in a post-trauma society?

*Dan:* There hasn't been a lot of talk about film, yet it is so powerful as a medium in terms of allowing people to step into one another's shoes. Are there films we can find of Aleppo from before the war? Films can also be a very helpful tool in humanizing the survivors and creating a deeper understanding of culture and history of Aleppo for others.

*Student:* I really like the idea of helping children, as it is important that they have a foundation.

*Student:* By helping children heal and providing space for them to recover from trauma, that will reflect back on the adults. Children's resilience can create inspiration for an entire community.

*Student:* Especially when thinking about trust building, working with trauma is very important. Are these kinds of camps really effective if they then must return to their societies? How can this camp push children to continue to engage back in their own communities/how can the camp 'come home' with the children? Working through trauma is a very long process.

*Cindy:* Rebuilding trust involves lots of hard work. People can rehumanize themselves to each other, but if they have not done the work of addressing the past these new relationships will not be sustainable.

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**Notes Taken By, Hauke Ziessler, TA #2**

**Pitch of each Project tackling the groups’ questions**

**Expert one:** AlHakam Shaar- Research fellow From Aleppo Project based in Budapest.

**Introduction:** He lived in a renovated old UNESCO protected houses. From the age 10. His father was a board member of the projects that help restoring the cultural heritage.

Researchers the old city of Aleppo and the intangible cultural heritage around the city.

**Expert two:** Rim Lababidi Architect from Aleppo
Expert Three: Dan Feldman Vice president of institutional planning

Group 1 presentation:

Preserving the past to create pathways to the future

- Pictures that will preserve historic sites and to help the restore.
- Give people in Aleppo cameras to create agency.
- Film not only persons but also recording cultural events such as music and dance. (sound recordings)
- Written history is important to preserve (tell the stories of the old through oral history).
- Create a history through the people. They define their culture and determine what their culture is. Creating a website database so everyone can have access to it.
- Not associated with cloud to endanger people
- Use the Database to work with external organizations such as UNHCR in restoring the cultural heritage.
- Create a pathway to educate hope in young people through education projects.
- They want to create an education project within refugee camps and their host countries to motivate them to support the process.
- Tell their stories of the refugees and become a part of history by capturing their memories.
- As a way to transfer skills to the Syrian refugees. And instill nationalism and hope in children through the database reliant education project.
- The key is to connect the different diaspora through technology as a way to bring the fragmented communities together.
- To rebuild a new future plan of a city of hope and light.

Open questions:
1. How do we streamline documentation in a way that people are not endangered?
2. How to Find educators and connect the different groups to interact with the groups? And how to facilitate such a project?
3. Who could maintain and write such a database considering biases and language barriers?

Response by Students and Experts:
- What did you like about the project?
  - The database.
- What would you consider and perhaps improve?
  - Try to recreate an experience and not impose an external set of ideas. Not to imitate how things were and capture the spirit of the place.
  - As you are recording you should add personal accounts how their recordings that they are making have an impact on them, and what experience they had in these spaces.
  - Oral history is a way to capture the very real journey of people in the city.
Who would do the interviewing? Should it be from people within the communities? Or should it rather be from opposite sides of the community.

How can we move forward and address people that are not yet motivated to participate? Do we need to reward people that are doing this work? Does there need to be financial compensation?

How do these stories reach the people once they are in the database?

How to meet and chat?

Consider the context?

Consider other examples and try to learn from them such as Beirut. Conflict in a dictator regime. Targeting people that are visually documenting the scenes and what is happening. It is a nightmare and people are being specifically targeted. Local militia arrested as he may be working for secret service.

**Group 2 Presentation:**

**An ongoing festival once a week.**

- Dahab, Kebab, Terab
- Music, Food and craft in a way to restore heritage and to capture the and reinvent the public spaces that are no longer dramatic and dangerous but bring join and new levels of connection.
- It can revitalize the communities in an economic sense. It can also be set up as educational projects to revitalize the lost culture that had to be put on the way side. Hence people can learn new skills for a new job.
- Kebab- food can bring people together in a type of farmer’s market where we have cooking lessons for people to also learn more about their delicacies. It is a place to rehumanize each other.
- Tarab- Music is a good vehicle to bring the past together with the present. It is constantly thinking of the past but also innovating.
- Create a way to feel and engage with the other and experience emotion. Establish a safe space.

**Feedback:**

- What should be considered and perhaps improved?
  - Crafts are very specific and take a lot of time.
  - Don’t intervene to much and give the space for the generations now to invent their public space in order to also help their interests.
  - Perhaps think of how these events will be recorded to also use VR. And establish solid documentation. It needs a momentum of enthusiasm.
  - Festival can help establish a dignity and beauty of communities. The planning can be done by different groups. As a way to understand each others culture.
- Try and create livelihood through a continuous series of festivals to ensure a longitudinal process.

**Group 3:**

- Create a form of storytelling such as a Youtube channel to capture songs, stories and poems of the refugee diaspora because:
  1. It allows the refugees to reclaim their voice that was suppressed through different arts.
  2. It is a good way for host countries to see them in a different light.
  3. It allows for the refugees to see this and gain hope and also create a more positive light of host countries.

  - Use a Blog or Youtube.
  - Who? In the language of the displaced people and host countries to create a form of community.
  - Privacy and safety for individuals. Maybe through a podcast? Maybe a Radio station or using USB sticks to hand them out.
  - Funding?
  - How to reach out to people to share their stories?
  - You need a credible source that can dispense these messages. If there is no following it is just another website in a sea of information. Use StoryCor or HONY.
  - Partnering with certain organization and use their followers.

**Feedback:**

- What to improve and change?
  - The internet can be a museum. This idea plays very well into that. Partnering with existing organization to not reinvent the wheel is a great idea e.g:
    - The human library
    - Humans of aleppo
  - What about people that don’t have access to the internet and maybe make a book form to spread and also help protect people?
  - Translating. Language barrier? How are you going to find the resources? A large workload.
  - At what level should we intervene. At what point does it become us and not the people telling the stories.

**Group 4:**

- Constant noise ends as there is a small camp.
- There is an opportunity to connect. Post war sense of hopeful and overcoming this nervousness. The camp begins to immerse the self further. Reality has not stopped but for a moment you can
get out and interact with others. A break and you can build trust with those in the community. This camp is a safe haven.

- The camp is for young people and involving as many members of the local community as possible. To bring in their skills. Engaging intergenerational interaction. To get youths to interact and regain a cultural identity through a fun safe space.
- It came from an idea in the national museum in Ivory Coast.
- Expand from many smaller camps in the region and then have a bigger camp where the smaller camps come together once they have found a smaller and more personal identity.
- Safety is a big issue. Would it be a day camp or how will the logistics be structured. How can it be a safe space?

Feedback:

- It is more for a post conflict period. For after the war or in areas where there is more safety!!
- Very reliant on the conditions after the war?
- How structured should the camp be or should it be a flexible process.
- How to work with different minorities?
- It addressed Trauma very well. And perhaps it can be extended to refugee camps?
- Maybe it is only important for them to express themselves. Its not necessarily the need to bring entertainment but to create a space where trauma can be addressed.
- How to use film?
- Resilience in children can reflect in the adults as they are motivated by it.
- It needs to stay in the community as you said.
- Thinking about how the trauma can continue be worked on after the camp and how to bring it into the context of being thrown back to the tough environment around. How to make a camp a longitudinal project.

General thoughts from students

- Reconciling with loss and the mourning
- Art should account for the narrative also during the war. And the politics around it.
- Don’t isolate Aleppo from Syria and it is a part of a greater context and how to work with that.
- What the students have learnt from Aleppo, Design Labs, Syria, art as a role?
- How can our work here can also have an impact there and look at the role of what we do also working in other contexts.
- Learnt a lot about Aleppo.
- Learnt a lot about the situation. It broke it down and the seriousness of the situation. What projects can go into it. People feel Helpless and how to keep the hope alive. Importance of teamwork. Good teamwork.
• The relationship between art and cultural heritage and how it functions in the everyday life. It is a difficult and delicate balance. Between what sustains life and how it can uphold the spiritual and emotional complexities.
• How to establish a safe space. And grappling with such a tough topic is crazy.
• The complexity of project management. Our personal capacities that we need in such projects from an emotional level as well.
• The project was overwhelming. It feels far geographically. But the challenge was also a personal learning curve
• Capturing the spirit of the community and how do you do that. How do you save a disappearing community? An element of sadness.
• Thinking about problem solving. How do we tackle certain problems?
• It brought home a reality of another reality. Hard to relate and makes it more real for us. Great where the small group level came in.
• The role of the people in reconstruction. Issues come and go but the community stays.
• The ideas bring in new ideas and a new and interesting perspective. A lot of creativity.

Appendix 5

Student rapporteur notes and photos

Group 1: Participant 1, 2 and 3 (+Kristin)
Question: What can be done now, while war is being waged, to preserve the possibility of memories? How should such activities take into account distinct and competing narratives, and divisions among groups?

• Memories: buildings, mental memories, intangible culture
• Collection of piece of film, photography
  • Recording to reflect
  • Recording to share with the world
• How to build a history from current living residents/citizens: using the elderly as a window to the past
• What did the city look like and feel like before the conflict?
• What do people want to hold on to?
• How to build resilience?
  • Sound recording the everyday/cultural events
  • Documenting memories both personal and historical
**Future:**
- Building a future
- We want kids and young people looking toward a hopeful future (as opposed to what Rim said about not looking more than 2 months ahead)
- Building the future from bottom up
- Teach children about culture in order to build a new (adapted?) one
- Documenting to preserve and create an existing history

**Outcomes:**
- Materials that all have access to (around the world)
- So people can create their own history, writing history as it happens, remembering history in a time of little hope
- **A way to cope**

Blue helmet: neutral forces to get neutral history and not pander to one narrative

*Participants visual representation of project plan (above) The working slogan of the group: Preserving the past to create projects for the future? (right) ➔*
Group 2: 3 Students (Rim, Madhawa)

Question: After the war, how can local citizens and artists be involved in rebuilding? What platforms and processes can be envisioned now? How should these platforms and processes take account of the divisions and mistrust between communities?

- Project 1
  Intention:
  - Creating inclusive public space
  Action:
  - Culture night- performances, arts, crafts, food
  - Temporary covered market
  - Possibly a series of festivals or weekly
  - Brings people of different backgrounds together
  - Creates routine of engaging with eachother
  - Can jumpstart economy
Roles:
- Civic groups, artists (attending, planning, participating)
- University students (studying architecture or conservation)

Strengths:
- Economic benefit
- Building off of something already there
- Public attention (funding and support)
- Collaborative

Weaknesses:
- No trust in public space
- Lack of capacities
- Corruption
- Spaces used negatively in past
- Lack of security

Opportunities
- Rebuild normalcy
- Start conversations
- Revitalize cultural heritage
- Connecting past, present, and future
- Space for growth
- Salvage significant materials

Threats:
- Security
- Failure

Outputs
- Events (festivals, performances)
- Collection of artifacts

Outcomes
- Networking

Sources of Support
- Local artists who want to show their work
- Citizens who want their normal lives back

Questions to be addressed
- Is the city safe enough to do this?
- Could we get people to overcome their fears and be involved?

Project 2

- Exhibition of Artists outing Corruption (Space for conversation)

Intention:
- Focus on corruption
- Educational
- Art/theater/music
- Vocational training

Action:
Create a space for conversation where government corruption can be discussed
Discussion on how to prevent this from happening again

Roles:
- Artists, people politically involved, NGO’s
- Community groups, educators

Strengths:
- Dialogue (action centered)
- Local participation

Weaknesses:
- Trust
- Restart conflict?
- Needs to be legitimized
- Hijacked by corruption
- What ideology is being taught? Inclusivity
- Might be seen as a waste by the people
- Security

Opportunities:
- Vocational training

Threats:
- Safety
- Inclusivity

Outputs:
- Space for dialogue
- Place where the people can be heard

Impacts:
- The people will feel heard
- Could get better ideas from them

Partners:
- Artists, community organizers
- Political scholars

Support:
- People who want an uncorrupted government
- Those who have felt abused by the system in the past

Questions:
- How did the previous government become corrupt?
- How can that be prevented?
- How can we build a better one?

Group 3: 2 Students (Eylem, Miriam)

Question: For people who have been and will be displaced, how can their access to cultural heritage and memory be made possible? How can such initiatives be designed to facilitate the rebuilding of intercommunal relationships?

Self-Expression Through Artistic Means

1. For those who are suffering from aftermath of conflict
2. Creation of an organization which would direct story of people to create poem collections, novels, etc.
   1. Provide funding to this organization
   2. Reasons for people to relinquish burdened past
3. Creation of an organization
4. Clothes: making sure people are comfortable and safe wearing the clothes they wish to wear
   1. Gender norms, expression, and exceptions
   2. Syrian cuisine and music events to bring together Syrians who are divided by war
   3. Exhibitions which show photos, videos, clothes, and music instruments from Syrians which represents cultural heritage/pop culture

Overall loss of identity
● this may resonate from the deprivation of cultural nuances

Cultural Expressions That Affect Neurotransmitters
● different cultures think differently; the wiring of our synapses and reception to neurotransmitters becomes somewhat learned instead of innate

Expression Through Religious And Moral Beliefs
For those out of immediate danger of conflict
Live streams or created videos on social media networks that facilitate the trope of dance and song as mediums to bring in diverse groups of people.
   ● Opening up to everyone — even nations of the residing country
   ● To create connections between the displaced and those still in the country
   ● Providing weekly/daily services
   ● Celebrating traditional holidays

JOBS:
For Displaced People Outside of Country
● In countries in Europe, etc.
● Various approaches to healthcare
● Facilitation of jobs in certain languages
● Working in/for a job that makes cultural heritage possible for others (support services, daycares, newspaper)
● Creation of jobs and structure for refugees
   ○ Hope for refugees to aspire to those jobs
● Creations of museums or places dedicated towards remembering the turmoils of the conflict
   ○ refugees in Berlin//Empathy from Germany

For Those Who Stay After A Conflict Has Subsided
● To those who move away from a place of conflict but still reside in the same state
● Moving = access to information
   ○ Public libraries
Access to internet
- In the case of Aleppo, the government holds internet privileges
- Publication of internet to further trust and openness of government
- Libraries supported by Internet and by various formulations

EDUCATION:
- Is this education in the native tongue?
- Are subjects being studied aspects that are relevant to the specific culture/heritage?
- Is accent/dialect a factor?

Intention: Support voice + Raise Awareness
“Provide” a voice to “voiceless”
Supporting the voice
As opposed to granting the “right” to have a voice
Makes others realize that they are humans and brings empathy

Artistic interpretation of the groups plans by participants (Above) The visual brainstorm process (below)
**Group 4: 3 Students (Jane, Shadi)**

**Question:** How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

How can arts and culture be engaged now and after the war, to support people to rebuild sufficient trust for people to work together in rebuilding the city?

Who is the targeted group we want to address?

We came up with ideas, the next step is to discuss and group the similar ideas

**Jane Sapp**
- gathering women’s experiences form the war, the community could create plays from the stories
- cooking together, creating an event where people can prepare and share food together (festivals and events,) sharing food as important community builder
- making music together, a chorus, or instrumental music, starting with the children singing together or a women’s chorus ,
- gather the children in communities to begin to have them sing and bond together as young people

**Student #1**
- ideas applicable to cote d’ivoire
- summer camps for children
- national museum organized different parts of the country art exhibit showcases, help educate and universalize different parts of the country via art
- a place for civilians to share views, a forum,
- fundraising for creative spaces, directing funding to art
- training and development, providing training for civilians and allowing skill development during the war

**Student #2**
- we must know the other, who are we trusting?
- cultural buffet, different groups in community (possibly living close to each other), an area to sample others food, get to know each other through food
- theatre blend, get together various perfumers form diverse groups, individual groups put on plays as their own identity and then create an overarching play or work or art , highlighting the individual but working to
- art convention: communal space to showcase individual art and then create a universal art piece
- sports league, mix up teams, sportsmanship, work together
- targeting conflicting groups in, open up communications in the sake of preserving art , a cease fire to move art, centering art as something both folks care about

**Student #3**
- Mens’ groups to do feminine arts together, cook or paint or sing, specifically men of conflicting groups
- female intergenerational potlucks, young women and older women are partnered
- children who have lost their parents mourning group
- young people open mic
- anonymous zine publication

Divided the Ideas into groups
- women
- children
- art
- food

Finding Similarities
Within the young people:
- a sports league summer camp
- a summer camp to host young people who have lost
- localized summer camps, develop internal individual
- specific mourning group and open mic (specific open mic)
- cooking, monthly thing with individual groups
- combining intergenerational mentor program, with men’s groups, with open mic
- dinner and a show, sharing creative works over food

- cultural fair! / “ART buffet”
- food, art exhibit, choirs, plays
- people sign up and get paired with another different person (families paired with families)

Intentions for Summer Camp:
- life-long partnership for the future of the country
- small scale during the war in localized parts
- before and during reconstruction
- Roles
- counselors, teachers for summer camps
- Strengths
- being together and building community, skill building
- building relationships
- increased interaction
- identity building
- giving hope, increases faith
- weaknesses
- safe space/ funding
**Intentions** for Art Buffet
- trust and fellowship built among adults, separate gendered groups
- **Roles**
  - intergenerational cooking mentorship and artists
- **strengths**
  - being together and building community, skill building
  - building relationships
  - increased interaction
  - identity building
  - giving hope, increases faith
- **weaknesses**
  - safe space/ funding

**Opportunities:**
- who was what skills, developing skills
- human interactions, partnership
- identify qualified people
- create art and food

**Threats:**
- safety issue (emotional and physical)
- outside opposers, against coalition work
- willingness
- funds and timing
- location, where will we be based?

**Output:**
- how many camps? how big the art buffet?

**Partners:**
- difficult to choose, how can you think about who to choose?
- a good partner is the local people, keep in central, keep it localized, a local task force
- we will want artists, children workers, schools and teachers, ministries of education or arts, find potential partners and look for funders, focused on clean partners with not self-centered partners
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