

# Urbact-päiväkirjarunoelma

Sananjalka 2019, suurimmaksi osaksi laadittu syyskuussa; oikoluettu ja kevyesti hiottu tammikuussa 2020.

Ia

(Originally composed in Finnish and partially in Hungarian, exploring the thematic of returning to a library to study actual monographs, instead of just gluing together pieces of information lying around on the World Wide Web.)

Kaikki tiet vievät kirjastoon.  
Onko sen takana  
minun historiani vai maani historia?  
Kauan olin mässäillyt  
Maailmanverkon seisovissa pöydissä.  
En aavistanut,  
miten toiselta tuntuisi  
pitkästä aikaa valita listalta  
usean ruokalajin kattauksia.

Oly rövid az élet.  
Csak annyit kérdezek, a válaszra várva:  
fogyasztók legyünk vagy alkotók?

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**I like to call myself an "associate member" of Urbact. Starting from April 2019, I have been sliding in, getting in touch with more and more various aspects of the project, yet without really embracing it as a whole.**

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Ib

(Translated into Hungarian with the kind help of our partners from Budapest.)

*Minden út könyvtárba vezet.  
Mi rejlik emögött,  
az én történetem vagy a hazám története?  
Már regóta dőzsöltem  
a Világháló svédasztalainál.  
Nem is sejtettem,  
mennyire más érzés volna  
egy hosszú idő után  
egy többtálas étkezést választani az étlapról.*

Oly rövid az élet.  
Csak annyit kérdezek, a válaszra várva:  
fogyasztók legyünk vagy alkotók?

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**This progress has opened my eyes to a multitude of layers. There are the layers of history - of architecture, industries, and communities developing towards our present time, visible for the trained eye; the layers of communicating and understanding each other, overcoming cultural barriers, each according to our individual abilities; the various layers of depth one can reach while attempting to dig into the forgotten facts that make up our surroundings.**

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II

(Originally composed in Finnish.)

Museoväki oli tietysti kesälomalla.  
Yhden ihmisen tavoitin.  
Hän auttoi minua kaivautumaan  
niillä työkaluilla, jotka hänellä oli.

Tunsin löytäneeni ruukunsirpaleita,  
jotka tarjosivat aavistuksen kokonaisuudesta.

Jos meillä olisi aikaa ja voimia, voisimme  
luoda kauniisti väritetyn historiallisen kartaston;  
menneen maailman muoto,  
sisältö katsottuna tästä päivästä  
taaksepäin,  
yli kukkulain ja pilvien.

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*The museum folks were on summer vacation, of course.  
I was able to reach one person.  
She helped me to excavate  
with the tools she happened to possess.*

*I felt I had discovered pieces of ceramics  
that gave me an inkling of the whole.*

*If only we had time and resources, we could  
create a beautifully colored historic atlas;  
a form from the world long lost,  
the content as seen from this day  
towards our past,  
over hills and clouds.*

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**I have heard about people wondering what the essence of Urbact is. Is one even allowed to state, in this day and age when even the tiniest results are to be meticulously metered, that the essence of programs like this is simply making people face some totally different circumstances and approaches? Then again, it could be more than just an eye-opener. For example, Urbact has kept my mind occupied so that I have eventually put together a handful of introductory texts and Wikipedia articles. In the ideal situation, long-term personal connections would also come into existence, feeding brainstorming and cooperations.**

**Can we seriously ask that much?**

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III

(Originally composed in Finnish.)

»Suomen Balaton  
- jos sellaista ylipäänsä on»,  
tiivistin myöhemmin toisille vieraille.  
Heidän oli vaikea uskoa, että  
ihmisiä ja varsinkin rakennuksia  
oli niin vähän.

Minulla  
ei ollut vähäisintäkään vaikeutta,  
kun veden lämpötila oli vajaat 13 astetta  
heinäkuussa.  
(Jälkeenpäin pohdiskelimme, millaiset virtaukset  
aiheuttavat moisen.)  
Osa kroatialaisista ja unkarilaisista  
oikeasti ui.  
Poimin hiekkarannalta käpyjä ja simpukankuoria  
pohtien avantouinnin merkitystä turismin kannalta.

(English commentary: I have a hard time deciding what the greatest  
mystery about the well-known sand beach of Yyteri in Pori is - how  
many of our guests actually tested the numbingly cold water, why  
there is so little tourist infrastructure there, or how I could  
best explain the pronunciation of the name to foreigners.)

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**My main approach to Urbact is my view on Finno-Hungarian relations; the fundamentals of said  
view were laid in the 80s and the 90s. This has led me to most rewarding work, and even  
brought me back to Transylvania, an area that left a strong impression on me back in 1997. At  
the same time, I am painfully aware of my limitations when interacting over other language  
barriers involved.**

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IV

(Originally composed in Finnish.)

Nelikymmenluvun kirjoittaja  
avasi eteeni székely-kansan maan.  
Minä seuloin  
parhaan kykyni mukaan  
ja ajattelin, että yllättävänkin moni  
asia on saattanut säilyä  
noissa vehreissä laaksoissa.  
Enemmän muuttuu se,  
mitä kukin aika niiltä asioilta odottaa.

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*An author from the forties  
provided an introduction to the land of the Szeklers.  
I tried to maintain a critical approach  
as best as I could  
and concluded that more than one would think  
might have been preserved  
in those green vales.  
The change is more about  
what each age expects from things unaltered.*

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**My desire to understand foreign cultures through comparing viewpoints, by reading different texts and experiencing things firsthand, is both a strength and a weakness of mine. Sometimes I envy people who, say, start making a video log together, connecting through the techniques of the medium, even though they do not share a common spoken language.**

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V

(Originally composed in Finnish.)

Suomi  
(kuten myös Unkari)  
on kuuluisa korkeista itsemurhaluvuistaan.

Tiedän asian olevan niin,  
mutta jotenkin totuus on vältellyt minua.

Urbact tarvitsi minua ensi kertaa todella kouraantuntuvasti,  
kun joku päätti päivänsä vieraittemme junan alle.

Ihmeeksemme matka jatkui niin pian,  
ettei edes pöytävarausta osoittautunut turhaksi.

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*Finland  
(as well as Hungary)  
is notorious for its suicide statistics.*

*I know that for a fact,  
but somehow the truth has kept avoiding me.*

*The day Urbact needed me in a really concrete manner for the  
first time  
was when somebody ended his life under the train carrying our  
guests.*

*To our great surprise, the interruption did not take so long  
that the table reservation would have been in vain.*

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**I wonder if the possibilities of Urbact lie exactly in that - people connecting through random creative activity. And when you cannot reach a flow of creating together, you can pose a few questions, then listen and observe.**

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VI

(Originally composed in Finnish.)

Uudet rakennukset tekevät minuun usein  
»kliinisen» vaikutuksen.

Niin teki tämä,  
ja niin tekivät aikanaan Anselmianum ja Augustineum.

Kaiken tapahtumisen keskellä en nähnyt pinnan läpi.  
Voiko tämä patinoitua kauniisti  
tai edes kestää aikaa?  
Mikä minä olen sanomaan, että ei?

Joka tapauksessa ongelmat melkein naapurissa  
lienevät enemmän lähtöisin ihmisistä  
kuin rakennusaineitten valinnasta.

(English commentary: I have a hard time believing in recent buildings that show no sign of decay but no sign of having a soul either. I wish I could learn to judge the material choices better - and yet it is an extraordinary occurrence that I would be able to fall in love with a building lacking history. This verse comments on some of the buildings we visited during our rainy

excursion day in Sampola, Eastern Pori. I also juxtapose them with certain buildings of the Péter Pázmány Catholic University campus, Piliscsaba, that I have been able to experience when they were brand new and revisit some two decades later.)

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**I am not the type of person to throw a party with some help from others. I am much more the type to help out at random points, with quite unpredictable results.**

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## VII

(Originally composed in Finnish.)

Niin:

Me löysimme Tove Janssonin ja kumppanit,  
jotka olivat yhä vahvasti läsnä.  
Moni meistä oudoksui kätkeytyä arretta enemmän  
kuin puolalaiset vieraamme,  
jotka sentään tiesivät,  
mistä oli kysymys.

(English commentary: This verse is a straight continuation about the rainy day mentioned above. As a side note, it was shocking to realize that most of our guests had never even heard of the Moomin works by Tove Jansson while the Poles knew everything. This is not to say that everybody should know the Moomins just because they come from Finland! I generally wish that there were **more variation within cultures**. Anyway, I guess visiting Taikurinhattu was the ultimate moment of treasure hunting for us, the hosts at the get-together in Pori. There were numerous occasions of learning during those days, but the kindergarten visit truly reminds me of a line by Positive Black Soul from Senegal: "We need to recognize our treasures.")

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**To me, Urbact has meant translating texts and digging up facts behind them; composing non-fiction and fiction of my own; communicating with people face to face and guiding them around. These poetic snippets reflect my impressions, from April to September. Niilo has suggested that it might be fruitful to combine them with drawings, photos, texts and more created by fellow group members. I am eager to see the results.**

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## VIII

(Originally composed in English at an Urbact get-together in the yard of the old radiostation in Pori, in July.)

layers  
some of them hidden  
others visible  
order and beauty  
not firmly rooted  
unexpectedly friendly faces  
from a layer vastly different  
lush green surrounding us  
- also with menaces  
formerly unknown -  
a feeling of floating  
questioned by forces old and new  
- within? -  
I guess we are on our way  
to a direction I cannot describe  
yet.

(English commentary: I am sorry to have included so few cross-language references and true translations. Feel free to try your luck with such online tools as Google translate on the parts you cannot understand. The results might be mixed, but I have a dream... a dream of a truly multilingual future, largely enabled by software we cannot even imagine today.)

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**All this makes me want to quote a music album I used to listen to in my late teens - which, in turn, was most probably quoting an earlier source:**

**"Next year at this time we shall see how much efficiency is brought about."**