homeless including the fishermen of Saint-Jean and the everyday people who lived in the area. Some 200 Jews were deported to the concentration camps, together with some 600 from other areas of the city. This was the site of the ancient Greek city, the oldest continually inhabited location in Western Europe. All that was found in this mass destruction were a couple of rifles and home-made bombs, what was left was a vast area of ruins. The German army and the French modernists, and the French property speculators, a fine team of whores and bandits.

Finally in the late 1970s French town-planners, not even needing the the German army to assist them, finished this extended operation by demolishing the Quarters of Les Carmes and the Porte d’Aix, an area inhabited principally by North African immigrants.

The only piece of the old city to survive is the area of Le Panier, at the top of the buttes, with its steep narrow streets and passageways. This area was once inhabited mainly by the poorest immigrants from Corsica and Italy, and had a reputation for overcrowding and dirt. But it has now been cleaned up and turned into a zone for tourists.

**Marseille Mix: ideal city**

William Firebrace
RESEARCH wrote Sparrow into his small black notebook, INTO THE CITY OF MARSEILLE. He was sitting beside the window of his hotel, looking down into the narrow street below. Some street-cleaners passed by, seen foreshortened from above, two in front sweeping aside the rubbish, one driving a device spraying out water, two following behind with large mops. Sparrow looked at the words he had written. He underlined the word RESEARCH, then MARSEILLE. He looked again down at the street so efficiently cleansed. He underlined the words INTO THE CITY OF. He stood there for a long while. He wrote down one word: ACTION. He stood again, looking down into the street. No action presented itself. Two prostitutes were chatting to each other, occasionally addressing male passers-by, but with little enthusiasm. Several men in African dress were standing a few doors down, outside a street cafe. He wrote, MUCH TOO EXOTIC. He closed the notebook and decided to visit the bookstore of one of his few acquaintances in Marseille, the bookseller Robert.

Robert ran a bookstore specialising in central-American novels, political investigations, criminology, violent thrillers. The shop-floor was

...
those who think in terms of rational planning
those pushing their political careers
those who love cleanliness
those who love apparent chaos
those who wish to remove the immigrants
those who wish to have fun
those who seek simply to survive.
those, those who...

And the others - those who don’t come into any category, because most of the people in Marseille don’t like being in any category and so should not be put in any category.

The contradictory actions of all these different groups, added together with a tendency to begin following a certain direction and then abandon it, have created the confusion of the present city, a confusion which may also be viewed as positive, inspiring.

A continual thread in the history of the city has been the assumption that certain groups of people have a right to live in the city and others not. This unending dispute is based on a misunderstanding of just where the city is. Is it part of Europe and therefore should conform to some idea of what a European city is? Or is it part
It is even because of this destruction that Marseille has acquired its particular qualities. Marseille is ugliness transformed into a beauty. Marseille has suffered, and through its suffering something real shows through. Marseille is made by the sea. Marseille is made by the light. Marseille is made by the people. Nothing should be refused in Marseille.

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This is a fragment from *Marseille Mix*, a forthcoming book exploring the city's literary, criminal, urban, gastronomic and cinematic aspects.
Euromediterranee, with the well dressed executives, a colony of the new global economy, isolated in some foreign land.

Each plan aims to throw into the mix some new element which will somehow make rational what is not rational. None of these plans have succeeded, each has been constructed in part and then abandoned for the next. Marseille, if there is still a Marseille, now covers a vast area, extending out over the plain, cluttered with urban freeways, raised highways, suburban centres, groups of housing blocks placed apparently at random, out-of-town shopping centres, areas of vacant territory, pieces of countryside, all adding up to an enormous and uncertain urban zone.

The people who once lived in the centre, people who come from every country and who have aroused such disgust, now for the most part live outside in this landscape of housing blocks and highways, out of the way, where they are not so easily seen by the good citizens of the south.

But it is all the people together who are the real force inside Marseille.

For a moment Robert paused. He seemed uncertain to continue.

In the 1860s this street, the Rue de Republique was cut through to join the old port to the new docks of La Joliette. Since the construction of the straight road involved cutting through the hills, vasts amount of soil were excavated, most of which ended up as landfill in the docks. See, there is something unreal about the whole creation, a feeling added to by the fact that the difference of levels leaves parts of the old city perched visibly above the new street. Occasionally the width of the blocks leaves strange narrow spaces, with hardly any light, and curious passageways like, yes, like...

Sparrow and Robert were now in a Neapolitan courtyard, high long and narrow, filled with abandoned cars and hung with washing. No sunlight penetrated through, nothing moved. Robert continued his lecture without a pause.

Well, the Rue de Republic never succeeded as a commercial undertaking and failed to attract the middle classes, for whom these Parisian houses were designed, but who preferred the streets of the new town to the south. The bourgeoisie of Marseille - what a pathetic rabble! Until recently these grand houses were occupied by the poorest elements of Marseille, and the...