

FRAGMENTS OF PRIVACY

Seen from behind; it is through these couples that we catch a glimpse of the city. Couples everywhere, sitting on benches on the seafront, sitting in parks or on the walls along the corniche; couples everywhere, all day long and of course, even more at the end of the day. Young couples, but not always. Bubbles of privacy amongst all the excitement of the city. There they are, leaning towards each other, slightly or hardly at all. They look at each other, or they look at the sea or at nothing at all, turning their backs on the world. Tiny islands in the crowded streets. An apparent paradox: the choice of public places for seeking an intimacy that the privacy of the family does not allow. Private attitudes in public places. Fragments of privacy.

Figures seen from behind, and the women are almost always veiled. In a city which is by tradition open to the West, the veil is without doubt a sign of the islamisation of mentalities; yet the variety of shapes and colours, the way it is folded and worn show that is also an essential fashion accessory. Choosing a rear view of a figure, a recurrent theme in landscape painting and contemporary photography, enables me to invite the viewer to take a seat and contemplate this urban environment according to his/her own point of view.

Counterpoint: In front of these blocks of flats, empty benches wait for couples, wait for life.

In this two-part series I have attempted to develop a form of representation in harmony with a culture that has a totally different relation to the image from mine, the European.

No doubt there was a lot to be said about the status of women, the role of religion in private and public life, on the life of young people in general and family relations in particular and finally perhaps, also a certain urban solitude.