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**WHAT REMAINS? ANTI-MONUMENTS OF THE GERZES
AND MEDIA FRAMEWORKS OF MEMORY.
YEARS LATER: A DIAGNOSIS**

Summary:

This article offers a critical analysis of the canonic and most radical examples of so-called anti-monuments including executions by Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz. The Gerzes' projects are completely compatible with James E. Young's postulate stating that discourse should take precedence over objects. Over two decades after their development, the question concerning the actual success of these otherwise correct postulates seems warranted. Referring to the concept of mediated memory proposed by Aleida Assmann and shifting the gravity from an analysis of the artists' formal and ideological assumptions towards the pragmatism and practice of the reception, I conclude the communication fiasco of the Gerzes' "invisible anti-monument". I also argue that despite their invisibility and ostensibly revolutionary format, these monuments have ultimately remained astonishingly traditional in nature.

Key words:

anti-monuments, Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, cultural memory, memory medium, commemoration

The following moving passage can be found in the autobiographical 1981 novel *Was für ein schöner Sonntag!* by Jorg Semprún – Buchenwald concentration camp inmate, eyewitness and chronicler, and Spanish minister of culture in the years 1988–1991:

Had I ever returned to Buchenwald? No, never. I shook my head. He briefly described an image of a work created there. The German Democratic Republic had erected a monument of multiple sculptures.¹ I nodded. I had seen it in photographs, I knew it: it was simply revolting! A tower, a cluster of marble figures, an avenue flanked by bas-relief-covered walls, monumental steps. In a word, revolting. I did not share my opinion. All I did was tell him my old dream: the camp could have been left for nature – forests, roots, rain, decades of erosion – to do its slow work. One day, someone would have discovered foliage-covered remnants of a camp building. He listened in astonishment. No no, he said, they built a monument there, it tells a story, and is politically important. On a side note, it had been Bertold Brecht's idea [...]. He even wanted the figures to be oversized, of stone, set upon plinths, gazing upon an exquisite amphitheatre. The amphitheatre would host an annual festival to commemorate the deported – complete with oratories, choirs singing, speakers lecturing, politicians talking. I was listening to the SED (Socialist Unity Party of Germany) officer, shaken. I was aware that Brecht occasionally forayed into bad taste, but this was too much! I didn't say a word. I was disgusted with the thought of talking to him about it at all. No, I simply couldn't make the time to travel to Weimar, that was all. I was sorry.² (Semprún 1981, 37)

Regardless of the geopolitical co-ordinates Semprún's reflection references, it is a marvellous illustration of two contrasting opinions reflecting on the proper form of material commemorative practices. On the one hand, we are confronted with the instrumentalising perception of a state official praising the political function and plain visual and ideological message behind a figurative, pathos-soaked memorial. On the other – with an unuttered wish from a former concentration camp inmate for the site of crime to be handed over to nature, allowing memory to do its hushed work, a memory distilled in passing, as it were, in a never-ending process of archaeologising the camp. Intrusive and pompous materiality has been juxtaposed with an anti-visual processuality and the related

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- 1 Fritz Cremer's monument was ultimately erected in 1954. Notably, this was its third compromise version. Despite positive appraisal by art communities, the artist's previous two visions were rejected by authorities. Cf. Thomas 2002, 40; Scheurmann 2019.
 - 2 Unless otherwise noted, all foreign-language quotes translated into Polish by the author [and into English by the translator of the essay].

conviction that when it comes to commemoration, effectiveness is in no way tantamount to a glaring effect.

The dream Semprún so lucidly described (eerily reminiscent, by the way, of the Hansens' 1958 design for Auschwitz), later materialised to a certain extent in so-called anti-monuments, their model and most radical examples to this day including executions by Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz in the second half of the 1980s and first half of the 1990s: *Harburger Mahnmahl gegen Faschismus, Krieg, Gewalt – für Frieden und Menschenrechte* [*Harburg Monument Against Fascism, War and Violence – and for Peace and Human Rights*] in Hamburg [1986–1993], and *2146 Steine – Mahnmahl gegen Rassismus* [*2146 Stones – Monument Against Racism*] in Saarbrücken [1991–1993], also commonly known as the *Invisible Memorial* [*Unsichtbare Mahnmahl*]. (Piotrowski 2007, 123–129)

The role or indeed mission of these new forms of commemoration involved, inter alia, the introduction of alternative, non-dogmatic narratives into public spaces dominated by official paths of memory, and – in the case of the work by the Gerzes – transcending the ad hoc nature of any monument as a symbol referencing the past. The purpose was to be served by such measures as universalising all dedications [*against racism, fascism, war, violence*], and emphasising the alarming rather than commemorative nature of monuments by replacing the German word *Denkmal* [*denken* – to think] with *Mahnmal* [*mōnere* in Latin, *mahnen* in German – to admonish] in all cases.

Over two decades after the development of the aforementioned canonic anti-monuments, the question concerning the actual success of these otherwise correct postulates seems warranted. Such critical reflection has become particularly essential today as we are confronted with a surge in fascist, nationalist, and anti-immigration feeling across Federal Germany, while the intent behind both the Gerz anti-monuments had been to warn against such a climate.

While the question concerning actual “effectiveness” will necessarily produce only makeshift answers, it might prove productive to shift the gravity from an analysis of the artists' formal and ideological assumptions towards the pragmatism and practice of the reception. That is of the history of the response – not least because the participative element of the dialogue – pointing the burden of memory towards the recipient – was intended as one of the anti-monument's distinguishing factors, setting it in distinct contrast to the authoritarian didacticism of traditional monuments. (Stevens, Franck and Fazakeley 2012, 954) In such terms, the Gerzes' projects are completely compatible with James E. Young's postulate stating that discourse should take precedence over objects. According to Young (1999, 9), a perfect monument is one whose physical absence would provoke a, “never-to-be resolved debate over which kind of memory to preserve, how to do it, in whose name, and to what end.”³

3 Moreover, in December 2003, during a debate regarding the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, Young uttered his frequently quoted words: “Better a thousand years of Holocaust memorial competition than any final solution.”

In December 2010, *Die Zeit* published a brief account by Israeli writer Benjamin Balint, following his trip to Hamburg:

Most recently, I went looking for a world-renowned monument against fascism in Hamburg's working-class district of Harburg [...]. None of the passersby I asked about the work knew anything about it. In defence of local residents unaware of having had a brilliant work of conceptual art on their doorstep, it ought to be said that they had a great excuse: the monument had disappeared many years before. (Balint 2010)

This brief newspaper notice, unambiguously suggesting the communication fiasco of the Gerzes' "invisible anti-monument", brings us to an essential issue, broadly discussed in the German memory discourse, in particular: one of memory mediatisation. (Korzeniewski 2007, 5–23) It would be worth our while to ponder upon this awhile.

Simply explained, a medium (usually called *nośnik* in Polish reference sources) is a thing of intermediation, a relay allowing the circulation of and assigning meaning to past events. (Szpociński 2005, 278–280) Eminent German researchers of memory Astrid Erll and Aleida Assmann have emphasised that media have become a *sine qua non* condition for memory, as it were. (Erll 2005, 2004; Assmann 1999) The most intimate memories shall not exist in a vacuum, beyond the body carrying them. That body is the first and most direct medium of memory. Yet it only remains one for as long as the given person is alive, offering a potential for inter-subjectivising recollections. (Assmann 1999, 241)

François Truffaut's 1966 film *Fahrenheit 451* tells the story of memory thus incorporated.⁴ A *hommes livres* (human book) community are the collective protagonist, painstakingly memorising books banned in their country, for the sole purpose of handing content over to their successors before they die. In such a case, individuals become the only guardians of cultural memory.

The film brings a certain major fact home, the necessity of preserving cultural text corporeally frequently ties in with painful experience: repressions, banishment, imposed violence, loss of material heritage, or an unfortunate geopolitical context. Memory interiorised in human book bodies is a living memory and under constant threat of destruction. (Bannasch and Butzer, 2007) It only exists as long as the chain of mouth-to-mouth (literally: body-to-body) content transfer is not severed. Once that separation happens, banishment from culture, identity and – last but not least – memory, becomes complete and final. (Palladini, Pustianaz and Tórz 2015, 11–18)

In conditions free of any of the aforementioned "extraordinary circumstances", a successful process of collectivising memory takes place once

4 Film based on Ray Bradbury's 1953 book *Fahrenheit 451*.

memories are transferred to non-somatic carriers. As of that moment, these carriers become a “surrogate body” for memories, thus being given an opportunity to transgress time-space restrictions delineating the scope of an individual’s existence. (Belting 2007, 13–16) Assmann is a fervent advocate of all and any efforts to materialise memory; she claims that without being anchored in matter, memory becomes versatile and fragile, a condition of particular importance in times of ephemeral digital media. (Assmann 2013, 142)

To recapitulate: medial distribution and representation allow stabilisation of cultural memory. Consequently, the way humans externalise memories determines their perception of the future. In paraphrasing the discipline’s founding father Maurice Halbwachs, Erll (2005, 125) contextually references “medial frameworks of memory.”

Notwithstanding the above, neither of the two researchers have described the concept of the related medium as such with sufficient precision. Erll (2005, 125–128) lists books (and, more broadly, literature), painted images [*das Gemälde*], the internet, printed matter, and photographs as media of memory. Conversely, Assmann (2013, 55) writes, “Cultural memory is based on external media and institutions safeguarding memory and conveying knowledge. At the cultural memory level, transferring experience, memories and knowledge onto material carriers – such as books or films – is of fundamental importance.” Thus defined media of memory should further include monuments in their assorted redactions, anti-monumental ones as well. In her book *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* [*Spaces of Memory. Forms and Transformations of Cultural Memory*], Assmann defines media in a somewhat different and broader sense. Assmann identifies the primary codes of cultural communication (lettering, image [*das Bild*], the body, and – last but not least – the place) rather than specific cultural texts (books, films, monuments) as her “media of memory.”

Such an option seems to be of substantial importance in the case of artwork with a focus on memory, monuments included: artists have been employing media thus defined – image, lettering, the body, the topography of a location – as measures of artistic expression and persuasion for a long time. Since media frequently generate memory models (in the metaphorical sense), the choice of a specific medium is not without meaning to the message carried by an artwork, and also to how we define such a memory.

Assmann’s theory outlines a marvellous theoretical framework for artwork-related deliberations. On the one hand, it problematises and describes the figurativeness and mediagenicity indispensable to memory in general; on the other, the scholar accentuates the gravity of materiality, a strictly formal dimension of memory, equally important to the processes of expressing content and the artists communicating with recipients.

Let us now revisit the Gerz projects of fundamental importance to the anti-monumental concept, and attempt to define the correct medium of memory

– whether past or present – in their case. To that end, my interpretation shall now move slightly away from the sufficiently examined anti-monumental ideological assumptions, in favour of focusing on an aspect usually recognised as a side note in texts describing the Gerzes’ monuments: their use of script, a medium of memory Assmann considers crucial.

A brief reminder: *Harburger Mahnmal gegen Faschismus...* in Hamburg (Esther Shalev-Gerz its co-author) was developed on commission by city authorities, and publicly funded; conversely, *2146 Steine – Mahnmal gegen Rassismus* was the artist’s private initiative, commenced illegally as an expression of his personal protest against (to quote him), “excess permissivism towards art in public space.” (Gerz 1995, 142)

In Hamburg, the artists intended to erect a twelve-metre-tall lead-coated column, featuring a plaque with an appeal to passersby – in seven languages – asking the person concerned to write his/her first and last name on the column with a provided stylus, as an individual expression of protest against fascist ideology. The surface of the inscription-covered monument were gradually interred; ultimately, the memorial was to vanish altogether, “because”, as the artists claimed, “nothing opposing justice should stand tall eternally.” In Saarbrücken, the artist – joined by students of the local Academy – carved the names of 2,146 Jewish cemeteries, existing on Reich territory before the Nazis seized power in 1933, onto the underside of the castle’s square paving blocks (the intervention started out without a permit). (Balisz-Schmelz 2018, 246–255)

In both cases, inscriptions were intended as a form allowing a larger community to confront its past. In Hamburg, they were designed as a personal declaration involving personal accountability. The Gerzes defined such publicising of private ideological declarations as an “act of courage”.⁵

The authors seemed to have been referencing the tradition of autonomous, contesting inscriptions left in public space (known as *graffiti*), one of the many ways employed by citizens to express political will publicly, at least since the revolution of 1968. Such inscriptions tend to be nonchalant, slipshod and spontaneous, all features intended to express animosity towards the dominant aesthetics of privileged script. (Petrucci 2010) In Saarbrücken, the situation was entirely different: the project utilises monumental lettering reserved for commemorative forms legitimised by the state. While surface lettering is organically documentary or interventionist, inscriptions are monumental in nature. (Meier 2002, 70–72)

Consequently, Gerz has adopted two kinds of lettering in both of his anti-monuments: autonomous and monumental, respectively. Yet he reverses its sacrosanct function: in the case of the publicly commissioned Harburg monument, he encourages passersby to engage in an action usually seen as vandalism, inviting them to scribble in a gesture associated with individual rebellion and lawlessness; conversely, in his purposely anarchist Saarbrücken memorial, he employs official and ceremonial lettering, usually expressing content authorities consider desirable.

5 J. Lichtenstein, G. Wajcman, *Interview mit Jochen Gerz*, p. 48.

Paradoxically, despite their invisibility and ostensibly revolutionary format, both monuments have ultimately remained astonishingly traditional in nature.

Script, after all, has always been a revered element of any monument, allowing content carrying a specific idea to be assigned thereto; similarly, stone has always been one of the sacred materials guaranteeing memorial longevity. While monuments as such have been rendered invisible in both projects, relevant information plaques (recognised conventional commemoration tools) have remained. The following formal and ideological determinants have been identified among traditional monument definitions: didacticism, clear significance, and “explicit textual or graphic reference to people, places, events, allegorical figures, archetypical symbolic forms.” (Stevens, Franck and Fazakeley 2012, 961)

The Harburg’s monument inscriptions included swastikas and trivial scribbling. While the artist had been visibly appalled by such acts of vandalism and aggression,⁶ they form part of the aesthetic and semantics of spontaneous writing by definition, as it were. Spontaneous writing including the phenomenon of fights concerning slogans and symbols for the purpose of questioning or commenting on the statements expressed by any of the parties involved. (Petrucchi 2010, 188–189)

At the end of the day, the signatures of Hamburg were subjected to the artist’s ultimate vision, and duly sealed with an information plaque. Both in Hamburg and in the case of the Saarbrücken name carvings, we are confronted with a secondary archivisation coupled with a refusal of accessibility, an act fundamentally contradicting the notion of an archive, its very essence, after all, involving openness and ease of use, at least in the case of *par excellence* democratic archives. To quote Assmann (1999, 345), “Archives have to be read and interpreted, [...] if their content is to be recalled”. *Summa summarum*, the postulated viewer mobilisation has at best resulted in a change to the object as such rather than to any related discursive framework. Outright concern has been voiced that although anti-monuments do aspire to be freed of the “demagogical rigidity and certainty of history” (Stubblefield 2011, 4), abandoned memorial sites shall in time morph into a projection plane based on consolidated official narratives, re-sentiments included, carrying the threat of the ossification and stereotyping of the past. In extreme cases, such silent non-specificity may even become fuel for authoritarian discourse. As Jacques Derrida declared, and he was not far wrong, “The greatest power of logocentrism lies in a work’s silence.” (Brunette and Wills 1994, 13)

Young (1992, 274) further assumed that thanks to the monument’s controversial form, local residents “would either like it or hate it, but they could not avoid it.” He was fundamentally correct: while the Gerzes’ projects did trigger emotions, they were not necessarily those Young had in mind. Noam Lupu refers to such a discrepancy between an artist’s intent and the actual memorial-generated

6 “Yet when I stood before the monument, once I glanced at it, I began sensing its idiotism, it nauseated me. I wouldn’t want to be that monument, no, not me”. J. Lichtenstein, G. Wajcman, *Interview mit Jochen Gerz, op. cit.*, p. 6.

discourse as “banalization.” While the dispute in local papers avoided the subject of commemoration altogether, local residents were hugely concerned with financial and public transport-related matters, such as the excessive cost of the project, or its obstruction of vehicle traffic in the city. (Nupu 2003)

In 2018, on the 25th anniversary of the erecting of the Invisible Memorial of Saarbrücken, extensive information about its origins was published on the Regionalverband Saarland website, with a dedicated platform for local residents, allowing them to post comments or reflections concerning the most famous monument ever developed in their town.⁷ The website was soon taken down. The few comments published only served to confirm Lupu’s earlier diagnoses that he had based on materials several decades old. The only issues raised by local residents involved prosaic day-to-day life matters: the memorial was chiefly viewed as a reason for the dysfunctionality of public space, preventing inter alia the development of a castle access ramp for the disabled.⁸ On June 14th 2019, after nineteen years of absence, Gerz returned to Hamburg to see his monument. The local magazine *Besser im Blick. Das Magazin für Harburg Stadt & Land* wrote as something of “substance” that the artist declared the monument to be in sound condition, “recommending only that the site be weeded, and moss removed from the plaque.”⁹

The Gerzes’ anti-monuments lost their interventionist nature in time. Well-nigh indiscernible today, they have become yet further locations of our daily inattention. Resembling many traditional monuments, they are also subject to historicisation processes, petrified “embodiments of history” rather than moral guidelines. Moreover, their history has become largely self-referencing and self-creation centred, “What remains at the site a monument has disappeared from? Nothing but the artist’s name.”¹⁰

Injudiciously designed anti-monuments may also be misinterpreted, even contradicting the authors’ intentions in some cases: sabotage through erasure has many shades, potentially turning into a memory-killing weapon (consider Truffaut’s film). We cannot escape associations with acts of iconoclasm, for example, albeit in this case one might potentially consider such action also in terms of a symbolically productive gesture generating new iconic images itself. (Bredekamp 2004; Mitchell 2013) Another interpretation would require the Gerzes’ anti-monuments to be decoded as vehicles serving purposes of therapeutic disregard, based on the

7 25 *Jahre Unsichtbares Mahnmal*, <https://www.regionalverband-saarbruecken.de/mahnmal/> (accessed October 29th, 2019).

8 Comments received *ex post*, courtesy of Daniel Schappert of the Regionalverband Saarbrücken press office.

9 “Mahnmal gegen den Faschismus – Künstler Jochen Gerz zum ersten Mal seit 19 Jahren wieder in Harburg”, *Besser im Blick. Das Magazin für Harburg Stadt&Land*, June 14th, 2019, <https://www.besser-im-blick.de/artikel/22-nachrichten/life/7195-mahnmal-gegen-den-faschismus-kuenstler-jochen-gerz-zum-ersten-mal-seit-19-jahren-wieder-in-harburg> (accessed October 29th, 2019).

10 Aleida Assmann, quoted from: Niroumand 1995.

Freudian practice of *Vergessen durch Erinnern* [forgetting through recalling]. At a collective level, such a form of therapy is conducive to reconciliation and integration. (Assmann 2016, 64) While fundamentally constructive, in the case of monuments against racism or fascism, such practices may raise serious doubt. Let us quote from Balint's aforementioned brief reference to the Harburg monument: "Regrettably, I believe it also symbolises the ever-vibrant desire of multiple German hearts for these memorials reminiscent of German crime to finally disappear". (Balint 2010)

The extreme right-wing AfD leader in Thuringia, Björn Höcke, expressed such an "ever-vibrant heartfelt desire" in 2018. During a meeting with his voters in January 2017 in Dresden, he declared that, "Germans are the only people in the world to have erected a monument of shame in the very heart of their capital",¹¹ obviously referencing the Monument to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. While authors of the Berlin project had referenced the anti-monument concept, notions of an exposed location and monumentalisation were not abandoned, the monument – probably to Höcke's great pain – soon becoming a recognisable symbol on the map of the German capital.

In response to Höcke's outrageous comment, members of the activist¹² collective *Zentrum für Politische Schönheit* [Centre for Political Beauty] purchased a plot of land across from Höcke's countryside refuge in Bornhagen, erecting a "private Holocaust memorial" under his very windows in November 2017, an exact replica of the Berlin Monument reduced to 27 steles.¹³ The campaign triggered a number of press interventions, authors referencing the past as well as the current political situation; lead politicians joined the debate, artists were summoned to court time after time, Höcke himself called the Centre "a terrorist organisation".¹⁴ Consequently, the Monument to the Murdered Jews of Europe was on everybody's lips yet again, becoming an incendiary component in the process of updating the discourse on German memory.

The campaign as described becomes conducive to revisiting Musil's notorious monument text: certain musings contained therein are occasionally wrongly parenthesised. (Musil 1978, 506–509) Firstly, Musil diagnoses a monument's "ineffectiveness" from the vantage point of the recipient or passerby rather than the founder or artist. Secondly, he principally accentuates poor monument visibility in cities subject to aggressive modernisation, wherein memorials have to compete, as it were, for the attention of overstimulated residents: the economics of perception

11 Quoted from "German AfD politician 'attacks Holocaust memorial' and says Germans should be more positive about Nazi past", *Independent*, January 11th, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-afd-bjoern-hoecke-berlin-holocaust-memorial-shame-history-positive-nazi-180-turnaround-a7535306.html> (accessed October 31st, 2019).

12 In English: *activism*.

13 *Das Holocaust Mahnmal-Bornhagen*, <https://politicalbeauty.com/mahnmal.html> (accessed October 30th, 2019).

14 <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article170961276/Hoecke-nennt-Mahnmal-Aktivisten-eine-terroristische-Vereinigung.html> (accessed November 19th, 2019).

forces onlookers to opt for a selective awareness of their surroundings; monuments – with their passivity, their static nature, and anachronistic iconography – lose the contest with a contemporary “performance-based” iconosphere. (Assmann 2016, 69–75) In such aspects, Musil’s diagnosis remains valid.

Yet as the invaluable Assmann (2016, 73) properly remarks, the monument extends beyond its form: it also comprises the social, political and cultural context it operates in. Memorials are chiefly a “stage for new interpretations”, animated by performative interventions focused thereon or provoked thereby (including defacement, toppling, relocation, marginalisation, or re-display). Assmann refers to such a period of long or short-term interest as “the monument’s active phase”. In case of the anti-monuments discussed herein, their active phase basically came to a close once they were developed. Consequently, it does happen that unconventional monuments engage audiences for an intense yet relatively short period, to then become part of the cityscape, neutralised, and (in worst-case scenarios) completely marginalised.

Let us also consider that the Gerzes’ anti-monuments referenced phenomena relatively well-embedded in the culture of memory. Any signalled problems may be exacerbated once authors of an anti-monument decide to expand the collective memory horizon by making elements intentionally or incidentally repressed or forgotten part of its bloodstream. (Assmann 2016, 21–68) Correlated with an involuntary deficit in viewer competence (tying in with the fact of the commemorated phenomenon not having been sufficiently processed in culture), an experimental form may result in an even greater failure of otherwise major initiatives. While a monument is an art form and may to a certain extent become a tool of cultural intervention, it has a certain **function** to perform as a “memory boost”, crowning rather than inducing complicated political and/or social-and-cultural processes. In such a sense, the monument remains an artwork – most certainly applied, and highly functionalised. Once such a perspective is accepted, it invites the conclusion that while a definition-based distinction between monuments and anti-monuments may be analytically useful, it is somewhat obscure in practice, since said distinction is chiefly based on the diverse **expectations** we may have of a monument.

What can thus be done to avoid ineffective, or outright counter-effective, forms of experimental commemoration? To avoid their transformation into yet another formal convention, attracting a limited community of professional spectators only? It seems such questions would require a profound consideration of two issues, both of which reflect Assmann’s respective taxonomy categories: *Sicherungsformen der Dauer* [continuance-preserving forms] and *Sicherungsformen der Wiederholung* [repetition-preserving forms]. (Assmann 2016, 21–68) One involves a question of what should constitute a true medium of memory, encoding the significance of an anti-monument in a way allowing, “its continuous interpretation, debate and renewal, with intent to adapt it to the needs and requirements of any

present". (Assmann 2009, 171) The other is based on a need to ponder the option of allowing an anti-monument to remain active for a possibly extended period: crucial features of memorials involve performative or ritualistic events organised in their immediate vicinity, designed to generate discourse renewed in debate. While related remarks by early theoreticians and authors of anti-monuments were extraordinarily apt, the following question remains open: what can be done in order for anti-monuments to avoid a long-term exclusive existence on the level of academic analyses and forming part of the logic of expert culture?

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**ŠTA OSTAJE? ANTI-SPOMENIK GERCOVIH
I MEDIJSKI OKVIRI SEĆANJA.
MNOGO GODINA KASNIJE: JEDNA DIJAGNOZA**

Apstrakt:

Rad nudi kritičku analizu kanonskih i najradikalnijih primera takozvanih anti-spomenika, uključujući radove Ester Šalev Gerc i Johena Gerca. Projekti Gercovih su u potpunosti kompatibilni sa postulatima Džejmsa E. Janga prema kom diskurs treba da ima prednost nad objektom. Preko dve decenije kasnije pitanja koja se tiču uspeha ovih, inače ispravnih, postulata, čine se opravdanim. Oslanjajući se na koncept posredovanog sećanja Alaide Asman i pomerajući fokus sa analize formalnih i ideoloških pretpostavki umetnika ka pragmatičnosti i činu recepcije, izvodim zaključak o komunikacijskom fujasku „nevidljivog anti-spomenika“ Gercovih. Takođe tvrdim da, uprkos nevidljivosti spomenika i uprkos njihovom naizgled revolucionarnom formatu, oni na kraju ostaju u biti vrlo tradicionalni.

Ključne reči:

anti-spomenik, John Gerc i Ester Šalev Gerc, kulturno sećanje, medij sećanja, komemoracija

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