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Lia Yoka and Federico Bellentani

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ART & WEB DESIGN Nikolaos Koumartzis - nkoumartzis@gmail.com

ADDRESS
PUNCTUM – International Journal of Semiotics
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
54124 Thessaloniki, Greece

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TRAVELOGUE

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INTRODUCTION

Lia Yoka and Federico Bellentani

While monuments exist in different plastic and architectural forms, such as statues, buildings, squares, temples, gardens, pyramids, cenotaphs, obelisks and even entire areas of a city, what they seem to have in common is a function that is at once commemorative and political. As a certain type of public material incarnation of information, containing, to borrow Göran Sonesson's term, 'remote intentionality' (Sonesson 2015: 32), monuments aim to promote a certain kind of public remembering of an event, as well as a certain kind of forgetting.

Through their inherent 'remote intentionality', monuments present the ideas of those who erect them. In the modern period, where official acts of commemoration refer to events 'marked distinctively and separately from the religious calendar' (Winter 2010: 312), state-national elites have been aware of the political power of monuments. They have used monuments as tools to legitimize and perpetuate their cultural and political power, i.e. as propaganda invested in objects and rituals, in other words, through forms of commemoration that owe a lot to the psychosocial structure of religious mediation, as expressed for example in shrines and pilgrimages (Groys and Weibel 2010).

However, this legitimization does not always work, and if it does, it cannot last. Federico Bellentani and Mario Panico have aptly summarized the 'paradox' between the physical stability and dynamic meaning of monuments. This paradox is also reflected, as they say, in the gap in scholarship between studying 'the material-symbolic and the political dimensions of monuments', as well as between addressing 'the intentions of the designers and the interpretations of the users' (Bellentani and Panico 2016: 28).

Addressing contemporary monuments made since the 1970s, that is to say, since the total transformation, in formal, aesthetic, as well as functional terms, of memorial culture worldwide through Holocaust memorials, the theorization (and the subsequent multiplicity of definitions) of counter-monuments is an attempt to bridge this gap and to give rise to new conceptions of the relationship between memory, history and political power.

The tension in this relationship, especially after the explosion of post-Cold War memorial culture, is evident in a chain of semantic dismantlings: Serious resemiotization is at work in the demolition of Soviet monuments, in the cathartic destruction of Confederate statues in the

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US, in the building of memorial sites that rearrange national historical narratives (*vide* the epic State programs in Skopje or Budapest), in the unforeseen phantasmagoria of 9/11 commemoration, in spontaneous acts of public commemoration, or, finally, in transformations, *via* an act of vandalism or an expression of indifference, of a hitherto respected object into one of public scorn and ridicule.

In memorial culture today, a culture irreversibly marked first by post-Shoah memorials and then by the post-1989 'memory wars', and exemplified in the trends mentioned above, the meaning of 'public' memory, (and this holds true of all things 'public', a notion usurped by market and State in the name of the people or of some so-called 'collective' use), must be tested anew in every case under scrutiny against the changing constellations of the generic terms memory, history, and political power. If we follow that principle, we could suggest that shifts in the forms and functions of commemoration over the last decades seem to at once confirm and go beyond Pierre Nora's famous distinction between the *milieux de mémoire* (the realms of memory), the real, authentic and vanishing environments for remembering, and the *lieux de mémoire* (the loci of memory), i.e. substitutes of memory that can merely remind us, in an artificial way, of the event that is being referenced. (Nora 1989)

Nora's distinction definitely finds its confirmation in the nostalgia for some forever lost common organic experience in what Erika Doss has called 'memorial mania' (Doss 2012). Civil society as commissioner, designer and user of monuments is employing symbols and mnemotechnics similar to those of religion; and yet, is also aware of the waning of the impact, appeal and interpretative transparency of traditional monuments.

But these new *loci* of memory seem also to reclaim their own *realms,* and in doing so self-reflexively reverse Nora's distinction: Monuments and counter-monuments today claim the recognition and installation of public meanings that are politically combative or controversial, at other times subjective and open to diverse ethical interpretations, and can even become vehicles of soothing moral redemption for civil society's powerlessness and inaction in the face of war crimes and genocides (Yoka 2016).

There are parallels to be drawn between meaning production in memorial culture and meaning production in contemporary art (suffice it to picture post-WWII painterly abstraction and abstract monuments next to each other, or to juxtapose minimalism to strands of the counter-monumental trend): On the one hand, mass communication in the 20th century as exemplified by the technologies of cinema, TV, and the internet, has rendered high art and official memorial culture weaker and irrelevant. On the other hand, both high art and memorial culture continue to refine and radicalize meaning-making, in the sense that they have taken up the task of constantly offering new connections between form and content, object and sign, signification and reference. While steering clear of popular over-expansive definitions of artworks as 'monuments that do not commemorate' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 167), we would add a further categorical connection between art and monuments, namely the blurring of boundaries (to the point of their extinction) between official public art and public monuments, a feature in numerous city and State commissions of public works today, particularly widespread in the UK.

While hailing from diverse research communities (visual culture, cultural anthropology, art history, cognitive semiotics), and dealing with case studies in different temporal and geographical contexts, the articles presented in this volume address the two basic questions outlined above. The first question concerns the dynamics at the intersection of history, memory and political power in the meaning of monuments and memorial culture today, the second examines the specific techniques of this meaning-making process. The issue also contains two special sections, comprising of original essays and artworks that thematize monuments and commemoration, and explore the poetic aspects of signification and semiotic approaches to making art.

Göran Sonesson sets the theoretical-cognitive stage for the debate on monuments and commemoration combining two demanding sets of epistemic inquiries. Where do we begin to think of the relationship between monuments as typical *exograms*, pieces of extended mind in neuroscientific/evolutionary terms on the one hand, and socioculturally determined public, collective, or potentially shared, historical memory on the other? In semiotic terms, monuments seem to be double objects, but do not necessarily qualify as signs in the strictest sense of the term: Usually, but not always, they are rooted in space as physical objects, they project meanings onto space, refer to a different moment in time, and are offered to public experience. Interpreting Sonesson, one could strip the definition to its bare essentials and conclude that monuments are a special technology of *reminding*.

Mario Panico explores the historical experience of Fascism in today's Italy through the analysis of still standing fascist monuments. He devises four semiotic strategies to elaborate on the historical experience of Fascism in Italy and how these are used in the practical conservation of monuments that remained after the fascist era in Italy: erasure, normalization, narcotization-latency and the construction of polyphonic memories.

Following a contiguous line of inquiry, **Miguel Fernadez Belmonte** calls attention to primarily iconographic and stylistic elements in the Valle de los Caídos in Spain. Reclaiming the analytical power of art historical next to sociopolitical readings of monuments, he charts the currency of the monument in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, its significance within the Francoist legal and political discourses, and finally its competing symbolic values and the conflicts over its meaning for future generations.

Sergei Kruk proposes a comprehensive method for the semiotic analysis of three-dimensional artworks. He focuses on a specific plastic sign of sculpture: the mass. According to Kruk, the mass determines the forces of gravity and inertia and have the potential to elicit connotations. Analyzing monuments erected in Soviet Latvia, the author explains that the experience of three-dimensional sculptures is embedded in the elaboration of the visual input. Therefore, the viewer can interpret sculpture through perceiving the sculptural mass.

In **Viktorija Rimaitė**'s analysis of monuments in Vilnius, Lithuania, monuments are considered tools of construction of national identity. Rimaitė proposes an aesthetic approach to monuments that will bring to the fore the technique of promotion and reinforcement of the sense of national belonging. The author argues that monuments in Vilnius present similar visual and aesthetic features regardless of the political regimes that erect them. To demonstrate this, Rimaitė uses an interdisciplinary approach connecting discourse analysis of news reports and Greimassian figurative and thematic analysis to assess both the variable and the constant features of monuments.

Patrizia Violi's analysis of *Fragmentos* by Doris Salcedo reviews the concept of counter-monument by proposing a more general definition of counter-monumentalization practices that can assume two notable forms: a) the re-semantization of an already existing monument that conveys meanings that are today perceived as unacceptable by a community (this is the case of the controversial monuments inherited by Nazism in Germany, Fascism in Italy and Francoism in Spain and communism in the former Soviet Union) and b) new monuments seeking to oppose the traditional rhetoric of monumentalization, as evident in several Holocaust memorials in Europe and especially in Germany. Drawing on this second category, Violi analyses *Fragmentos* in Bogota, Colombia – a counter-monument as defined by the Colombian artist Doris Salcedo herself.

Ariel Barbieri suggests a discussion of the notion of 'non-monumentality' and pursues two manifest aims: a) to construct a semiotic definition of a 'non-monument' in dialogue with the field of commemorative monumentality and deconstructive anti-monumentality and b) to offer possible taxonomies of non-monuments. The essay is inspired by American aesthetics proposed by Rodolfo Kusch and the semiotic categories developed by Juan Magariños de Morentín. It establishes connections between semiotics and contemporary art in an effort to devise a unique framework for the analysis of the non-monument: a planned work of art in progress.

Inevitably, an important part of this issue addresses monuments in relation to the medium of photography. Photography actually predetermines the way we understand public space today, since it is by far the main pictorial medium of mass communication. It also plays a great role in shaping the way memories themselves are perceived and represented, often acting as an emblematic reference to the concept of memory itself. **Eirini Papadaki** examines monuments on postcards and social media images in order to explore two-dimensional mediating practices, their socio-cultural and media settings and the role of such visual resources in producing the meaning of monuments. The author argues that monuments and photography cover a similar ontological status because of their ability to capture selected instances of time and feed into or give actual shape and content to one's memory.

In his review of a photographic portfolio by **Paris Petridis**, shot in Southeastern Mediterranean cities over the last fifteen years as part of an ongoing research project**, Hercules**

Papaioannou navigates through the connections between theory and technique of depicting monuments. He offers a critical overview of the history of photographing architecture, monuments, and landscapes, tracing this specific genre back to the very beginnings of the medium of photography itself. Against this analytical/interpretative background, and in conversation with the contemporary photographic work by Petridis, Papaioannou discusses new aesthetic and conceptual angles, that reinvent and redefine the weight and the trace of the monument in photography.

Finally, the *travelogue* by **Orestis Pangalos** documents, in text and picture, a deeply meditative itinerary, balancing between Lund's museums and its streets, between producing street art and curating it, and between appreciating 'accidental' aesthetic results in public space and analyzing conscious, intentional artworks. He collapses the boundaries between 'street art' and the poetics of urban visual noise, and urges us to imagine a restored connection between making uncommissioned, original public works and exhibiting them, through respectful collecting and curating techniques that will preserve the ethos and credibility of early practitioners.

This issue appears amidst a global pandemic, an unprecedentedly generalized and collective experience of fear and uncertainty, producing hitherto unimaginable connections between communication, politics, biology and nature, allowing for eugenic nightmares to be discussed as potential policies, magnifying and thus exposing, in high resolution, the world's inequality, fragility and anthropocenic despair.

We would like to thank, with all our hearts, the authors that worked with us and responded to our last-minute editorial demands, saving this small moment of semiotic reflection from distraction and confusion. Lia Yoka is grateful to Konstandinos Ioannidis and Konstandinos Korres for their inspiring ideas. Finally, we would both like to thank, for their invaluable help in the review process for this volume, Federico Montanari, Olga Lavrenova, Iwao Takahashi, Carlos González Pérez, Kęstutis Zaleckis, Aleksandra Bogomilova, Aluminé Rosso, Daria Arkhipova, Lukas R.A. Wilde, Tiit Remm, and Karin Boklund-Lagopoulou.

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The publication of memory – from the *Via crucis* to the terrorist memorial

Göran Sonesson

The notion of memory is ambiguous in multiple ways. It can be an event, an act of memory; or it can consist of a structure conserving and organizing a set of facts. In the first case, it may involve the automatic retention of the 'just evolved' moment in the stream of consciousness, or it can be a deliberate act with a purpose to build up, or to search, the space of recorded facts. In the second case, the information can be accumulated in the brain, as an endogram, or in an object independent of the body, as an artefact or an exogram. Elsewhere, I have suggested that the photograph, at least from the Instamatic to the selfie, partakes of several of these kinds of memory. The same could be said about the monument, although the latter necessarily involves a public dimension. Maurice Halbwachs and Alfred Schütz have written enlightening things about collective memory which are worth exploring. None of them, however, were able, at the time, to take into account the difference between two kinds of publication of memory: the official one, which is what first comes to mind, epitomized in war monuments or in the monuments of the Holocaust; and, on the other hand, the monuments erected on places where terrorist acts have occurred, which become public events only because of the concurrence of many individual acts of commemoration, which is not to say that they are not socially conditioned. The purpose of this paper is to elucidate the second kind of memorial publication.

Keywords Monument, Memory, Relevancies, Public Space, Consciousness

Envoi

If there is such a thing as the semiotics of monuments, we must start by inquiring into the way into which monuments convey meanings. As a first approach, it may seem that a

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monument must be an object located in a particular part of space, which invokes some event or series of events in the past, whether this was the original purpose of the object or not. It might already be concluded that the monument *as a monument* has to be situated in both time and space. Several glosses can be made to this characterization. In the historical sense of the term, a monument is erected on purpose, but recent experience of terrorist deeds, not to forget the ancient *Via Crucis*, shows that something may become a monument to an act that has occurred in that very space, without any object being originally dedicated to that purpose.

Moreover, a monument is traditionally expected to constitute a physical presence occupying some particular part of space; but the part of the monument which is physically present, and the part which is simply projected from memory or imagination is variable. Thus, a place where a terrorist act has occurred will no doubt at first be decorated with flowers and other objects. However, in the long run, these objects will disappear, and yet the place will continue to form a monument to those who remember the act. Something like that must have been true of the *Via Crucis,* during the Middle Ages, when itineraries to Jerusalem were published (see Sonesson 2019) — although it should not surprise me, if more recently, the itinerary has been marked out physically, as a service to the tourists.

A third complication is that a monument may be (physically) erected in a place in which the commemorated event did not take place, whether the monument was erected by official powers (such as the Estonia monument in Stockholm) or was a more spontaneous work, such as street art referring to some politically salient event having occurred in that country, which may, for various reasons, not appear in the place where the event took place.

If the monument has as physical presence, it may, or may not, contain signs, such as writing or pictures, but, as is particularly obvious in the case of terrorist acts, signs are not necessary for meaning to be there. Auschwitz is to us a monument to the Holocaust, although that was not why it was built; the Holocaust monument in Berlin was created especially to commemorate the Holocaust, although it is not situated in a spot singularized by specific events having to do with the Holocaust (which is not to deny that the Holocaust also happened in Berlin, though not, as far as I know, in the particular spot where the monument is located).

Finally, monuments in the narrow sense are erected in public places through a decision by some kind of public authority, but, in an extended sense, also the cross placed by family members close to the road where a person had a mortal traffic accident, or even the memorial to a dog created by someone in his garden may be considered a monument. It seems that our notion of monument is very much a prototype concept. However, as I pointed out long ago (without referring to this particular case; Sonesson 1989: 330ff), in polemics against Eleanor Rosch (et alia, 1976), this does not mean that there are not things which are clearly not monuments.

Where does this leave us? Whatever the problem with the first definition proposed above, the notion of monument fundamentally involves the notions of time and space. Therefore, it should not only be productive to scrutinize the temporal and spatial relations of monuments for their own sake, but such an exploration may turn out to be also rewarding for specifying the nature of semiosis generally. This is obviously true about the notion of sign, but it may also apply to the notions of public and less public spaces.

The monument as a temporal object

The primary sense in which the monument is a temporal object is, of course, the same in which everything offered to perception is such. It is part of the experience of a perceiving subject in the here and now. There are, however, less trivial ways in which the monument is temporally anchored. The nature of memory changes with the type of semiotic resources in which it is embodied. Certain types of memory are implicit in the very body of human beings and other animals; others are clearly distinct artefacts, such as knots on handkerchiefs and photographs; others consist of storehouses of facts accessible to the intersubjective knowledge of generations and generations of ever greater numbers of human beings. The interactions of semiosis and memory are complex, and we are still far from understanding all the complexities of this interrelation.

Temporality in the stream of consciousness

At least one contemporary neuroscientist, Gerald Edelman (1992), whose professional access to the mind is quite different in nature to mine, nevertheless recognizes the existence of 'Jamesean properties', such as intentionality, which are irreducible characteristics of human consciousness. William James (1978 [1890]: I, 179-182) is, of course, particularly famous for having introduced the idea of a 'stream of consciousness' or, as he also says, 'of thought,' in which the 'specious present' is surrounded by 'fringes' that extend to both past and future. As Aron Gurwitsch (1957) has shown, James's conception of the stream of consciousness is very similar to the way Edmund Husserl (1966 [1928]) conceives temporal consciousness, as consisting, in James' (1978 [1890]: 279) terms, of temporal parts which envisage the same object in different ways and which melt into each other in a continues stream. Husserl, however, would appear to be more meticulous in his description, specifying that every present moment already includes references to the past (retentions), which include references to even earlier moments, and so on (retentions of retentions, etc.) and references to the future (protentions), with references to even later times, etc. (protentions of protentions, etc. see Fig. 1a), which means that each protension flows into another, and so on, as the retentions do, and there will be retentions of protensions and protensions of retentions in addition to that. Retentions and protensions can also give rise to a sort of accumulation of meaning, in the sense of Lotman, or more precisely, of a sedimentation of meaning, as Husserl (1939) understood it: a superimposition of meaning on the temporal process.

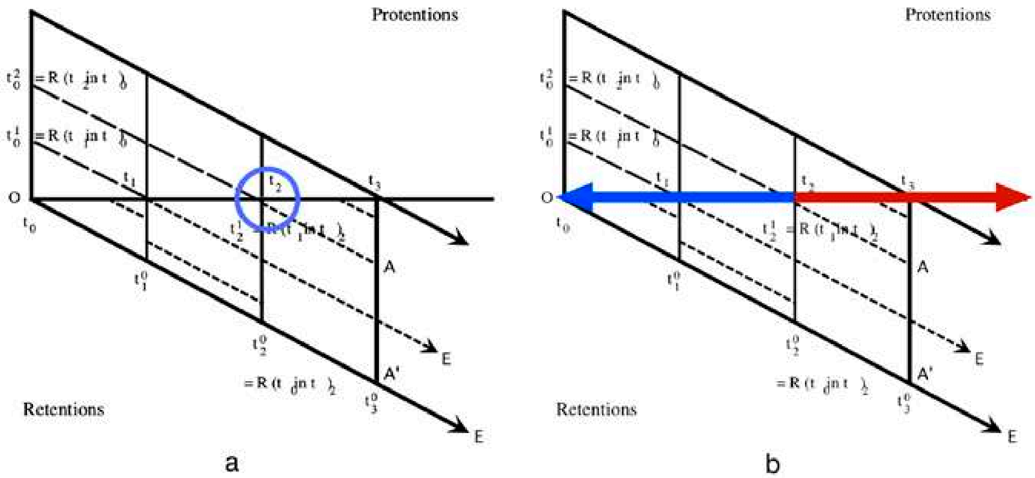

Figure 1: The temporal consciousness according to Husserl (1966 [1928]), extended in both temporal directions by Sonesson (1999b): a) Retentions and protensions; b) acts of anticipation and remembering.

According to Merlin Donald (1991: 149), monkeys live entirely within the limits of episodic memory, which he takes to mean that they spend their entire life living in the present, consisting in a series of concrete episodes. To live entirely in the present may seem like a simple condition, but if it implies an awareness of the insertion of the present into the past and the future, it is already a complex capacity. Indeed, this would require what Husserl calls retentions (of the past) and protentions (of the future). It is very different to live in the present, without understanding it as an opposition to the past and the future, as one would expect the case to be for the tick, as its existence (its *Umwelt*) is described by Jakob von Uexküll (1983 [1934]). Donald is undoubtedly aware of this, as he attributes such an episodic memory only to monkeys, human beings and human predecessors. But one could expect there also to be a pre-episodic stage. I have argued that to live in the present knowing that it is the present is to live in the current of consciousness with its retentions and its protentions; but living in the present without being able to appreciate its difference from the future or the past is an even simpler condition that seems to characterize the tick among many other animals (see Sonesson 2006; 2015).

At one level, the *Umwelt* of the tick is structured by time, since the three acts that form its life according to von Uexküll must be performed in a certain order. In the beginning, the tick is suspended motionless on a branch until it perceives the odour of butyric acid emitted by the cutaneous glands of a mammal, causing it to fall from the branch where it is posed. When coming into contact with the mammal's warm body, the tick perambulates on the body of its host in order to find the least hairy part of the skin, allowing it to start drinking the blood of its host.

Thus, the *Umwelt* of the tick is provided with a temporal structure according to McTaggart's B-series, that is to say, it is divided into a *before* and an *after*, but it does not require anything like the division of the stream of consciousness, in terms of past, present, and future, which characterize McTaggart A-series (see Gell 1992: 149ff.). To move from Series B to Series A, you need to insert an Ego into the time series, for which there is a lapse of time both before and after the situation in which it is currently located.

Thus, retentions and protections are clearly distinct from acts of memory and anticipation, which are active events in their own right. As Husserl (1966, 1928) points out, protentions and retentions are parts of a complete act and should not be confused with separate acts of memory and anticipation (see Fig. 1b). It would therefore seem that it is not enough (but it is certainly necessary) to have a current of consciousness in order to be able to "travel in time", in the sense of Endel Tulving (1983), that is to say, to place oneself imaginatively in time before or after the present moment. This is what Tulving calls 'episodic memory'. Diana monkeys use different warning signals to communicate the presence of different classes of predators, such as a leopard, an eagle or a snake. Klaus Zuberbühler et al. (1999) demonstrated that the monkeys were more upset (giving more repeated calls) when, five minutes after listening to the alarm call corresponding to an eagle, they heard the roar of a leopard instead of the scream of an eagle. This shows that the monkeys have kept in memory the meaning of the alarm call they had heard before. However, to do this, it is not necessary to resort to time travel, or, in different terms, to realize a specific act of memory, but only to have a current of consciousness in the sense of McTaggart's A-series.

In a well-known study of what they qualified as 'episodic-like memory', Clayton and Dickinson (1998) showed that white-throated scrub jays remember where they collected food, as well as the nature of the food kept in their different caches. It seems undeniable that this requires a journey back in time, that is, an independent act of memory, even if the procedure appears to be limited to a domain of special interest to the animal, food resources, and even if we cannot know whether the animals have any feeling of time-travelling (see Clayton et al. 2007). It has also been found that chimpanzees are able to collect stones to use the next day to throw at tourists who come to watch them at the zoo, and that chimpanzees and orangutans are able to pick the right tool necessary for a task they know will be set for them afterwards (Osvath 2009, Osvath & Osvath 2008). These are certainly active anticipatory acts, which seem to involve also some acts of memory, and they are not so immediately directed towards the procuration of food as in the case of scrub jays (although in the second case, they may be so indirectly). Thus, time travel, in the sense Tulving understands the term, seems to be present also among other animals and goes well beyond the experience of the current of consciousness.

To erect and experience monuments, you certainly need episodic consciousness in Tulving's sense, since you must be able to travel in time. The foregoing analysis of temporal objects should therefore offer some clues to understanding the semiotic status of monuments, as used by human beings. In the narrow sense of the term, a monument clearly requires there to have been a specific act of remembering an event, which was the impetus for creating some kind of physical object located at a specific place. In a wider sense of the term, no specific physical object is necessary, except for the environment prompting an act of remembrance of a sequence of earlier experienced protentions and retentions, in particular if the latter is culturally shared (part of collective memory, in the sense of Halbwachs (1950 [1925]; see further below). In reality, moments often partake of several of these semiotic operations. Thus, for example, Auschwitz is a monument to the Holocaust for everybody who has been an inmate of the concentration camp, but also, in a different way, to all of us who have heard about it in history lessons or in the media. The Auschwitz victim only has to bring back, through a personal act of memory, his or her stream of consciousness at the time of detention. The rest of us (fortunately) need to have recourse to segments of collective memory which we project onto the site. Quite another thing is that national or international authorities may officially proclaim the site to be a monument and then perhaps erect a physical object, or at least append a signboard stating the fact. Such a procedure requires an active act of remembrance, customarily conveyed by a sign. Such an officially proclaimed act of remembrance may however also be applied to a place which is not particularly associated with streams of consciousness occurring at the time at that very spot, as in the case of the Berlin Holocaust monument.

Temporality as sedimentation

According to Jurij Lotman (1976), the accumulation of information as well as of goods (by which we must understand *material objects*) precedes their exchange and constitutes a more elementary and fundamental characteristic of a culture than the latter. Material objects and information, Lotman claims, are similar to each other and differ from other phenomena in two ways: They can be accumulated, whereas, for example, sleep and breathing cannot be accumulated, and they are not completely absorbed into the body, unlike food, but remain separate objects also after the reception. A lot could be said about this analogy, its advantages and its perils, and we have done so elsewhere (see Sonesson 1999a, 2010, 2015). In the present context, it will be sufficient to retain two elements of this critique. First, if accumulation means integration into predefined structures, the accumulation of information is very different from the accumulation of material objects. Far from being a stack of objects, the accumulation of meaning is an intentional process, in the double sense of a process that is about something else and that is present for someone. Insofar as it involves the integration of elements into a pre-existing structure carrying meaning, accumulation in Lotman's sense could be identified with sedimentation, in Husserl's sense, namely the process by means of which previous acts are conserved in a passive form, which not only can be reanimated, but which also give rise to interpretative schemes which can be used as a basis for the understanding of subsequent acts.

The latter point is explicitly made by Alfred Schütz (1974 [1932]). However, this idea becomes more interesting if (as suggested by Sonesson 2018) we can identify these *schemes of interpretation* with what Schütz (1970) later was to call the *systems of relevancies*, which are social in nature, and the function of which is to guide our interest in given situations as they occur in the Lifeworld. This again may be considered a kind of collective memory, in the sense of Maurice Halbwachs (1952 [1925]; 1950; see Sonesson 2018), to the extent that such systems of relevancies are shared between members of a group or a society. Language, and most other semiotic systems, thus form part of collective memory.

In the second place, even the most elusive type of information must be 'embodied' in some kind of material substance, in order to be accessible in time and space. This can happen in at least two very different ways. It may have its primary existence in the mind, either in an individual mind, or being intersubjectively shared by some group, thus forming a kind of collective memory, but it also needs to be materially manifested in some way. In the case of dead languages, for example, their continuing existence depends on writings which have been preserved; languages which are still spoken, however, and other semiotic systems still current, every day produce numerous material manifestations of their existence.

In the present context, nevertheless, it is the second case which is of particular interest. This is the sense in which Merlin Donald (2010) talked about *exograms*, as vehicles for conserving memory external to the mind, comparable in that respect to the *endograms* in the brain. Examples would be those devices we know as books, pictures, records, CDs, hard disks, and so on. Indeed, as I have explained elsewhere (Sonesson 2019), the photograph is a particularly interesting kind of exogram which embodies all sorts of temporal connections. Some kinds of 'extended mind', in the sense nowadays current in cognitive science, also would seem to involve exograms in Donald's sense. Andy Clark & David Chalmers (1998) tell a story about Otto and Inga, who both go to a museum. Otto has Alzheimer's disease, which is the reason why he has written down all the directions to the museum in a notebook to serve as his memory. Inga, however, is able to remember the directions using only her (un-extended) mind. The argument is that the only difference existing in these two cases is that Inga's memory is being internally processed by the brain, while Otto's memory is being served by the notebook. In other words, Otto's mind has been extended to include the notebook as the source of his memory. The notebook qualifies as such because it is constantly and immediately accessible to Otto, and it is automatically endorsed by him. At least according to the interpretation of Daniel Hutto & Erik Myin (2013), this story suggests that, thanks to the notebook, Otto does not have to have any capacity for processing meaning in his own mind. In fact, however, if Otto cannot read, which is a semiotic act (that is, an act of extracting meaning), he cannot be doing anything at all with the notebook. The notebook is meaningless, if not actualized by a mind, just like writing in some unknown script for which no key has been found, as was the case, for instance, of the Maya script until recently (see Coe 1992).

While an exogram needs to be material, it also has to possess a part of meaning. It requires some kind of indirect intentionality, both because it has to be produced by someone (as in the case of the camera placed on the finishing line of a horse race, which automatically takes a snapshot when the horses cross the line, but which must have been set up and armed with this intention by a subject, as explained in Sonesson 2002) and it has to be understood by someone (as in Otto's case). It is true that computer disks and CDs have to be 'read' by a computer and a CD-player, respectively, but even this is of no avail if there is nobody around to read the text or listen to the music. Thus, exograms require both a physical and an intentional presence.

The monument is certainly an exogram, or a piece of extended mind, in this sense. In the narrow sense of the term, a monument no doubt needs to be both material and mind-dependent. In some other sense, however, as we shall see, monuments can do with a little less materiality, but never with an absence of meaning.

The monument as a spatial object

In many ways, the monument may be conceived as a typical exogram, or as a manifestation of extended mind. In relation to memory, in the various senses we have identified, the monument shares many properties with other exograms, but it differs from them for at least two reasons. First, it is part of public space, whose meaning is at least partially defined by the collective memory of a particular group (a neighbourhood, a society, humanity, etc.). Secondly, it is located in a circumscribed physical space, which implies that it is accessible, in a sense, to all the people being in that place, and that it constitutes, at least marginally, a mandatory experience for all the people who pass by it. But there are many avatars of this spatial specificity which still remain to be explored.

The monument as an object rooted in space

In its most familiar shape, as epitomized by the bronze kings and other heroes looming large in most cities, the monument undoubtedly is a physical object, which is situated in physical space, sometimes relying on a physical connection to some event in the life of the real person it impersonates. In the city in which I live, Malmö, there is a statue, at the main square, of the Swedish king Charles X Gustav. It is not clear whether the statue was erected here to remind us all that this king, more than 300 years ago, conquered for Sweden this part of what was at the time Denmark, as has sometimes been suggested; or whether the statue was erected here a little more than hundred years ago, simply as a specimen of the stripe of 'Swedish kings'. In the former case, the statue is clearly materially anchored in the humus of Malmö City. In the second case, the spatial relation is fuzzier. Nevertheless, it is still within the border of present-day Sweden, which is not true of other statues of the same king in Finnish Turku, as well as in Germany and Estonia, no doubt because these countries, or parts of them, were earlier Swedish colonies, and also in Minnesota, clearly because it was a centre of Swedish immigration to the US.

A more clear-cut case is constituted by the statue of the footballer Zlatan Ibrahimović very recently erected in his hometown, Malmö, and more specifically, not in the suburb, Rosengård, where he grew up and no doubt started out as a footballer, but in front of Malmö Stadion, where he must no doubt have spent some part of his early career. It is interesting that, at the beginning, the plan was to erect this statue outside the Friends' Arena in Stockholm, which would have rendered his statue as lost in space just like that of Charles X Gustav, according to the second interpretation suggested above.

While there may be no particular reason for the statue of Charles X Gustav being situated at the main square of Malmö, some monuments are clearly placed on particular sites, although these are not the sites where the events commemorated took place. This would seem to be true of the Holocaust monument in Berlin, which was no doubt placed in Berlin, because it is the capital of Germany, and because it also was so at the time of the Holocaust, which means that it is placed in a kind of official shop window.[1]

Yet, in this location, the monument only carries meaning because we all know the story of the Holocaust, and we are aware of its numerous real sites. The monument erected in Stockholm to the victims of the MS Estonia disaster is also displaced in relation to the real event. It certainly could not be placed where the real catastrophe took place, in the middle of the Baltic Sea, for obvious material reasons. Since the ship was crossing the sea between Tallinn and Stockholm,

the choice of placing the monument in Stockholm was not arbitrary, but the showcase principle may still have played a part. More importantly, in both cases, the monument only makes sense to those who know the story, in the first case because of the history books, and in the second case thanks the news reports. But this introduces us to the case in which the narrative is primary, and the spatial attachment is entirely dependent on the story being told.

The monument as an object projected onto space

To the people of the Middle Ages, the most important moments were undoubtedly those in Jerusalem, those testifying to the sacred history of Christendom, especially the places by which Jesus was supposed to have passed the day of his condemnation and crucifixion. Seen in this light, there was a whole sequel of monuments in 'the Holy City', connected by a trajectory which had to be followed, although not much remained of these sites at the time. Numerous guidebooks were therefore written to help those who wanted to follow the monumental road, the first of which that is known to us is that of the 'pilgrim of Bordeaux':

> Leaving the rampart of Sion, and going towards the gate of Neapolis, there are walls on the right, a little further down the valley: this is the site of the house and the courtroom of Pilate. This is the place where the Lord was questioned before he was led away to his suffering. On the left is the small eminence of Golgotha, where the lord was crucified. A stone's throw away is found the cave where the Lord's body was laid at rest and from where he resurrected on the third day. It was there that, at the order of the Emperor Constantine, a basilica was recently erected, that is to say a church of admirable beauty (Marval 2002 [1996]: 32; my translation).

Commenting on such guidebooks, Maurice Halbwachs ([1941] 2008: 126) wrote:

> Apart from its sacred character, the place of worship is a part of the ground whose position in space is defined. Like everything that is material, this position tends to remain what it is. / --- / It is from the day when a cult is organized, from the day when this place becomes a rallying point of a whole group of believers, that it becomes a holy place / … /.

When reading Halbwachs, one cannot help wondering whether it is the materiality of the space that defines collective memory, or if, on the contrary, collective memory assigns a meaning to the ground. Perhaps Halbwachs is claiming that both processes take place concurrently, but there clearly are cases when one of them predominates. It is almost impossible to avoid (although Halbwachs managed to do so) associating such a notion of collective memory with the so-called 'art of memory', practised since antiquity and current during the Middle Ages, which was used, for instance, by rhetoricians, to memorize long lists of ordered elements, by projecting them onto already well-known places (Yates 1966, Carruthers 2008; Le Goff 1988: 146). One retains the structure of the space perceived (or easily pictured in the imagination) but fills the different slots with new material. Again, one may consider Kevin Lynch's notion of 'the image of the city' as an application of this idea: Lynch (1960) set out to investigate 'the visual quality of the American city by studying the mental representation of this city among its inhabitants' by focusing on such elements as paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. If we apply this analysis to the description offered by the pilgrim of Bordeaux, we see that he starts out passing a gate, which is a kind of node, while at the same time testifying to the existence of a path. He sees the walls, that is, edges, down in the valley, and then he visits a series of landmarks, which are at the same time monuments: the house of Pilate, Golgotha, the cave burial, and so on (For more details of these parallels, see Sonesson 2019).

The question then becomes: How much of these meanings is embodied securely in physical space (necessarily as given to the interpretation of a human, or otherwhere animate, being) – and how much is projected onto space from the system of relevancies harboured by the historical subjects visiting the place? The description given by the pilgrim of Bordeaux certainly suggests that most of the information has to be projected from the experiencing subject onto space. It may seem, nevertheless, that there must be some spatial detail which is really 'physically' there, though perhaps not a complete structure, contrary to what is required in the art of memory, and which has to be temporally connected to some event which took place at this very spot at some earlier moment.

Terrorist acts, mostly propagated by Islamic activists, of which Europe has seen a significant number in the new century, often result in monuments with only a rudimentary rootedness in space. They are attached to a place by a set of artefacts left on the spot in the aftermath of the event by individuals, who may be family members of the victims or other sympathetic people. These artefacts can be flowers, candles, toys *etc*. It is thanks to their accumulation that they constitute the monument. This happened in the cases of Sweden's two acts of Islamic terrorism, both taking place on and around Drottninggatan in central Stockholm. The first terrorist was Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdal, who, in 2010, detonated his bomb too soon, killing only himself; the second terrorist was Rakhmat Akilov, who, in April 2017, drove a car along Drottninggatan killing five people and injuring a large number of others. However, the artefacts piled up at the spot of the event do not carry any meaning to people who are not familiar with the event, that is, who are not bearers of a version of sedimented temporal consciousness, either derived from their own experience on the spot at the time of the event, or more probably conveyed by news media. With time, these artefacts will probably be whisked away. The flowers, in any case, need to be replaced quite often if the monument should last. In fact, one cannot help wondering whether such assemblages of artefacts are agglomerated in places where terrorist acts are not singular occurrences standing out from the ordinary, but almost everyday events, such as, for instance, in Afghanistan. If not, the narrative becomes imperative.

There clearly are monuments which are not positioned at the very place where the event commemorated occurred. In this case, the story is all important. Such monuments are, of course, often officially sanctioned objects, such as the Berlin Holocaust monument and the Stockholm Estonia monument, where the narrative is emphasized by the use of writing, pictures or other signs. If the creation of the monument does not carry any official sanction, as may be the case with, for instance, street art, the entire burden of 'monumentship' has to be carried by signs and by systems of relevancies.

These cases allow us to discern clearly that a monument has a double object, on the one hand, a material reality, a figure, a place in space, and, on the other hand, a meaning which, in the mind of a group, is attached to and superimposed on that reality. Suppose, as Halbwachs (2008 [1941]) does, that the group splits, and some of its members remain on the spot, in the presence of the material object, in contact with it, while others move away from it, carrying with them the memory of the object. At the same time, the object changes. The very place it occupies does not remain the same, since around it everything is transformed. It no longer has the same relationship with the material world that surrounds it. In the example studied by Halbwachs, this is what happened to the Way of the Cross. It will certainly also happen to the commemorations of terrorist acts.

The monument as a sign

Here we will only briefly consider the question whether the monument is a sign or not. That depends, of course, on what is meant by *monument* (and we have seen that this very much depends on circumstances), and what is meant by (something being a) *sign*. It is a curious fact that semiotics has generally been unable to spell out a useful definition of the notion of sign. Elsewhere, taking my inspiration from both Husserl and Piaget, and in an effort to amplify their intuitions, I have suggested that the sign can be minimally defined by the following properties (see Sonesson 1989, 2006, 2012, 2016): (1) it contains (a least) two parts (expression and content) and is as a whole relatively independent of that for which it stands (the referent); (2) these parts are differentiated, from the point of view of the subjects involved in the semiotic process (the addresser and the addressee, or, as we will see, sometimes only the latter), even though the parts may not be objectively differentiated, that is, not separate instances of experience in the common sense Lifeworld (except as signs forming part of that Lifeworld); (3) there is a double asymmetry between the two parts, because one part, expression, is more directly experienced than the other; (4) and because the other part, content, is more in focus than the other; and (5) the sign itself is subjectively differentiated from the referent, and the referent is more indirectly known than any part of the sign.

In this sense, obviously, any monument containing writing, pictures, or anything of the kind, contains signs. And any object conventionally considered to be a monument will, by this very fact, be a sign. Still, this is not the whole story. The Berlin Holocaust monument is a sign for the Holocaust because we are told so. It is certainly a sign, a symbolic sign, in Peirce's sense, and more specifically a conventional sign. On the other hand, you can enter the monument, you can go move along its different parts (although there may not be any guidebooks comparable to those specifying the *Via Crucis*), you can touch its different parts, and you will certainly have an experience of meaning, but it is not, so far, a meaning of the kind carried by signs. Rather, it has to do with what James Gibson (1980) called affordances: the direct perceptual meaning resulting from experiencing the movement of your own body on a surface, touching other surfaces, etc. These meanings may well be said to be iconic, that is, motivated, not exactly by similarity, but rather by identity. However, to the extent that these experiences are meant to be related to some properties of the event commemorated by the Holocaust monument, this can only be determined conventionally by means of the story, yet not the story of the Holocaust, but of the story of the Holocaust monument.

The monument in public space

The statue of the Swedish king Charles X Gustav erected in the central square of Malmö City, as well as those tokens of the same type found in Turku, in Germany and in Estonia, were no doubt the result of decisions taken by the relevant authorities, and this may also be the case, though perhaps not by means of the same procedure, of the one in Minnesota. This is also true of the statue dedicated to the footballer Zlatan Ibrahimović in his hometown Malmö. They are all, in slightly different ways, the result of public acts.

When Jürgen Habermas (1962; 1989; 1992) introduced the notion of 'the bourgeois public sphere', where a dialogue could exist between different stakeholders, he contrasted it with what he called 'the representative public sphere', which he took to precede it, and which he clearly conceived as a space in which those in power were in the business of conveying to the people at large what they wanted them to think and believe in. In the ensuing discussion, a lot of other 'public spheres', such as a plebeian, a proletarian, and a feminist, public sphere, were proposed. But while these public spheres, if they exist, are historically and sociologically different from Habermas' 'bourgeois public sphere', they all seem to be conceived as involving discussion, rather than the imposition from above of the right kind of thinking. It therefore seems necessary to dissociate historical facts from structure. As observed by Sonesson & Sandin (2016: 218ffs), Habermas' 'bourgeois public sphere', and all its competitors, all embody a *spectacular function* that is *symmetrical* and *intermittent* (see Sonesson 2000), whereas Habermas' 'representative public sphere', involves an *asymmetric* and *enduring spectacular function*, similar to that at the theatre, but, of course, with more power behind the scenes. Structurally, it would therefore make more sense to distinguish between *an interactional public sphere* and a *presentative public sphere*, without imposing historical limits on them. Here we are essentially concerned with the latter.

Physically, of course, all monuments are in the public sphere, that is, they are erected in spaces open to, and customarily frequented by, the public. In the narrow sense of the term, moreover, monuments, as they have been characterized above, are manifestations of the presentative public sphere: their existence is imposed 'from above', by public authorities. When flowers, crosses, photographs and other objects are brought together on the side of the public road, to indicate that a traffic accident has occurred on this very spot, the decision to create the monument is clearly private, although the result of the act is offered to the public. In such cases, the narrative is mostly held privately, and we, as a public, are only able to understand that a traffic accident occurred to somebody to us unknown close to this spot. Although usually referring to more publicly shared events, street art is also private in this sense, even if it is not necessarily created by one individual, but possibly by a group deprived of official authority. In Sonesson (2019s), I discussed this distinction in the terms proposed by Michel de Certeau (1980), opposing *strategies*, the initiative for which is taken by official bodies, and *tactics*, attributed to individuals or groups without any official sanction. Monuments in the narrow sense are the results of strategies, in the sense of de Certeau, which are the result of decisions taken within institutions and structures of power. According to de Certeau, tactics, on the other hand, are actions which overturn the strategies by means of an ingenious way of using them. The problem with this terminology, however, is that it brings the meaning of the terms very far from that of ordinary language. The advantage of the terminology, nevertheless, is that it may help us realize that there are acts which partake of both strategies and tactics, in de Certeau's sense.

The monument to terrorist acts is a case in point. Monuments to terrorist acts will normally appear in public spaces, in fact, at the centre of central places of the country, because these are the places where terrorist acts tend to occur (in Europe, not, for instance, in Afghanistan, where targets are chosen using other criteria). There is normally not, at least at the beginning, a decision by any official body to create a monument on the spot where the terrorist act was executed (though this may happen later, as in the case of the Twin Towers). Still, it would be wrong to think of these monuments as being created at the initiative of individuals or oppositional groups, overturning, more or less ingeniously, as de Certeau suggests, the rules imposed by the powers that be. It is, of course possible that at some stage (but hardly the next day), people who were present at the event, but who survived, may return to the spot and leave some memorandum. But the creation of the monument is no doubt due to all those people who were not present, but who got to know about the event through the media and felt the need to vent their sentiments by means of some kind of physical token. Since, on such occasions, multitudes of people may feel the same need, it can hardly be denied that there is an element of social conformism in such a behaviour, whether or not there is some real empathy involved. Thanks to the media, we nowadays are faced with acts of collective memorialization that Maurice Halbwachs could not have dreamt of.

Acts of vandalism applied to statues seem to be closer to the meaning given by de Certeau to the notion of tactics. In fact, such acts could be considered tactics applied to strategies, and thus, at least minimally, as creating a kind of interactional public space. Ever since the statue of Charles X Gustav was erected on the Malmö central square in 1896, there has been a continuing criticism, voiced in newspaper articles, involving the convenience of placing a statue of the Swedish king who conquered this former part of Denmark and incorporated into Sweden in the city centre of Malmö. Nevertheless, as far as I have been able to ascertain, it has never been the subject of any publicised acts of vandalism (though I have seen objects used to delimit places of roadwork being placed on the king's head). The case of the Zlatan statue is different. The statue was inaugurated in October 2019, but it was repeatedly vandalized already in November, after it was revealed that Zlatan had invested part of his considerable fortune in a competing football club.

One such act of vandalism consisted in hanging a toilet lid on his neck. This is certainly a case of tactics, in de Certeau's sense, and even an instance of the interactional public sphere. It is a pity, however, that it involved such a petty argument.

Conclusion

In the narrow sense of the term, the monument seems to be rather clearly circumscribed: It is a physical object, situated in a space which is culturally defined as being public, being erected at the initiative of some official authority, and which refers to some event in the past (including a life span). We have seen that not all monuments have to fulfil all criteria (and we may not have explored all the alternatives: for instance, could a monument refer to the future or the present, instead of the past?). Nevertheless, in an attempt to generalize, we will suggest that the monument is always a meaning more or less rooted in space and referring to a different moment in time, and which is offered to public experience. Even though monuments may not be signs or contain signs, given a stricter strict definition of the latter term, they do seem to comply with the idea of signs as *notae*, first conceived by, among others, Hobbes and Leibniz (see Dascal 1978): the proverbial knot on the handkerchief, publicly exposed.

NOTES

1 In the sense of Section 5 below, some public spaces are more public than others.

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Göran Sonesson is Professor at the Department of Cognitive Semiotics, Lund University Sweden.

Email: Goran.sonesson@semiotik.lu.se

Questioning what remains: A semiotic approach to studying difficult monuments

Mario Panico

In Italy there is a difference between the historical experience of Fascism and what is remembered of it. In many cases, violence and repression have been interpreted as a kind of historical removal. In particular, the lack of the Nuremberg trial, as happened in Germany, allowed the traumatic memories of Mussolini's dictatorship to be banalized and made nostalgic. To understand these defects of Italian cultural memory, it may be useful to look at urban space. If urban space always speaks of something other than itself, then looking at the monumental traces of Fascism still standing in Italy allows to provide answers about the collective amnesia that has transformed Fascism into a parenthesis, as Benedetto Croce said in 1944. The main goal of this article is to investigate the mechanisms of conservation, a practice able to include new enunciations and remove old ones. In particular, through the analysis of some fascist monuments, I address four semiotic strategies of elaboration and cancellation of the past that weaken the sense of monumental representation. Specifically, I investigate the mechanisms of erasure, normalization, narcotization–latency and the construction of polyphonic memories.

Keywords Monuments, Italian Fascism, Difficult Heritage, Cultural Memory

> I spent the first twenty years of my life with Mussolini's face always in view, in the sense that his portrait was hung in every classroom, as well as in every public building or office.
>
> Italo Calvino (2003: 207)

Memory, urban space and difficult legacies

The events that a social group decides to remember inevitably pass through urban narratives. Monuments, memorials and museums play an important strategic role in the construction of social identities and hegemonic power.

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In the last few decades, various scholars in the field of semiotics of cultural memory (e.g. Mazzucchelli 2010; Sozzi 2012; Bellentani and Panico 2016; Violi 2014, 2020) and cultural studies (e.g. Nora 1989; Assmann 1999; Kattago 2009) have dealt with the investigation of the spatial mechanism that allowed a bound transmission of the past and the elaboration of future imaginaries, compromising and questioning the relationship between individual and collective memories (Halbwachs 1925, 1950).

In this regard, the key point is that through spaces of memory specific social groups can self-represent, providing us with a clear image of what they perceive as a fundamental and strategic tool of communication, not only inside their own semiosphere, but also in the extra-semiotic space outside the boundaries of culture, facing what Lotman (1990: 128-129) defined as the barbaric space of others.

In this sense, urban space is 'a silent language, sometimes unaware of its own scope of meaning' (Marrone 2013: 13, my translation) that in any case enables a relationship between the story that is told on it and the subjective existences that run through it. Given that urban space as a semiotic language speaks about something *other than itself* (Greimas 1976), we can also assume that it speaks about the culture that thought, designed, built and then experienced it. This is possible, framing theoretically the points made thus far, because space is, in the words of Lotman (1984, 1990), culture uses a modelling language to describe itself, to situate itself topologically and subsequently to position all elements present in the cultural world.

As Patrizia Violi (2014: 23) has observed, this does not mean that urban space is merely a 'material landscape made of things', a pure material expression that is dislocated from the content that corresponds to it on the basis of pre-established cultural codes. On the contrary, urban space is a multifaceted and 'organized extension of things and people that constitute the plane of their expression, giving rise to a syncretic type of semiotics' (Violi 2014: 23, my translation), in which various systems and languages must be considered when setting the objective of deciphering its meaning. To do so requires adopting a perspective that can put aside the possible ontological extensions of urban spaces, or their geographical and architectural conformations, to give a wider reference to the way in which subjects question themselves through urban space and through different and mostly various discourses, and associate themselves to specific uses, functions or practices (Violi 2014: 23, my translation). Admitting this polyphony of languages, urban space therefore allows us to speculate (i) on the modalities adopted by subjects when hierarchizing the things of the world, as well as (ii) on their ability to invert these same cultural hierarchies, forgetting certain elements or producing counter-narratives.

In the case of monuments and memorials, this is evident because, on the one hand, they propose interesting reflections on the hegemonic re-written versions of history, and on the other, they put culture in front of the problem of elaborating what happened in the past. The latter case allows us to study how a culture might have to work on a textualization that it did not actually produce, rather received from a previous generation.

What happens when the monuments under consideration relate to a traumatic past? The answer to this question is strongly tied to the notion of having to come to terms with a heritage that is already there and, from a certain moment on, that a culture has to deal with, interpret and critically re-evaluate in order to demonstrate at a national and international level that it has 'learned its lesson'. Here I consider that inherited heritage built during a dictatorship or a war in celebration of an authoritarian power. On this concern, some scholars speak about difficult heritage. This definition, which aims to be an umbrella term for 'heritage that hurts', such as 'dissonant heritage' or 'dark heritage' (see Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Sather-Wagstaff 2011; Koskinen-Koivisto 2016), was internationally legitimized for the first time in 2008 by the English anthropologist Sharon Macdonald. In her book entitled *Difficult heritage. Negotiating the Nazi past in Nuremberg and beyond* (2008) the scholar underlined the social role of buildings, monuments and urban traces as worthy of being remembered, restored and preserved due to the fact that they generate, in the culture in which they are inserted, a series of frictions, fears and diplomatic conflicts. More precisely, Macdonald wrote:

> I call 'difficult heritage' [...] a past that is recognized as meaningful in the present but that is also contested and awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity. "Difficult heritage" may also be troublesome because it threatens to break through into the present in disruptive ways, opening up social divisions, perhaps by playing into imagined, even nightmarish, futures. (Macdonald 2008: 1).

What should we do with the Nazi police headquarters in large German cities? What is the best way to convey traumatic memory without glorifying or normalizing its interpretation? What are the risks of granting these spaces the status of cultural heritage to be preserved, making them accessible to the public? Should we raze or re-functionalize the monuments erected at the behest or in honor of dictators? When a group opts for the second possibility, how can the past that belongs indexically to a space (Violi 2014) be re-semantized and critically evaluated, without feeding the myth of those who built it?

In the case of Nuremberg, the main case study considered by Macdonald, the answers to these questions find their coherence in a local and contextual point of view. The fact that Germany (both legally and culturally) had, at times, its semiotic sanction (Greimas and Courtés 1982: 267) with the Nuremberg process, should not be underestimated in a discourse on the re-functionalization of spaces. Having a year zero, a moment from which to start from scratch (actually more a complicated process of diplomatic reconciliation than a new, clear and peaceful beginning) allowed German culture to elaborate the errors of Nazism and interpret the past as traumatic, as something not to be forgotten in order to avoid the same mistakes[1]. Furthermore, it allowed Germany to divide responsibilities and share blame in urban space, proposing a clearer division of victims and perpetrators. As I said, at least institutionally, Nuremberg Trial represented a Sanction that allowed the semiotic definition of the actants within the conflict (Greimas and Courtés 1982: 5). The perpetrators of the Holocaust and of Nazi crimes were explicitly defined, as were the actant roles of its victims. This, precisely in relation to the self-representational capacity of urban space, was also made evident in the choices of heritage conservation and the representation of national faults and repentance. An example here is the headquarters of the Nazi police, the SS, in Munich, that today is a documentation center on National Socialism (*NS-Dokumentationszentrum*) focusing on the history of the city and Bavaria between the First and Second World Wars, with a particular focus on the political and social consequences of Nazism.

Sociological, anthropological and geographical literature on monuments and memorials has considered these spaces only as *tools of power* (see Sudjic 2005: 6), which convey particular messages and build identity, setting the agenda on hierarchies of values and on what can be represented or not. Macdonald (2008) problematizes this issue by adopting a different point of view, focusing less on construction than on conservation, hence maintaining a balance between past externalization and present elaboration in post-conflict situations. In doing so, the anthropologist shifts the temporal perspective and opposes the well-trod critical issue of identity constitution to the equally complex problem of the re-elaboration of one's past through what remains.

In this respect, monuments can be read as traces of an investigative cultural reflection. They constitute specific kind of signs that are installed in a culture as recognized marks (Eco 1976); they exist 'in a world of facts as a fact among facts, comes to be viewed by an addressee as the expression of a given content, either through a pre-existing and coded correlation or through the positioning of a possible correlation by its addressee' (Eco 1976: 221).

Sign production for memory and forgetting

All these theoretical premises will be tested in the context of the Italian landscape of memory. I will investigate different strategies that Italian culture adopted after the Second World War (hereafter WWII) to deal with the traumatic past. I will not assume a chronological or historical perspective. Using a semiotic perspective, I will propose different examples in order to consider various mechanisms of remembering and forgetting through urban space, from 'classical' erasure to critical preservation.

In this regard, these possibilities will be conceived – with necessarily theoretical adjustments – as modes of sign production *à la* Umberto Eco (1976: 151), which can also be interpreted as effective semiotic coping strategies that are capable of putting into urban space the forms of the elaboration of a traumatic collective past (see Mazzucchelli 2017). I firstly refer to (i) the modalities of erasure of the so-called high profile monuments connected to the two decades of Fascism in Italy; (ii) the fake neglecting of monuments in non-peripheral urban contexts; (iii) the modalities of a-historical reuse that do not consider the previous biography of the monuments; and (iv) ongoing forms of critical preservation of fascist monuments as artistic heritage, while polemically recognizing through challenging polyphonic enunciations the problematic meanings of their original design. These four possibilities do not represent simply a catalogue of interventions in post-conflict contexts, rather a literal metaphor, a sort of mirror through which is possible to reflect the emblematic memorial division of Italian culture on the themes of Fascism (see Foot 2009).

All of this bears in mind the fact that strategies of the preservation and reconstruction of monumental space always redefine the conceptual boundaries of what deserves representation, that is, visibility and memorability.

The Italian landscape of memory

The end of the WWII in 1945 produced a new spatial awareness related to what happened during the fascist *Ventennio*. Specifically, I am referring to acts of erasure, camouflage and re-writing proposed by the new-born country as forms of cultural translation that could say something more about the way in which public memories were selected, changed or removed and transmitted across generations.

The monumental traces of the fascist past in Italy, what remains of the 'environmental propaganda' (Nanni and Bellentani 2018: 390) set up under Benito Mussolini's regime, can be considered as mirrors of significance that can reflect translations of what the fascist past is and how it can still influence those social groups for which these monuments are the last living traces of a past political glory. In this sense, anticipating the case studies that follow, it is easy to understand how the monument "of the father visited upon the children" can trace a coherent reflection on the mechanism of elaboration of cultural identity. This is so precisely because 'space talks about society, it is one of the principal ways in which society portrays itself and represents itself as a meaningful reality' (Marrone 2001: 292, my translation) and – I might add – it consequently offers the coordinates for the transmission of the rewritten past in addressing the future. Furthermore, adopting a cultural semiotics perspective, I will propose through monuments certain answers about the collective amnesia that in contemporary Italy has transformed Fascism into what the Italian historian Benedetto Croce defined a 'casual parenthesis'[2] rather than twenty traumatic years of a real and cruel dictatorship.

In 2017, Professor of Italian Studies and History at New York University Ruth Ben Ghiat wrote an eloquent editorial on the *New Yorker* on the spatial legacy of fascism in the Italian urban landscape. The emblematic title of her article – *Why Are So Many Fascist Monuments*

Still Standing in Italy? – quickly became a sort of question–manifesto and a provocation on the hot topic of the urban legacy of Fascism. Ben Ghiat proposed a reasonable historical justification, saying that 'When Mussolini came to power, in 1922, he was leading a new movement in a country with a formidable cultural patrimony, and he knew that he needed a multitude of markers to imprint the fascist ideology on the landscape. Public projects, such as the *Foro Mussolini* sports complex, in Rome, were meant to rival those of the Medici and the Vatican, while the likeness of Il Duce, as Mussolini was known, watched over Italians in the form of statues, photographs in offices, posters at tram stops, and even prints on bathing suits'.

Criticized by many Italian scholars and journalists who accused the American scholar of wanting to knock down all the monuments of the fascist era, Ben Ghiat's misunderstood provocation had a strong mediatic impact that transformed the topic of the 'maintenance' of fascist monuments in Italy into an ongoing public debate about identity representation and the preservation of what some parts of society see to be the country's artistic cultural heritage.

With the aim of pushing further Ben Ghiat's question, I would propose a change of perspective on, stressing attention not on *why* there are so many fascist monuments in Italy *en plein air* without any critical connection with their own past and origin, but on *how* they are still standing.

To be more specific, I am interested in how a certain forgetfulness manifests itself in the rewriting of memory in texts. My aim is to understand how a form of forgetfulness not only creates a new collective identity, in this case that of the Italians as 'not guilty' in the post-war landscape of memory, but also serves to weave new plots, absenting the crimes committed during the war. As Lotman (1990) has often explained in his work on memory and cultural self-representation, a specific culture bases the public representation of the collective self on the consolidation of a forgetfulness. The question therefore emerges of what a culture might select to forget, of how this can occur, and of who decides which events are forgettable.

After a traumatic event, culture – like a person's mind – tends to distance itself from traumatic events, which cannot be narrated since they are too difficult to process immediately. In the same way, in a collective dimension, for its own benefit culture seeks to filter those responsibilities that are too uncomfortable for diplomatic reasons, or those that would require a huge interpretational effort, for laziness or for political motives.

What is put into practice through these actions is a process of filtering, where what is considered uncomfortable is easily removed. The removal is activated through altered textualization practices, in which the dialogue with the past changes the meaning of the past itself, providing the next generations with a different and 'lighter' version of the story, that is easier to assimilate.

Furthermore, in these pages I propose a typology of the how fascist monuments produce a solid explanation of what Italian historians called *rimozione* (Pavone 2000: 21-22; Focardi 2013: XIX), referring to the process of removal (of guilt) inherent to the interpretations and, consequently, the legacy of the traumatic fascist past. As Hanna Malone writes in her historical reconstruction of the 'process of removal' in the space of Italian cities:

> After liberation, the effects of 20 years of authoritarian rule, followed by a global war, a civil war and foreign military occupation, made it hard to implement any meaningful *agenda of defascistisation*. There was a sense that the memory of *Fascism was too divisive and best forgotten*. Plans to prosecute Fascist crimes and to purge public bureaucracy were soon abandoned on the grounds that they would destabilize the state and hinder the transition to democracy (Malone 2017: 448, my italics).

Furthermore, the revisionism that became diffuse at the end of the Cold War, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, had various implications in Italy. One of this was a crisis in anti-fascism and the empowerment of various right-wing formations, including certain fascist-leaning parties. These political problems also had cultural consequences that remain traceable in the present. I refer in particular to the development of the *Italiani Brava Gente* stereotype (Italians the good people), widespread in public speeches as well as in cinema, promoting the idea that, during colonial campaigns, Italian fascist soldiers were 'kinder' than the German Nazis. Utilizing this international image, a process of purification of history was put in place, victimizing the Italians who in turn are interpreted as being forcedly involved-by-Nazis-by-Hitler and not guilty of war (see Focardi 2013). This re-interprets the fascist period as an unintentional event, for which the Italians have no responsibility since it merely fell out of the sky. All these facts contributed to the creation of a filtered imaginary in which is easier to speak of collective amnesia than collective memory (see Dondi 2001; Malone 2017; Arthus 2010).

Different ways to erase the recognizable

In Italy, the conservation modalities of the monuments that remained after the fascist era have not been uniform. There is not coherence in the preservation and conservation practices that depends significantly on local and regional governments characterized by different sensibilities and specific needs.

In this respect, the first typology of monumental elaboration that I consider is what has been labelled 'repressive erasure' by the social anthropologist Paul Connerton (2008). This refers to actions that seek the destruction of high-profile monuments which explicitly represent symbols related to power. In *Seven types of forgetting*, which outlines the different possibilities of memory erasure at a collective level, Connerton (2008) first refers to this kind of iconoclastic action also (and specifically) against monuments. In particular he writes:

> As the condemnation of memory (*damnatio memoriae*), it was inscribed in Roman criminal and constitutional law as a punishment applied to rulers and other powerful persons who at their death or after a revolution were declared to be 'enemies of the state': images of them were destroyed, statues of them were razed to the ground, and their names were removed from inscriptions, with the explicit purpose of casting all memory of them into oblivion (Connerton 2008: 60).

In line with this trend, after the Badoglio Armistice in 1943 which declared Italy's unconditional surrender to the Allies, the Italians decided to knock down power symbols in line with what happened across the world after a period of strong political authority. Specifically, monuments representing lictor fasces or the face/body of the dictator Benito Mussolini, i.e. the recognizable signs of Fascism, were torn down. It is evident that this episode of urban anger was a sort of symbolic ritual murder of the man and the ideology embodied in the stone of the monuments. This aspect poses a semiotic question regarding the relationship between monuments and political/cultural recognition. The attacked monuments were in fact urban signs that were assimilated from society (see for example the quote by Italo Calvino at opening of this article) and linked to a stable form of code. They occupied a specific place in the cultural imaginary so specific that, at the end of the dictatorship they end up becoming sign prostheses, extensions and at the same time material metonymy of the power that built them. In other words, the fascist lictors and the versions of Mussolini's face that were knocked down suffered this fate because of their high semiotic gradient, so high that their removal not only activated what we could easily expect, that is, a powerful erasure and an expulsion from the given semiosphere, but also a focus on the act of cancellation itself.

To offer an example, we might consider the fascist lictor removed in 1943 from the hand of the woman (symbolizing Victory) in the mosaic on the façade of the *Galleria dei Legionari* in Trento, a city in northern Italy (Figure 1).

Underneath there is a quote: *Il popolo italiano ha creato col suo sangue l'impero lo feconderà col suo lavoro e lo difenderà contro chiunque con le sue armi* (The Italian people have created the empire with their blood, they will fertilize it with their work, and they will defend it against anyone with their weapons). This is a quotation by Mussolini, whose name once appeared engraved alongside the words, but this too was removed like the fascist lictor. This operation certainly indicates an overcoming of values and a change in the semiotic coordinates of culture; at the same time, the shape of the symbol in stone left there as an imprint evokes the act of erasure and produces a clear presentification of absence.

In this sense, considering the afterlife of the fascist monument and its cultural legacy, removing the *fascio littorio*, with no further explanation or justification potentially enables nostalgic and dangerous attitudes towards the removed sign. The risk of this non-critical erasure lies in allowing this footprint to reactivate, inside certain predisposed groups, forms of yearning for the past. In other words, the absent-but-visible *fascio littorio* could became the expression of a lost glory of the past, a sort of reminder that the nostalgic group can use to feed their needs and desire to restore the past. Alternatively, another possibility is that the absent sign merely becomes a form of failed *damnatio memoriae* where what is excluded is actually underlined, giving it a new emphasis and new visibility.

Figure 1: The façade of the Galleria dei Legionari in Trento – Photo courtesy of Henning Bulka

As Francesco Mazzucchelli wrote in 2017, questioning the way in which the semiosis could be interrupted: 'the destruction of the sign in its materiality does not always – or rarely, we dare say – negatively affect the propagation of its meaning, which can even survive the disappearance of material occurrence, translating and reactivating itself in other signs, and in some cases even proving to be enhanced. As all *damnatio memoriae* operations teach us – think of the forced removal of symbols at every change of political regime, revolutions, wars […] – to eliminate the 'symbols' of the political adversary does not mean to cancel their semiotic presence' (Mazzucchelli 2017:111, my translation).

A different version of the same process of depotentiation is represented by the semantic recycling of monuments. This is precisely what happened to the statue of Mussolini on horseback that from 1929 sat at the *Littoriale* football stadium in Bologna, Italy (now named *Stadio Renato Dall'Ara*). After 1943 the statue was knocked down and decapitated during a mass protest, leaving the horse without a rider. Four years later in 1947, as though an act of metaphorical spatial revenge, the horse was melted down and re-made into another monument representing a man and a woman symbolizing the partisans. The monument was erected, where it stands still today, on the roundabout of Porta Lame in Bologna (Figure 2), where during WWII the Bolognese partisans fought and won a cruel battle against the Nazis (Storchi 2013).

This kind of removal is different from the one we dealt with previously in Trento because in this case no imprint of the previous life of this space was left behind. Only photographs and memories of the *bolognesi* who frequented the stadium during the fascist period can testify to the absence of Mussolini. In this case, we are faced with the case of a semiotic weakening in which the cancellation allows the narcotization of a precise portion of the knowledge of the past without anything to explicitly presentify its absence.

Figure 2: The monument of the two partisans in Bologna – Photo by the author

Grey zones and normalization

Various scholarly works on monuments and their meanings in contemporary society open with a sentence by Robert Musil (1987: 61, my emphasis): ‘Monuments possess all sorts of qualities. The most important is somewhat contradictory: what strikes one most about monuments is that *one doesn’t notice them.* There is nothing in the world as invisible as monuments’. This sentence could be renewed and read from another perspective, starting from a question *sub specie memorialis* related to the legacy problems that this kind of indifference can produce.

A useful example that helps to dissolve any doubts in this regard can be found in the entire monumental complex of the *Foro Italico* in Rome, where still today there are mosaics on the pavement with fascist slogans such as *Molti Nemici, Molto Onore* (Many Enemies, Much Honor) or *Duce Vi Dedichiamo La Nostra Giovinezza* (Duce We Dedicate To You Our Youth), as well as an obelisk featuring, in fascist lettering, the surname of the former Italian dictator, accompanied by the Latin word *Dux* (Figure 3).

Figure 3: “Mussolini” obelisk in Rome – Photo by the author

The biography of the monument is a complex one: it was built as sport complex for the young fascists *Balilla*, after the war became a refuge for the allies and later, after years of neglect, the headquarters of the Italian Olympic Committee. The debate triggered by the former president of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Laura Boldrini – who proposed during a commemoration for the 70th anniversary of the Italian Resistance against Fascism in 2015 to erase the words *Mussolini Dux* from the obelisk – signals an interesting semiotic consideration related to different perceptions of the temporality of the monument.

If the removal could present an explicit cultural position, where the positioning of who decides to erase is explicit, here the situation is much more complex because both the monument and its creator merge in a sort of 'urban grey zone', in which the memory of what happened and that which is materialized by the monument are suspended. In particular following the observations by Mazzucchelli (2010: 304) about the liminal semantic space between 'not erasure' and 'not conservation', the *Foro Italico* declares an explicit 'incapacity for new elaboration'.

This grey zone, in which the semiotic role of the different actors interested in this urban representation are confused and overlap, efficiently represents (and not only metaphorically) the failure of memory elaboration in Italy. A comparison with the German context is inevitable: would it ever be possible to think of a monument existing still today in Germany with the name of Adolf Hitler?

Having a monumental complex in Rome where there are fascist sentences and symbols with no antifascist comments has led to its normalization, as Ruth Ben Ghiat stated during an interview in an Italian newspaper online: 'Fascist monuments are beautiful, but they remain monuments to violence, they are bloody buildings. The EUR was built in the years of the Axis, years of violence and aggression, against Jews, against anti-Fascists. In a world where the right is growing, such normalized symbolism encourages a vision of Fascism as something non-violent' (my translation).

In the contemporary context, the daily presence of the fascist symbol became a semiotic occurrence that determines a sort of repetition that allows consolidation and normalization. In this sense, the greatest risk is that the burden of the past is assimilated in a reductive way, where the uncritical preservation of the monument contributes to the standardization of the image of Benito Mussolini. Emptying the reference to the dictator of any meaning pushes the political values that characterized his life (when alive) into the background, overshadowed in favor of a pure form of expression, whereby the fascist monuments that are not re-functionalized in any way allow the creation of a system of values that 'feeds on contradictions and memorial simplifications' (Cole 2000). This kind of habit feeds new norms of remembrance, new shapes of memory that allow the creation, with a domino effect, of new memorial communities which in turn are strengthened by sharing and disseminating an imaginary that no longer exists in a strictly political sense.

Spatial narcotization and latency

Maintaining a focus on monuments in Rome, I turn to another specific modality of the re-semantization of fascist monuments, looking at the *Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana* (Figure 4). The 'monument of the monument', as Mussolini called it, was designed in 1937 by the architects Giovanni Guerrini, Ernesto Bruno La Padula and Mario Romano for various reasons: to glorify the Italian colonialist campaigns in Africa, to host the *Mostra della Civiltà Romana* on the occasion of the universal exposition E42, which was due to take place in Rome on the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the fascist regime in Italy, but never ultimately inaugurated due to the outbreak of WWII.

Without considering all the different uses of this monument after WWII, and the lengthy periods when it was abandoned, it is worth considering in detail its history from 2013 onward, when the luxury fashion brand Fendi decided to rent the space, transforming it into its new global headquarters.

Figure 4: Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana in Rome – Photo courtesy of Iuri Fiodorov

The semiotic relevance of this event is not the change in usability of the space but the fact that Fendi decided to ignore any connection to the previous life of the monument. The fashion brand decided not to change anything on the level of the expression of the monument because, paraphrasing the company's response to some criticism in this direction, this building is the symbol of ancient Roman roots that finally came back to the city (Fiorentino 2015 in Malone 2017: 458).

From a memory perspective, this statement produces what I would call a *trivialization* of the traumatic past of which the *Palazzo della Civiltà* is a contemporary witness. To understand this aspect, suffice it to focus our attention on the sentence present on the top of all four sides of what the Romans nicknamed as the *square colosseum*: *Un popolo di poeti di artisti di eroi di santi di pensatori di scienziati di navigatori di trasmigratori* (A population of poets artists heroes saints thinkers scientists navigators transmigrators). While, today, Fendi has changed the semiotic meanings of this sentence, transforming it (without altering a word) into an exaltation of made in Italy products, it was actually first pronounced by Mussolini in 1935, in a speech in which he announced the invasion of Ethiopia, during the Italian colonialist campaigns before the start of the WWII.

Following Greimas (1976), the *Enunciator* and the *Enunciatee* change, but not the utterance. From the subject of an enunciation that directed his spatial and literal message to a 'Fascist and Italian' *Enunciatee*, after Fendi's arrival, this shifts to a collective Sender, the fashion house, that through an act of re-appropriation and contemporary narcotization requalifies the sentence, nevertheless obliging the previous intentions of the monument's design. This memorial lack leads the building itself to a reconversion which, on a collective and cultural level, proposes a political weakening followed by the production of a form of amnesia.

Fendi's re-appropriation of a fascist space leaves Fascism itself in a form of encyclopedic latency[3]. Following the theory of forgetfulness and latency proposed by Umberto Eco in *From the tree to the labyrinth* (2014), the monument's references to Fascism are not erased through an explicit act of sign destruction (see Mazzucchelli 2017), but redirected in an even more misleading way, changing their narrative structure. This is therefore, once again borrowing an image proposed by Eco (2014: 88), frozen information, certainly not a definitive erasure, rather 'all the expert has to do is to take it out of the freezer and put it in the microwave to make it available once again, at least as much as is needed to understand a given context' (Eco 2014: 88). This means that, given the narcotizing action proposed by Fendi, the Mussolini monument becomes a 'tool for forgetting, or at least for rendering something latent' (Eco 2014: 89). This 'something', however, in our case has some gravity, representing a part of history that, also due to this kind of action, has often been minimized, in favor of a revisionism that has exalted its presumed positive aspects: for example, the undisputed architectural and artistic value of the monument.

By linking our reasoning to semiotic theory, we can recall an interesting passage from Eco in which he deals with the production of textual forgetfulness:

> If in a semiotics the correlation is not based on simple automatic equivalence (a=b), but on a principle of inferentiality, however elementary (if a, then b), the meaning of an expression is a potentially huge package of instructions for interpreting the expression in different contexts and drawing from it, as Peirce would have it, all the most remote inferential consequences, in other words, all its interpretants. On these bases we ought then to know in theory every possible interpretant of an expression, whereas in practice we know (or remember) only the portion that is activated by a given context (Eco 2014: 90).

Following Eco, Fendi's custody of the building, while making it understandable as something more than a monument, at the same time narcotizes its entire past biography, thus avoiding the chance to work through or challenge it. By avoiding conflict and weakening its fascist aspect, the form of narcotization that emerges does not simply put aside a portion of the building's story. What is semiotically interesting here is that the rhetoric adopted by Fendi to justify the reinvigoration of this building is essentially the same as the rhetoric that Mussolini used in this spatial mediator (Assmann 1999) which communicated his idea of fascist greatness. Fendi seems to clean up all previous interpretations, entrusting the monumental space with a new year zero, leaving its external surface unchanged, without referring to the intentions of the original design. Fendi's action, perhaps unconscious, was that of *encyclopedical mixing*, making it increasingly difficult to elaborate a form of collective guilt for what happened during the fascist colonial campaigns in Africa. By changing the dynamics of the actors, even the so-called Model Readers (Eco 1979) of the monument are no longer the same: we have passed from the 'fascist' to the 'proud Italian', generating a link between the Roman Empire and the contemporary world that does not contemplate the degree of separation represented by the fascist *Ventennio*.

As mentioned above, this re-semantization is a form of temporary and transitory forgetfulness 'a side effect, due to reasons of interpretative economy' (Eco 2014: 95). No sooner than a semiotic connection with the monument's fascist past is reactivated, this part of history, which the new translation has tried to bury, is made manifest. This happened, for example, during a student event organized by a far-right student group, *Lotta Studentesca*, which in the posters used to promote the parade used the image of the square colosseum (Malone 2017: 459); or, again, when the fashion brand Pivert, favored by the extreme-right militants of *Casa Pound* and *Forza Nuova*, chose the monument for its press campaign. Another example comes from strict politics: in 2019, Giorgia Meloni, leader of the right-wing party *Fratelli d'Italia*, decided to nominate Benito Mussolini's great-grandson Caio Giulio Cesare Mussolini for the European elections. She presented the candidate publicly through a web-video stream, where the two appeared in front of the square coliseum (see Violi 2020). All of these examples bring the meaning of monument's design back to the present, without, however, any anti-fascist counter-reflection. If in the case of

Fendi the interpretation of the monument is inclined to 'Italianness' with no consideration of the fascist violence that is textualized within it, in the case of the re-appropriations from the right or the pro-fascist culture the original design's meaning is resumed.

Polyphonic memories in the same monument

An example of how a polyphonic and anti-fascist statement can be put into space comes from Bolzano, a city in the North of Italy close to the national border with Austria. I refer to the fascist bas-relief made by the artist Hans Piffrader which was strangely located after the war, in 1957, on the former fascist headquarters in the city that today is home to several administrative institutions. The plaque represents Benito Mussolini on horseback in the middle, accompanied by the words engraved in the stone *Credere Obbedire Combattere* (Believe, Obey, Fight). In 2017, the municipality of Bolzano decided to add a large bright neon sign in white that reads, in the three languages of the city (Ladin, Italian and German), *No one has the right to obey*[4] – a quotation of the Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt (Figure 5).

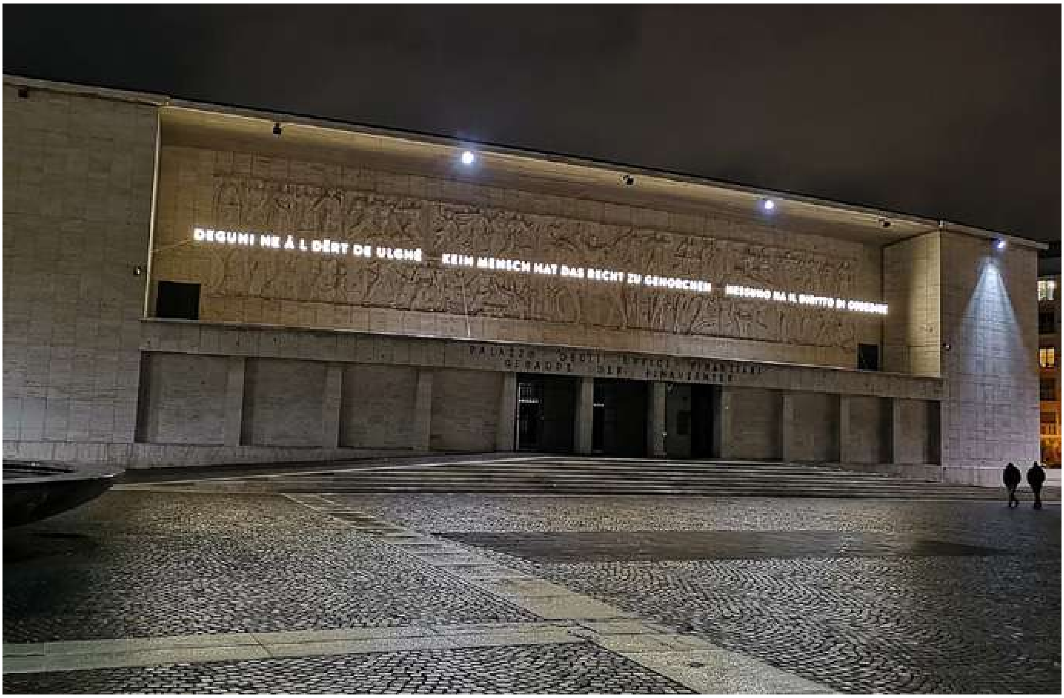

Figure 5: The bas-relief of Mussolini with the sentence by Hanna Arendt (source: @Bartleby08 via Wikipedia)

This last example opens the door to a very different reflection to those conducted so far. What was produced in Bolzano is a clear example of what scholars of memory and museum studies have called ‘critical preservation’ (see Carter and Martin 2019). Conceived and theorized with reference to the Nazi heritage of Germany, critical preservation concerns those modes of polemical elaboration of difficult heritage that aim neither to destroy nor to neutralize it, rather to create a structure of polyphonic spatial enunciation, in which the original meaning of the design (in this case a fascist one) is made to communicate with an Enunciation of opposite political tones and values, creating a sort of polemical spatial structure that is constantly under the eyes of the public.

In the Bolzano case considered, this oppositional structure is created with respect to a semantic overturning that is spatially produced through the anti-fascist conversion of the word *obey*. If in Mussolini’s bas-relief there was an exhortation to military action and obedience, Arendt’s words, which even topologically are placed ‘upon’ the former, as a rewriting and subversive stratification, focus on the denial of unconditional obedience to any hegemonic power. Following Violi’s reflection, this gesture of overlap generates the possibility of the rhetoric coexistence of competing messages: ‘that of the monument and that of Arendt’s words, thematically opposed but kept within the same frame. The effect is a polyphonic text with two voices, in which neither completely erases the other; their juxtaposition determines by contrast a further level of meaning, a stratified historical thickness’ (Violi 2020, my translation).

Those levels that articulate two perspective follow a specific narrative model that opposes each of them to an antagonist, in the sense that the semantic values that are transmitted are related to value that carry a contrastive relation. This does not neutralize rather depoliticizes it, or more precisely, defascistizes the totalitarian ideology through its democratic re-politicization. Two statements compete simultaneously in space, in a sort of ‘materic hand-to-hand’ (Violi 2020, my translation), generating a narrative conflict and feeding an articulate response to the historical gap produced in post-fascist Italy.

Conclusion: Notes on cultural silence

Another element that should not be underestimated when dealing with the translation of memories though difficult monuments is their transmission to new generations. This type of reflection allows us to link the famous concept of *postmemory* proposed by Marianne Hirsh (2012) with what in Italy can be called a generational removal of memory, which has not only produced a particular form of forgetfulness but has enabled an alternative narrative, proposed by forgetfulness, to become a cultural norm. In this sense, silence actually becomes a semiotic noise, a rhetorical tool that does not eliminate communication as it would hope to. In losing its ontological nature, by proposing an alternative communication mediator for what has been set aside in the historical narrative, silence makes what is in the latent murmur intelligible.

This imposition of silence has found a privileged channel in Italy because, as the Italian sociologist Paolo Jedlowski (2011) has written, there has never been a solid relationship between memory and justice in this country, because of an evidently different way of processing and elaborating the traumatic past. This is due to the fact that there was never a distinction made between those who could be considered perpetrators and those who were part of the antifascist faction. This lack of definition of semiotic actor-roles prevented a clear and well-defined interpretation of the past, at least at legal level.

As a consequence, the role of silence in the transmission of memory has imposed cultural amnesia, a false cultural memory, in which what is erased has become more important than what is explicitly represented. In other words, that imaginary of Italian Fascism as a light dictatorship was in part propagated in this landscape of silent memory, between unawareness and a delay in the necessary processing of the dictatorial past.

NOTES

1 I will not attempt to consider all the specificities of Nazi heritage. It is important to point out, however, that Germany is also an emblematic case because even before the Nuremberg trial, many Nazi monuments and buildings had been destroyed by the Soviet and American armies.
2 On Fascism as a parenthesis, I refer to Benedetto Croce's speech at the first CLN (*Comitato di liberazione nazionale)* in Bari, January 1944, published in Croce (1993: 61).
3 On this occasion, I borrow the concept *Encyclopedia* from Umberto Eco. The semiotician considered it as the repertoire of all textualized knowledge and all interpretations, as the entirety of the *already–said*. Using the words of Eco, the *Encyclopedia* 'is the recorded set of all interpretations, objectively conceivable as the library of libraries, where a library is also an archive of all non-verbal information recorded in some way, from rock paintings to film libraries' (Eco 1984: 109, my translation).
4 The quotation chooses for the monument is taken from interview of Arendt given to Joachim Fest in 1964, after the publication of her book on Eichmann.

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Mario Panico holds a PhD in Philosophy, Science, Cognition and Semiotics, University of Bologna, Italy.
Email: mariopanico21@gmail.com

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Stones of oblivion/stones of truth: A semiotic approach to the Valle de los Caídos and the politics of memory in contemporary Spain

Miguel Fernandez Belmonte

Adding to the few existing studies regarding the Valley of the Fallen and its significance and importance in connection to the politics of memory in contemporary Spain, the article summarizes information regarding the construction of the monument, its architecture and its role relating to the ideology of Franco's regime, also considering the recent, heated discussions on the burials and the future of the building complex. The article suggests an original analysis of the monument's iconography in order to flesh out its concrete connection to the architectural and ideological significance of the Valley of the Fallen implied in previous accounts.

Keywords Francoist Spain, Valley of the Fallen, Semiotics of Commemoration, Political Iconography

Introduction

On the 1st of April 1959 Franco inaugurated the Valley of the Fallen (Valle de los Caídos) and walked into its basilica under *palium* together with his wife Carmen Polo. Forty years later an artist painted over the tomb of the dictator with red paint, declaring he did this 'for the freedom and the reconciliation of all the Spanish people'.[1] These two acts reflect the changes in the perception of a monument in which architectural, artistic and symbolic aspects are intertwined with the histories of the workers and the people buried in the place as well as with the history and politics of memory in contemporary Spain. The complexity of the monument's history is reflected in the interpretation of its meaning that has undergone several changes.

Semiotics can contribute to the analysis of the monument not as a static assertion but as a dynamic system in which the material aspects, the cultural, social and political aspects,

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the monument's creators and the successive generations of users have contributed actively in shaping its meaning (Bellentani and Panico 2016). In doing so, we could understand and describe in a more integrated way, not the meaning that should be definitively attributed to the monument but, as Barthes put it, 'the logic according to which meanings are engendered' (Barthes 1966). We will consider a series of interconnected elements regarding the monument: the significance of the monument in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, the significance of the monument as expressed in several related decrees and Franco's discourses, the formal characteristics of the monument in connection to their symbolic values, the significance of the monument for the following generations.[2]

Religion and politics of power

On the 30th of September, the bishop of Salamanca described the civil war as a Crusade for defending religion, the country and its culture (Fusi 2001). The Spanish Catholic Church showed its unlimited support to Franco through a collective letter by the majority of bishops (only two abstained from signing), and through the distinction of Knight of the Order of Christ, offered to Franco by Pope John XIII. It was as late as 1971 that the Episcopal Assembly decided the Church should issue an apology for her non-reconciliatory role during the civil war.

Throughout Spain, monuments and plaques were built; names were given to roads that praised Franco, Primo de Rivera, founder of the *Falange*, and the nationalists who died during the civil war. This process was carried out in parallel with the consolidation as hegemonic narrative of a national-Catholic political rhetoric with an emphasis on sacrifice, heroism and martyrdom, in which the victims of God and Spain played a central role (Ferrandiz 2011).

The idea of a great reference monument rose in the rhetorical-ideological context of the Crusade for Spain and of the need to honor the memory of the dead nationalists.[3] The idea of the Crusade and the exaltation of the victory in the Spanish Civil War of the nationalists were central elements for the creation of the Valley of the Fallen. The monument constitutes an expression of the hegemonic narrative promoted by the forces in power at the time. The martyrs of God and Spain were those who managed to prevail over the dark forces that menaced the country and thus had to be remembered.

The Catholic religion was one of the ideological pillars of the Regime and in the monument the religious faith is indissolubly connected with the politics of power. The first time Franco spoke publicly about the Valley of the Fallen was on June 3, 1939, 'Our monument to the Victory will not be another monument … it will be a place that will have a church that will have a monastery and barracks …' (Lafuente 2002). In the Decree of April 1, 1940, which inaugurated the construction works, he stated that 'it is necessary for the stones that will be built to have the magnificence of the ancient monuments, to resist time and oblivion, and to become a place of meditation and tranquility in which the future generations will admire those who inherited them a better Spain'. (Decreto de Presidencia de Gobierno, 1 April 1940). The monument is defined in the same decree as 'an eternal place of pilgrimage in which the greatness of nature gives a dignified background to the field where the heroes and martyrs of the Crusade reside'.

On August 23, 1957, the Foundation of the Sacred Cross of the Valley of the Dead was founded with a decree in which the monument was described as a place of prayer and research, as required by 'the religious belief in our Lady, the deep catholic meaning of the Crusade and the social orientation of the new state born after the Victory'. The decree also mentions that the monument regards all the fallen of the war in an attempt to redefine it as a place of reconciliation.

The guide of 1959 from Patrimonio Nacional (public agency responsible for state goods from the Spanish kingdom), refers that 'The Monument to the Fallen for Spain, an idea conceived during the Crusade, must be appreciated by all the Spanish as a token of memory to those who, in defending such a pure ideal, offered unselfishly the greatest and richest property of man: Life'. (Patrimonio Nacional, Guía turística de Sta. Cruz del Valle de los Caídos, Barcelona, 1959, 6-7). At the inauguration on April 1 1959, the day that commemorate Franco's victory in the civil war, the dictator remarked: 'Our war, obviously, was not a civil conflict, but a true Crusade [...] Our country had never before witnessed such great examples of heroism and holiness in so little time'.[4]

Formal characteristics and symbolic value

The Monument is located in Cuelgamuros, overlooking the mountains of Guadarrama and very close to El Escorial. El Escorial, a monastery, palace, library and pantheon of the Spanish kings, is a building complex linked to the rule of the Spanish Empire of Philip the Second, a great defender and supporter of the Anti-Reformation. It was therefore an important part of the glorious past with which the dictatorship sought to be perceived as its natural successor in the defense of Spain and the universal faith (Bonet Correa 1981).

This ideal relates to the choice of the place for the Valley of the Fallen and its magnificent scale with a large square of thirty thousand six hundred square meters, a gigantic church of two hundred and seventy meters long, dug in the rock with a maximum height of twenty-two meters, crypts, a huge cross, the Benedictine monastery and the access road.

The original design was the work of architect Pedro Muguruza, but when he died in 1950, Diego Mendez took over and made several changes, such as at the height of the church that was doubled. Méndez named the monument in the 1959 guide as 'pre-determined to glorify the memory of those who died for their Homeland'. The works of the Valley of the Fallen, whose architecture and artistic features were alien to the ongoing artistic and architectural renewal in Spain, were characterized by their eclecticism and their monumental scale.

The cross, reaching 150 meters high, was one of the most demanding elements of the project. In spite of a competition with twenty drafts in 1950, the commission was offered by Franco directly to Méndez. The architect described the difficulty of the architectural construction of the cross as bigger than that of the Cheops pyramid, and mentioned it was a landmark with which not even recent buildings, such as the Empire State Building, could be compared to (Patrimonio Nacional, 1959). The transition from the base of the cross to the mountain is achieved through a set of huge sculptures by Juan de Ávalos, the main sculptor of the Valley of the Fallen[5]. These are the Evangelists[6] and above them, the Cardinal Virtues.

> Juan de Ávalos reached the maximum to which the sculpture, claiming to represent the orthodoxy of the Regime, could aspire: technical skill, security in sculptural work, figurative expression of loneliness, intimacy and individuality; mastery in rectilinear forms and majesty in the big blocks, characteristics that made Juan de Ávalos the ideal sculptor to work the stone that in the Valley of the Fallen would be destined to commemorate the grandiosity of Franco's life and work and constitutes a palpable sample of the culture imposed by the victors (Bonet Correa 1981).

All the artistic elements of the Valley of the Fallen were not intended for the production of an autonomous aesthetic pleasure but were strongly integrated into a symbolic discourse fed by Christian Catholic iconography and related to a political dimension (as seen in its connection with the values of sacrifice and martyrdom of those who fought for Spain).There are three main architectural elements that determine the symbolic value of the monument besides the importance of the chosen place for its construction and its scale: the square, the cross and the basilica/crypt.

The cross is the affirmation of the Faith, based on the Gospels. The Salvation that the Faith promises can be achieved through the Cardinal Virtues (prudence, fortitude, temperance, justice). Notably, there is no direct representation of the Theological Virtues (faith, hope and charity). The Cardinal Virtues iconography was broadly used in funerary monuments from the 15th century onwards as an allegory associated to the goodness of the deceased, and represented independently from the Vices to which were connected in previous centuries (Olivares Martínez 2017).

In the case of the monument of the Valley of the Fallen there are some elements that follow traditional iconography. The representation of Fortitude treading on a dragon (the triumph of the soul over sin), Temperance holding a bit, Justice holding a sword, Prudence holding a snake all refer to traditional elements of Catholic iconography (Réau 1959) (Luis Monreal y Tejada 2000) (Ordax 2007). Nevertheless, there are variations. The most obvious iconographic difference is the fact that the Virtues are represented by male and not by feminine figures, since Franco had estimated that 'women do not usually represent these virtues' (Sueiro 1976).

In the case of the Prudence, the statue holds a stone in his hand instead of the traditional mirror. Justice, who is not blindfolded, holds a tablet in his left hand, instead of a balance or a set of scales, with the round edge alluding to the Tablets of the Law. What seems to be emphasized is the actual application of the Law of God and not the process of divine or worldly judgment.

Above the entrance of the basilica there is an enormous Pieta. The theme of the Pieta belongs to the iconography of the Lamentation of Christ. After the Counter-Reformation, the Virgin offers her Son in sacrifice as a prelude of the institution of the Mass, without the sorrow reflected as in previous representations of the theme in the Middle Ages. After the 17th century the pain of the Virgin becomes a lamentation to God for the sacrifice of the Son (Réau 1957). In the case of the Pieta in the Valley of the Fallen a first version, more in tune with the Counter-Reformation iconography, was dismissed in favor of a version closer to Michelangelo's Pietá. The Virgin holding the dead body of Christ reflects the human sorrow and acts as an intermediary between the divine and the mundane.

Therefore, we may suggest that the conceptual and visual axis of the main view of the Monument is articulated from the mundane level of the believers to the dual nature of Christ embraced by the intermediate figure of the Virgin to the exaltation of the Faith based on the Evangels which Salvation is achieved through the Cardinal Virtues. Symmetrically, the basilica/crypt is where the believers are conducted from the terrene level to the sacred, approaching the sacred divinity in a linear course of perfection that also finds its spatial parallel in the orientation of the church towards the apse.

In the basilica's interior there are along the nave six chapels dedicated to the Virgin as Patron of the Army and related to different important moments of the History of Spain (Inmaculada Concepción, Nuestra Señora del Carmen, Nuestra Señora de Loreto, Nuestra Señora de África, Nuestra Señora de la Merced, Nuestra Señora del Pilar).[7] In each chapel there are two sculptures of the Apostles so to be completed the twelve.

When approaching the crossing from the nave there are eight sculptures that represent the fallen during the war (on land, sea and air, plus the volunteers). At the sides of the crossing there are the chapel of the Sepulchre and the chapel of the Most Holy. Is in these chapels and in the ones along the nave that are buried the fallen. At the center of the crossing there is the crucified Christ and around the main altar there are the sculptures of the archangels San Raphael, San Michel, San Gabriel and San Uriel. The last one, according to apocryphal texts[8], is who at the commandment of God gives soul and spirit to the dead at the day of the judgement. In front of the altar is placed the tomb of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, founder of the Falange and in the opposite side was placed the tomb of Francisco Franco.

We may suggest that, considering the above-mentioned iconographical aspects, the Fallen constitute the paradigm of the Christians that followed the Cardinal Virtues in order to achieve

Salvation and that with strength and resolution applied the Law of God. They actively fought as soldiers and Christians for Spain and God. The most exemplary Fallen in this scheme will be those nearer to the main altar, that is Primo de Ribera and Franco.

The third main architectural element of the monument is the main square in front of the basilica's entrance, an enormous empty space, the meaning of which becomes activated when addressing the Spanish people, not as single individuals, not as mere observers or visitors, but as a unified crowd (Bonet Correa 1981). This is a crucial element in the overall semiotics of the monument. Only a crowd, where it would not be possible to single out differences which may suggest diversity, can fill the square. The role of the crowd as seen during the inauguration of the monument is intended to be to honor the fallen, to remember their sacrifice and to continue to be alert for the defense of the homeland.

Franco's dictatorial regime failed to translate its ideology into a particular artistic and architectural style. Eclecticism, references to Herrera and Villanueva's architecture, and the absence of clear guides from the Architecture General Directorate headed by Muguruza, were characteristic of the lukewarm and confused architecture of the regime (Bonet Correa 1981). One of the few conscious attempts, and perhaps the only accomplished one, to translate into a specific formal language the ideals that sustained the foundational act of the Regime (the victory at the Spanish Civil War) is the monument of the Valley of the Fallen, with the monumentality of its architecture, its connection to the mountain (forming a solid unity with it) as well as the iconography and scale of its sculptures.

The burials

Franco and his wife, Carmen Polo, inaugurated the Monument of the Valley of the Fallen on the commemoration day of the victory of the dictator in the civil war. They crossed the church, that had been dug into the rock partly by workers chosen among the defeated in the war, political prisoners who died prematurely due to hard labor (Sueiro 1976), while the national anthem sounded from the organ. Beneath the floor, a few meters apart, in absolute silence, witnessing this ceremony of power and triumph, lay thousands of corpses.

In 1958 the possibility of burial in the Valley of the Fallen was offered without discrimination, on the sole condition that those who will be buried had to be Spanish, Catholic and their relatives would approve their burial (Ferrandiz 2011). According to the official records available by the monastery's Benedictine monks, it is estimated that there are approximately thirty-three thousand eight hundred forty-seven dead bodies in the Valley that were buried there from March 17, 1959 until June 3, 1983 (Ferrandiz 2011). Among them there are also many democrats who were transferred from shared pits without the approval of their relatives, though their exact number cannot be verified.

On March 31, 1959, the corpse of the founder of the Falange, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, was transferred to the place and on November 23, 1975, Franco, whose tomb was placed in a dominant position next to the altar of the church. Following the general amnesty of 1977 for any incident and crime of political feasibility that took place between July 18, 1936 and December 15, 1976, and with the successor appointed by Franco, King Juan Carlos I, Spain entered in the period know as Transition and with the 1978 constitution were laid the foundations of a democratic regime in the form of a reigning parliamentary democracy.

However, the families of the thousands buried without identification throughout Spain, the defeated of the civil war, waited for justice and claimed the memory of their relatives through forming associations and voicing their truth. In 2000, the Association for the Restoration of Historical Memory was established and in 2007 the Law of Historical Memory was adopted, and was opposed by the People's Party and the Democratic Left of Catalonia because no measure was included to cancel the trials conducted during Franco's dictatorship.

In addition to war reparations, access to relevant records, the withdrawal of street names, statues and other elements that exalted Franco's status, among other issues, the law established an exhumation protocol, provided the publication of an online national map with the common pits, but determined that the costs of locating common pits, exhumation and identification tasks will be borne by individuals.[9]

The law states that 'It is not the role of the legislator to impose a specific collective memory. But it is the duty of the legislator and a commitment to the law, to compensate the victims, to dedicate and protect, with the highest normal power, the right to personal and family memory as an expression of a full democratic state' (Ley de Memoria Histórica, 2007). Regarding the Valley of the Fallen, the monument is a special case in law since it is excluded from the general framework for exhumations and follows the general regulation of public cemeteries and places of worship.

In the crypts (six in the central temple with three levels of storage and two in the transverse with five levels) many bones were placed in wooden boxes with the names and surnames of the dead, or simply their place of origin. The current state of maintenance adds difficulties to the identification works since many boxes have been broken and bones are mixed and also due to the lack of data and the inaccuracies of the documents with the number of deaths. The question of the comprehensive identification of the corpses remains unsolved.

The different memories

While the formal aspects of the monument are the expression of a specific ideology connected with the elites in power during Franco's dictatorship, the actual monument gives rise to several different reactions and interpretations regarding its meaning and significance. The changes in Spanish society under Franco´s regime and during the Spanish Transition led to significant transformations regarding the perception of the Valley of the Fallen. The commemoration of the day of the Victory, indissolubly linked to the Monument, was transformed into the Day of the Army, established definitively in 1977 on a different date (Aguilar Fernández 1996).

In the same year, general amnesty was declared and the Spanish Communist Party was legalized and phrases like the Crusade, the Victory, and Our War ceased to be used by the government to refer to the Spanish Civil War. Instead of *collective memory* regarding the monument, the right to personal and family memory was recognized in the Law of Historical Memory (2007).

Those who still admire and want to honor Franco place flowers on his tomb (until recently at the monument), as his relatives, members of the Franco Foundation and neo-phalangists, experienced and understood the monument in a diametrically different way than the families who still search for their relatives buried without their consent in the crypt (this absence of consent is extended also to some cases of soldiers who fought for Franco).

The opinions of the workers[10] that built it also differ regarding their personal experiences as they have been recorded by Sueiro in 1976 and studied later by Moreno Garrido. On the website of the church's monument we read that in the founding documents of the Valley of the Fallen:

> [...] the emphasis is directly placed on the religious, social and cultural purposes in the service of the pending work of the agreement and the justice among the Spanish people, and to serve as a memorial and burial dyke for all the victims.

There is an important distinction between the fallen and the victims. The name of the monument uses the term Fallen, connected it to the political ideology of the Victory and the Crusade. The term victim, as seen in the website of the church's monument, has been used in recent times not only to refer to the losers of the war but also to the winners.[11]

The historian Julio Aróstegui, who between 2004 and 2013 directed the Historical Memory Chair at the Complutense University in Madrid, denied that the relationship between memory and history is exclusive and analyzed the generational memories of the civil war. He established three main generational memories: of identification and confrontation (imposed in the postwar period to erase republican memory), of oblivion or reconciliation (of the children of those who lived through the war, overcoming collective trauma and producing the narrative of the Transition), of reparation or restitution (of the grandchildren who recovered the memory of the defeated and of the victims of Francoism) (Viñas and Blanco 2017).

Besides, we have what Garrido defined as 'media memory' that comprehends a series of aspects of the representation of the past in the media and through the media that are interrelated with collective memory. In the specific case of the monument of the Valley of the

Fallen, she analyzed how the media discourse is articulated by referring to different conceptual frames that exist as cultural pre-configurations: the monument as a place of manipulated memory, as a place of erased memory, as a place of contested memory, as a place of persecution, as a religious place (Garrido 2016).

We could go even further by considering all associations that a viewer could establish before the monument as fundamentally subjective and therefore, and the process of giving meaning as open to endless interpretations (Bal and Bryson 1991). But are they really 'endless' or basically conflicting and dynamic?

The role and personal implication of the dictator in the monument have been well documented (as in Aguilar Fernández 1996 and Sueiro 1976), but it would be difficult to consider that the monument 'belongs' exclusively to Franco. We have to consider as well that the purpose for the construction of the building, the ideals that it expressed, did not only belong to the dictator or to a religious and political elite, but were assumed partly or at least not contested by a considerable part of the Spanish society. When in 2018 the government of Pedro Sánchez announced its intention to carry out the exhumation of Franco from the Valley of the Fallen affluence to the monument increased dramatically. For Fernando Ferrandiz, an expert on the civil war and central investigator of the program for memory policies in modern Spain depending on the Ministry of Science and Innovation, the exhumation, that occurred on October 24, 2019, was necessary in order to begin the 'democratization' of the monument and to abolish the hierarchy of victims which conferred in the monument a leading role to Franco and Primo de Rivera (Ferrandiz 2014). Ferrandiz noted that it is impossible to change the meaning of the monument, a unique example in Europe of exaltation of a dictator on such a scale, and to transform it into a reconciliation monument. He underlined the necessity of a center or museum that will explain to visitors what was Franco's dictatorship and how the monument was constructed (Ferrandiz 2018). At present, the government has refrained from launching such a solution, and the status of the monument remains the same: It is classified as a cemetery.

Conclusions

The cultural, ideological, artistic, architectural, political and social aspects related to the Monument of the Valley of the Fallen do not convey any unique pattern of intention or singular discourse. Rather than an open work, that assumes the task of giving us an image of discontinuity, *being* it and not *narrating* it, as Umberto Eco would put it (Eco 1989), the Monument of the Valley of the Fallen transmitted a specific narrative at a certain time which has been reinterpreted along with broader cultural and political changes.

The visitor, the familiar visitor, the winner, the loser, the victim, the fallen, the worker, the children of the workers, the notion of generation in confrontation with the history of contemporary Spain, constitute some of the different ways to experience the monument but also to construct different narratives regarding its meaning.

This is why it is not possible to define the monument in an unequivocal sense. Is it a public cemetery? Is it only a dictator's mausoleum? Is it the assertation of the foundational ideology of the Franco's regime? Could it be a monument for the reconciliation? Is it a religious monument? Is it a regressive attempt to recall the past glory of Spain in its dialogue with the near Monastery-Palace-Kings' Burial of El Escorial? Is it a place to be forgotten so as to 'bury' the profound wounds opened in Spanish society by civil war? Is it a place of remembrance of the injustices and crimes committed during the civil war? Is it a touristic attraction?

The Monument of the Fallen could be approached as the sum of all the perceptions of its significance that are still being confronted in contemporary Spain. Efforts to impose certain narratives upon its specific architectural and artistic form still exist and coexist. Architecture and art produce and define meaning from their conception to their multiple interactions with the cultural subjects. We could therefore approach the monument of the Valley of the Fallen mainly as an attempt to transmit, through specific architectural and artistic forms, the values defended and promoted by the ideology of Franco's regime. In this political context, we believe the specific iconographical aspects of the exterior of the monument and of the basilica's interior call for further study.

NOTES

1 Juan Diego Quesada: 'Un artista pinta una paloma en la tumba de Franco…'. *El País*, 31-10-2018.

2 Its contents were presented partly at the symposium *Political monuments of the 20th and 21st century: Memory, Form, Meaning*, hold in Thessaloniki 30th November-1st December 2018, organized by the Association of Greek Art Historians in collaboration with the Interuniversity Postgraduate Programme in Museology.

3 A precedent existed in the project of Luis Moya of 1937 published in September 1940 in the magazine *Vértice* 'Sueño arquitectonico para una exaltación nacional' (Architectural Dream for a National Elevation) in: Bonet Correa, A. (coord.) 181. *Arte del franquismo*.

4 A summary of the references to the Valley on the Fallen in related decrees can be found in Aguilar Fernández, P. 1996. *Memoria y olvido de la Guerra Civil española*. Madrid: Alianza and in Moreno Garrido, B. 2010. El Valle de lo Caídos: una nueva aproximación. *Revista de Historia Actual*. Vol.8.

5 There were also other sculptors and artists who worked on the various works in the church such as Carlos Ferreira, Luis Antonio Sanguino, Antonio Marin, Ramón Mateu, Ramón Lapayese, Beovide.

6 Franco rejected a Saint John with a beard and Ávalos did it again, and Franco had rejected the original sculpture of Pieta over the entrance of the church (Sueiro 1976).
7 Detailed information regarding the interior of the Basilica can be found at the Abadía de la Santa Cruz of the Valley of the Fallen webpage
http://www.valledeloscaidos.es/monumento/paso
8 'The Apocalypse of Peter' In *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Translation and notes by M.R. James 1924. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
9 The exhumations regard the democrats because, starting in 1942, the Franco government was able to identify and bury the deaths of the national army.
10 It is not possible to know exactly how many prisoners and workers have worked in the works. Isaías Lafuente calculates an average of 400 to 500 men while Raymond Carr and Juan Carlos Fusi give a total of 20,000 men.
11 This approach can be related to recent publications, as those of Stanley G. Payne, that assume an 'objective' distance far from biased points of view and considers that the left forces had more responsibility in the beginning of the civil war (Viñas and Blanco 2017).

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Miguel Fernandez Belmonte is an art historian and museologist who teaches at the University of Thessaly.

Email: info@mfbelmonte.art

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Story of a counter monument: Doris Salcedo's *Fragmentos* in Bogotá

Patrizia Violi

This paper aims to discuss the controversial notion of 'counter monument', often used in different ways not always consistent with each other. In order to overcome this difficulty, counter monumentalization is defined as a practice that can assume various forms. The first part of the paper identifies two types of counter monuments. The second part analyses Fragmentos by Doris Salcedo, a counter monument recently realized in Bogota, to remember the terrible and long-lasting war in Colombia.

Keywords Counter monuments, re-semantization, memory, Colombia, Doris Salcedo

Two types of counter monuments

Since the seminal paper by James Young (1992), the category of counter monuments has been used in different ways not always consistent with each other. The category is yet not clearly defined and can refer to quite different artifacts and practices. The prefix counter- alludes to a polemic dimension and an opposition to other monumental forms, but it is not always clear to what a counter monument is opposed. I suggest there are two types of counter monuments (Violi 2019).

The first is a practice rather than a monumental artefact. It consists in the re-semantization of an already existing monument which carries a bygone value system currently perceived as unacceptable by the community to which it belongs. This is the case of the *difficult heritage* (Macdonald 2009) of Nazism in Germany, Fascism in Italy, Francoism in Spain and more recently of Communism in the former Soviet Union. In these cases, monuments erected during the regime represent values that not only are not shared by the community anymore but are also perceived as controversial and potentially dangerous. Two are the options to neutralize

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their past meaning: destruction of the monument or the re-semantization of its meanings which can assume many different forms: for example, monuments in prominent locations can be relocated in less relevant areas of the city, as it happened in Budapest with the statues erected during the Socialist period; otherwise, monuments can be used in ways that are different from the original, as analyzed by Mario Panico (2018) in relation to the Monument to the Red Army in the city center of Sofia.

The second type of counter-monumentalization refers to newly erected monuments opposing the classical, traditional rhetoric of monumentalization. This is the case, for example, of most of the memorials for the victims of the Shoah all over in Europe and especially in Germany. After the Second World War, it was felt impossible to reproduce the classical monumental style that was used to celebrate traditional figures such as kings and generals, saints and poets. A completely new style was necessary to remember the unthinkable tragedy of the Jewish Holocaust. Therefore, different forms of counter-monuments were created to radically oppose the rhetoric of monuments and memorials used until the Second World War.

Classical monuments generally present realistic representations and are made to be seen and to last in time and. Thus, three seem to be the main features of classical monuments: i. figurative forms, ii. visibility, iii. durability in time. These are the features that are deconstructed in newly erected counter monuments. First counter monuments often present non-realistic representations affecting their forms and dimensions, as for example in the *Stolpersteine* (in English *stumbling block*) by the German artist Gunter Demnig. Second, they call into question the durability (and therefore the visibility) of their forms. Many counter-monuments are monuments made not to last forever, monuments that will disappear with time going on. They are only temporary artefacts symbolizing the vanishing of memory itself: for example, the *Monument Against Fascism, War, and Violence-and for Peace and Human Rights* by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, that stood in Hamburg, Germany from 1986 to 1993; the sunken *Aschrottbrunnen* fountain by Horst Hoheisel in Kessel, Germany (1985). More recently an extraordinary example of a work that will disappear in due time is the vast and fading frieze *Triumphs & Laments* by William Kentridge along the river Tiber in Rome.

Notably, the two types of counter monuments here described are not exhaustive: the kinds and styles of counter monumentalization practices can be many and they do not prefigurate an established and pre-fixed format.

An analysis of *Fragmentos* by Doris Salcedo

This section analyses a very interesting and particular form of counter-monument: *Fragmentos*, a walking-through installation by the Colombian artist Doris Salcedo. It was erected in December 2019 in Bogotá, Colombia. The installation can in full right be considered as a counter monument: the artist herself defined it as such. Before analysis, a brief historical context is needed.

The historical context of the Colombian civil war

The history of Colombia from the mid-20th century to today today has been characterized by violence and terror and it is one of the most tragic and dramatic of the whole Latin American continent. The starting point of violence is considered to be the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán on 9 April 1948. Gaitán was the candidate of the Liberal Party to the 1950 national elections. He was enormously popular for his democratic and social positions as well as for his radical opposition to the corrupted government in charge. After his assassination, the so-called *Bogotazo* broke out in Bogotá, many days of rioting during which some 3,000 people were killed. (Alape 1983; Gonzalo Sánchez 1983).

Since then, a civil war named *La Violencia* was fought by many different actors supporting different forces. Starting from the mid-60's, various revolutionary and guerrilla movements such as the FARC *(Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia)* and the ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) started an armed struggle against the government and the regular military forces. Two other actors had major role in this conflict: the narco-terrorists and the paramilitary organizations of the extreme right, allied with the regular military force, that were responsible for the 80% of the people killed over the five decades of civil war.

Since 2012 various attempts to reach a peace agreement have been done. After long and complex negotiations, on 24 November 2016 the President Juan Manuel Santos signed with FARC a peace agreement according to which FARC's guerrilla groups should surrender their weapons to the United Nations (UN).

Commemorating the Colombian conflict: Towards Fragmentos

One article of the 2016 peace agreement stated that, as mandatory part of the agreement itself, three monuments will be realized to commemorate the achieved peace: the first in Bogotá, the second at the headquarters of the UN in New York, and a third one in Havana where the negotiation meetings took place.

Notably, the pace agreement stated that the monument in Bogota had to be constructed using the weapons surrendered by the over 13,000 members of FARC forces: 8994 weapons were surrendered to the UN and later used as materials to build the Doris Salcedo's monument, as an information plaque at its site explains. At the moment of writing, only the Bogotá monument was realized. The one in New York is still a work in progress and there is no precise news about the monument in Havana.

Doris Salcedo, the world-famous Colombian artist, won the competition for the realization of the Bogotá monument in October 2019. The artist set two conditions for its construction: first, the monument should not be a monument dedicated to peace but to the victims of the conflict: she explicitly referred to is as a *counter monument for victims* and not *for peace;* second, the monument should be located in the city center of Bogotá.

Both these conditions are highly relevant: refusing the common rhetoric of peace, Salcedo wanted to dedicate her work to the victims and especially – as we will see – to women victims. Despite the 2016 peace agreement, Colombia is still far from being a pacified country, while thousands of victims still remain without compensation or recognition. The location also has a precise function: *Barrio Santa Barbara*, in Bogotá's old colonial downtown, about one kilometer from Bolivar Square – the main square of the city surrounded by historical buildings such as the Palace of Justice and the National Capitol. This central location underlines the relevance that the victims should deserve in today's Colombian public life, while reasserting the centrality of the recent tragic events of the Colombian civil war.

Turning ruins into a counter monument

The only free location in the area was a small, dismissed site with abandoned ruins of an old colonial house form the 16th Century. In the 50's, the house was owned by Secundino Navarro, a wealthy man who died in 1962 without leaving heirs. The house thus became propriety of the Colombian state, that however did not use it for any specific purpose. Without proper maintenance, the whole building slowly deteriorated and eventually collapsed, creating a shelter for homeless people and drug abusers. In the 90's, the ruined area was turned into a dump for construction materials used to build surrounding buildings.

While working on the plan for *Fragmentos*, Doris Salcedo faced the issue of how to deal with the ruins of the old house. Two options were possible: completely excise the ruins or integrate the broken walls and what was left of the house into the monument plan. The latter was chosen as a planning practice consistent with the very idea of memory and its preservation. The ruins of the house added a peculiar and very powerful meaning to the counter monument itself: the ruins of a far past were connected to the more recent destructions of the civil war producing a never-ending feeling of trauma. The monument itself is a ruin, as it is the life of the victims and in turn that of the whole Colombia.

The space of Fragmentos

Beside the ruins, what does the counter monument consist of? The question has not an easy nor obvious answer: it is difficult to understand at a first sight what the monument is here and even *where* the monument is. When visitors reach its location, they firstly see the title *Fragmentos* written on an external wall close to the entrance door.

Once crossed the door, there is a small courtyard including some of the old house's ruined walls, plants and a path leading to the entrance of a long corridor (Figure 1). The corridor is made on its right end side of glass windows opening on the ruins: from them the visitors can see the rest of the old house (Figure 2), that can be also accessed from here.

The corridor is empty, its floor is made of large roughly-worked, corrugated and non-uniform metal tiles (Figure 3).

Figure 1: The main corridor of *Fragmentos*.

Fragmentos is organized around this long corridor that constitutes the spinal bone of the structure: it opens to three rooms, two of them used as exhibition spaces, and to the outside where the remains of the old house stood. Overall, the space is not immediately readable as a monument and the emotions of the visitors are encumbered by confusion as the visit goes on. The ruins play a major role, at least as a first impression: they interact with the corridor giving the misleading idea that the ruins themselves are the monument and the corridor is built to better admire the view on them. A tension is created between the old ruins and the modern space of the new corridor, installing a first isotopy of temporality.

The two rooms at the beginning and at the end of the main corridor are used for temporary exhibitions. Temporary exhibitions - selected through public competition by an international committee - are open for six months; after that time the whole space is left empty for the following six months, before other exhibitions are open.

Figure 2: The ruins of the old house from the glass window.

When there are no temporary exhibitions, the whole space of the counter monument remains completely empty and the two empty rooms increase the feeling of uncertainty about what the monument is about and even *where* the monument is. Visitors will understand the original meaning of the counter monument only watching a long explanatory video made by Salcedo herself, broadcasted in a screen in the third room located in the middle of the corridor. The video explains the story of the monument, why it commemorates victims rather than peace and why it is to be considered a counter monument.

Building Fragmentos

Fragmentos was materially realized by the performative action of 17 women – whose names are written on a poster in the first exhibition room – victims of sexual violence and abuse from the various armed groups fighting the Colombian civil war. Salcedo melted the metal of 37 tons of weapons surrendered by the FARC and made metal thin sheets out of them. She then asked the 17 women to give form to the metal sheets using hammers: they did so for several days as to give voice to their anger and to express their feelings, signifying at the same time the symbolic end of the power relation imposed over them by the violence of weapons. As Salcedo explains in a poster at the site, this is the first time in history that a peace agreement allows victims of sexual violence to voice their pain and suffering through an action that aims to build a space commemorating the end of the conflict, taking an active part in its construction.

Figure 3: The floor of *Fragmentos* made of non-uniform metal tiles.

Only after watching the video, the visitors realize that the counter monument actually consists in the corrugated metal floor on which they were walking. Of course, there is more than this: in that floor the suffering and the anger of the women is objectivized and made concrete. We may say that in that floor feelings became matter. In each corrugation and fold of the iron can be seen the inflicted wound, the later suffering, the despair as well as the outburst of the reaction, the liberation of the victims' anger. Therefore, the floor is the material, visible result of a performative action which is at the same time a very complex narrative.

A narrative semiotic analysis of *Fragmentos*

From the point of view of semiotic aspectuality, i.e. the point of view on the action, (Greimas and Courtés 1979: 12-16), *Fragmentos* is the terminative state of a performative action happened before. This action needs to be explained and understood to reconstruct the meaning of the counter monument. As the final phases of a complex narrative, the floor presupposes and activates, with its very presence, all the previous phases of the narrative: from sexual violence on women to their angry reaction and response.

Salcedo's work is a counter monument in many different ways. First because it is a counter narrative that opposes the classical, dominant narratives of war as well as of peace, that are too often part of official treaties and peace talks among politicians and government men. *Fragmentos* tells the visitor a different story that was rarely narrated before: a story of women victims, often marginalized in the dominant narratives of men that constitute the official historical narrative. It also does something more and more relevant: it activates a real transformation of women from objects to subjects, from a passive position to an active one. Through the performative action of hammering metal sheets women are no more passive victims but active creators of a work of art.

In the perspective of narrative semiotics, the transformation can be described both at the thematic and at the actantial level. The thematic role is changed from *victim* – somebody who is *subject to* an act of violence – to *creator* – somebody who is *subject of* an action. Beside the change of the thematic role, something very peculiar occurs at the level of actantial roles: if women as victims occupied the role of *Object*, now they acquire the role of *Subject*, as well as the one of *Addresser* with the power and the authority to sanction the story and establishing the overall value system (Greimas and Courtés 1979: 80-81, 226-227, 282, 333-335). As such, *Fragmentos* becomes a symbolic sanction of the whole Colombian civil war. A sanction that only women can pronounce and that it is made by using the very same material substance of the instruments of men's violence.

Fragmentos is a counter monument made to last in time. Differently from other counter monuments, it is not planned to disappear. Durability in time – one of the features that often counter monuments deconstruct – is not questioned here. Rather, its visibility is a trickier issue: *Fragmentos* is visible, but at the same time it consciously plays with a certain level of invisibility. Who among visitors would think that the monument is the metal floor on which they are walking? What is immediately visible – the ruins – is not the core component of the counter monument. The content of the counter monument is grasped in the process of visiting it and specifically after being informed by the video. Its meaning is thus resulting from a progressive discovery, rather than from a punctual encounter that can be caught without knowing the full story that lies behind. *Fragmentos* is thus *not recognizable* as a monument, rather than *not visible* as such.

Fragmentos is a highly abstract and conceptual work, without any mimetic or figurative form of representation. Nothing is openly said about war and violence. Its main rhetorical device consists in a deep overturning of the form and function of weapons, the matter of which the counter monument is made of: weapons stop being instruments of death to become an anonymous and insignificant surface to walk on, something the visitor do not immediately pay attention to. The implicit vertical erectility of weapons is finally transformed in the flat horizontality of the floor.

The monumentality of *Fragmentos*

There is a last final question: is *Fragmentos* a real (counter) monument or it should be considered as a work of art, an installation, part of a larger museum structure? From an institutional point of view, it belongs to the National Heritage, it is managed by the National Museum of Colombia as part of the Culture Minister, and it is connected to a net of various museums in Bogotá.

However, to wonder about the real nature of *Fragmentos* – monument or work of art – does not seem to be the right question to ask. A semiotically oriented approach would be to consider what are the spatial thresholds of this counter monument and which relations are established with its spatial environment.

Typically, a monument does not have an entrance: it is located in an open space, often a square, totally open to sight. This is not the case of *Fragmentos*: visitors have to go and visit it as it was a museum or an art gallery. This implies a quite different form of visiting practice. First, it has to be endowed with a specific intentionality of action: *Fragmentos* is not just there, as for example the statue of Simon Bolivar in the nearby Bolivar Square. One has to *decide to see* it, to *look for its location* and to *enter a gate*. None of these actions is casual, as it is the case in walking through a public space where a monument is located. The difference is also underlined by the presence of guides at the entrance, that mark a precise threshold between its inside and outside, and guardians inside it. Even from this perspective *Fragmentos* is a very peculiar: its relevance, beside its architectural beauty and originality, relies in its political message: the reversal of weapon in a floor to be step on, one of the humblest functions a monument has ever had.

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Patrizia Violi is Professor of Semiotics at the University of Bologna, Department of Philosophy and Communication. She is the Director of the International Centre for the Humanities Umberto Eco and the Director of TRAME, Interdisciplinary Centre for the Study of Memory and Cultural Traumas, University of Bologna, Italy.

Email: patrizia.violi@unibo.it

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Political monuments in Lithuania: Artistic aesthetics and national identity

Viktorija Rimaitė

Monuments can be treated as an empirical entry point into the symbolism of national politics and the formation of national identity. Following the elitist perspective on monuments by Forest and Johnson (2002), Begic and Mraovic (2014) and Atkinson and Cosgrove (1998), different political elites and regimes should cause change in monuments that, in turn, lead to change in the construction of national identity. The aesthetic analysis of monuments in Lithuania reveals the contrary: that there are some constant aesthetic characteristics, i.e. visual canons that can be observed in the monuments built in different political regimes and elites. In this context, the main task of this article is to answer how we can account for both the continuities and the changes in monuments. To do so, an analysis of monuments in Vilnius, the capital city of Lithuania, was conducted using the discourse analysis of documents representing the analyzed monuments together with the semiotic analysis looking the discursive level of monuments and especially their figurative and thematic aspects.

Keywords National Politics, National Identity, Soviet and Post-Soviet Monuments, Discursive Analysis, Lithuania

In February 2018, local and national authorities proposed to build a memorial in Lukiškės Square, one of the most important squares in Vilnius. The proposed memorial was to honor the history of Lithuania. The projects were submitted to and assessed by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania. There were visual and aesthetic disagreements about the value and appropriateness of various submitted projects in the public space. These disagreements revealed a strong clash between different concepts of national identity and national narratives that caused intense debate between various groups of society and political community.

The emptiness of Lukiškės Square emerged after the removal of a Lenin monument in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As this removal demonstrates, the changeover of monuments and their interpretations reflects political and regime change: the changes in the

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political regime have an impact on the changes in the monuments. Despite a direct relation between the needs of the political elite formed after the collapse of Soviet Union and the practices of erecting and removing monuments, not all the monumental remains built by the Soviets were removed from the public spaces in Lithuania. At the beginning of the process of restoration of Lithuanian sovereignty, most of the Soviet monumental heritage was dismantled. According to written documents, 42 monuments were removed during this period. Soviet monuments were also taken away from public spaces during the whole restoration of independence in 1989-1994. However, there are still standing Soviet monuments, twelve of which are in Vilnius. In this perspective, the clashes of theoretical and practical assumptions that disclose the survival of monuments in the context of different political regimes are evident in Vilnius.

Theoretical problematization: From elitism to aesthetics of monuments

The academic interest in monuments as media through which national identity is constructed has grown during the post-Soviet period and especially in post-Soviet countries. Academics have a broad agreement that monuments can be treated as an empirical entry point into the symbolism of national politics and the formation of national identity (e.g. Riegl 1903; Mitchell 2003; Benton-Short 2006; Shaya 2013; Kwai 2017). Scholars, such as Forest and Johnson (2002), Osborne and Osborne (2004), Merewether (1999), Buivydas (2011) and Krzyzanowska (2016) perceive monuments as essential for the legitimation and articulation of the national narratives through which political elites set dominant political agendas and legitimate political power. Thus, public places occupied by monuments are not neutral: usually they are intended to commemorate a particular person or historical event. Far from being accidental, this marks a conscious process of selection imposed by a dominant political power of what is important in forming the main national identity narratives. Thus, monuments presenting commemorative values are political tools to narrate national stories and reveal national identity.

Looking at the concept of national identity can be useful in response to the need for a theory that combines interaction between the material, symbolic and political dimensions (Bellentani and Panico 2016) of monuments. Benedict Anderson's theoretical position of the space and time of modern nations as embodied in national narratives suggests that a national story can be constructed through material and symbolic practices such as monuments (Anderson 1999: 226). The approach developed by Homi K. Bhabha claims that the narrative revealing the identity of the nation can be read through a variety of written and visual texts and sub-texts:

> Nation as narration will establish the cultural boundaries of the nation so that

> they may be acknowledged as 'containing' thresholds of meaning that must be crosses, erased and translated in the process of cultural production. (Bhabha 1990: 4)

It is noteworthy that national identity narratives do not develop itself considering monuments as the expression of cultural production able to combines material and symbolic levels. In retrospect, from the Middle Age to the end of the 20th century – when the first monuments interrelated with the sociopolitical aspects were built – the prevailing position in building and analyzing monuments was filled by the elitist perspective: monuments were strongly interrelated with a dominant political elite. It is precisely this aspect that links monuments with specific political regimes; and the material and symbolic aspects add a third, analytically significant political dimension to monuments.

The elitist concept of monuments functions through a simple scheme: the main objective of political elites is to legitimate their power, construct and consolidate a political narrative related to their ideological presuppositions through which a national identity is created. In this case, monuments serve as visual tools for the realization of the political goals mentioned above. Based on this scheme, changes in monuments are accompanied by the changes in the construction of national identity after the change of political regime.

Following the elitist perspective on monuments, the history of the Lithuanian monuments from the middle of the 20th century to the present can be classified into two periods characterized by specific political elites: 1) monuments built during the Soviet period, 1940-1990 and 2) monuments built in the post-Soviet period[1].

Researches in the field of the Lithuanian art by Šapoka (2009), Kučinskaitė (2011), Jankevičiūtė (2015) and Antanavičiūtė (2018)[2] revealed that there are some constant aesthetic characteristics among monuments built in the two periods, i.e. visual canons that can be observed in the monuments built in different political regimes as well as by different political elites. While some material forms are replicated[3], a conservative image of massive heroes on a pedestal prevails in monuments despite the ideological differences of the regimes that erected them (Antanavičiūtė 2019: 352).

The findings showed that it is possible to find the same visual and aesthetic forms and characteristics in monuments regardless of different political elites and their needs to legitimate their power and their particular political discourse in the Soviet era and in post-Soviet Lithuania. Resisting from the discussed theoretical perspective based on the idea of strong interrelationship between monuments and dominant political regime, these aesthetical similarities raise some unanswered questions: if indeed there are some constant aesthetic and visual features, what does that portend for political meanings? Do political meanings change or not? Is it possible to find a relationship between stable aesthetic forms and dynamic political meanings or do stable aesthetic forms necessarily entail stable political meanings? To address these questions raised from theoretical problematization, there is a need to assess both the changes and the continuities in the aesthetics and political meanings of monuments in Lithuania.

The discursive and semiotic analysis of monuments

Observing a significant aesthetic interrelation between Soviet era and post-Soviet monuments, monuments in Vilnius were chosen as relevant case studies to account for the continuities and the changes in Lithuanian monuments. The analysis was conducted using the discourse analysis of existing documents and the semiotic analysis of the discursive level of monuments in general and their figurative and thematic aspects in particular (Greimas 2005).

Strategy for analysis

In the analysis of monuments, a strong relationship is assumed between the messages that monuments express through a visual vocabulary and their interpretations circulating in the public sphere. The visual vocabulary is decoded in highlighting thematic and figurative aspects of monuments by using the semiotic analysis based on the European semiotic tradition.

Following Greimas (2005), there are three main levels of the semiotic analysis: logico-semantic (the central analytical tool in this level is the concept of the semiotic square), narrative and discursive levels. Due to the main question of this analysis – how to account for both the continuities and the changes in monuments – the biggest attention is paid to the discursive level of the semiotic analysis, that is in turn divided into the figurative ant thematic analytical levels (Nastopka 2010). The figurative aspect is a unit of contents of a monument that is related to the equivalent of the natural world in the plane of expression. The thematic dimension refers to the units of content that have no counterpart in the sensory world and function through the constructs of the mind.

It is important to note that combining figurative and thematic levels firstly indicate the *form* and visual grammar and then, based on the thematic values of the analyzed monuments, it allows to provide for the *content* it is filled with. Following Roland Barthes (Barthes 1991: 87), such distinction between the *form* and the *content* levels correspond to the semiologic system that links the figurative level with a signifier, while the thematic level may mark a signified, thus creating a certain significant set. Having reviewed the figurative and thematic levels, the monuments are grouped by applying the principles of typological analysis. Grouping the monuments semiotically, typological analysis was chosen as a descriptive analytical method allowing to form a set of categories applicable for the explanation of a certain phenomenon of social sciences – in this case the material, symbolic and political dimensions of monuments – by distinguishing interrelated but different characteristics categories that explain the same phenomena (Given 2019). The typological analysis in accordance with the principles of similarity and differences allow the comparison of distinguished categories by revealing the similarities and differences of the categories (Wikander 2010).

In this article, the analysis is carried out in three stages. The first stage determines the meanings attributed to the monuments by performing the semiotic analysis, including its figurative and thematic analytical parts, at the discursive level. The second stage distinguishes the categories of monuments considering the recurring meanings by applying the principles of typological analysis. The third stage looks for the isotope-based relations among the distinguished monument categories.

In keeping with the methodological notion that 'the term *object* itself has no meaning [...] intercourse is a prerequisite for meaning' (Greimas 2005: 47-51), the semiotic analysis of the discursive level is supplemented for the analysis of the currently existing texts. The latest texts of newspapers and portals and their analyses act as a complementary analytical instrument allowing a more precise identification of monument references at the thematic level. Analyzing monuments as dynamic sites of meaning, the discourse analysis of the existing texts creates an access to the multiple changing meanings of the political monuments in Lithuania.

The combination of these three strategies of the analysis of monuments, i.e. the semiotic reading through the discursive level of the semiotic analysis and its figurative and thematic analytical parts, typological analysis and discourse analysis of currently existing texts allows the holistic view on the process of meaning-making of political monuments in Lithuania, overcoming the distinctions among the static, visual as well as preferred meanings and dynamic political meanings related to the concept of national identity expressed through monuments.

It should be noted that the development of the analytical strategy follows *the effect of reality* concept identified by Barthes because of the social realism style characteristic of the Soviet-era monuments. The style has remained recognized after the restoration of independence of Lithuania[4]. Based on Barthes' explanation (Barthes 2009: 28-29), the realistic tradition violates the trinomial nature of signs followed by direct interface between an object and its expression: 'the absence of the signified and prioritizing only to the referent becomes the signifier of realism. It allows to reject the stage of signifier articulation implemented through its fragmentation into statistical discreet units' (Greimas 2005: 23, 79). In other words, there is no necessity to ignore reference impression and limit the recognition of natural world figures. Sergei Kruk (Kruk 2008) also emphasizes the importance of the referent in the semiotic analyses of the social realism monuments by assuming that the aim of social realism and its works of art was not only to represent the reality but also to be a social agent that corresponds with the reality. In this context, the analyzed monument is not divided into separate objects and the main object of the semiotic analysis becomes the reference of the monument.

Generating data

The question how we can account for both the continuities and the changes in monuments is answered through the case of Vilnius by covering the empirical parts of the Soviet era and post-Soviet period – two political periods that this paper claims having a strong aesthetic interrelationship. The case of Vilnius was based on the position implemented by the practical works of Atkinson and Cosgrove (1998), Benton-Short (2006), Janku and Nientied (2019) with the proviso that Vilnius represents a general situation nationwide.

The main attention is paid to the following two kinds of monuments: the extant Soviet-era and post-Soviet period monuments in Vilnius that are still found in public places and that still participate in the formation of the national identity and national narrative. Also, it is useful to note the logics of the selection of the analyzed monuments. Following the scholars, such as Krzyzanowska (2016), Jeffrey (1980), Shaya (2013), Osborne and Osborne (2004), Merewether (1999), the importance is placed on the monuments having commemorative values. They are built to commemorate an important person or event as a part of the national narrative or national identity and interpreted as political monuments participating in the formation, reformation, entrenchment and support of national identity.

Current and extant Soviet-era monuments have survived the clash of two different types of political regimes, i.e. the Soviet based on Communist ideology and the post-Soviet based on democratic values. The wide-known academic agreement introduced by Benjamin Forest and Juliet Johnson (Forest and Johnson 2002) explains that the existing monuments could experience one of the three possible fates during the significant critical junctures, such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the restoration of the independence of Lithuania: coopted or glorified, disavowed and contested monuments (Forest and Johnson 2002).

The disavowed monuments are erased from the national landscape just as the demolished ones. The contested monuments remain the objects of political conflict. Despite the changes of political regimes, the coopted or glorified monuments are maintained or exulted further. Regarding this differentiation of the Soviet-era monuments, the analysis focuses only on the coopted or glorified monuments and the contested ones as they can be found in public spaces and perceived as a part of current national narrative expressed through political monuments. However, despite the mentioned differentiation introduced by Forest and Johnson (2002), it is noteworthy that the glorified or coopted and contested monuments explain the alternatives of their fates, however, they do not reveal why some monuments remain, while others are removed. In other words, in terms of content, it is unclear what political meanings are communicated through the glorified or coopted and contested monuments, how they get in line with the political messages of the new regime and integrate into the national identity constructed by the new political context.

Data from documents and texts were gathered by analyzing selected public documents that refer to and deal with the analyzed monuments.

Soviet and post-Soviet monuments: Language and culture on target

Following the given theoretical assumptions and methodological provisions, this part of the article presents the selected monuments from the Soviet era and post-Soviet period. The insights of the semiotic analyzes are highlighted by discussing the monuments involved in the national narrative through which the national identity is revealed.

The Soviet-era monuments: 1940-1990

Starting with the glorified or coopted and contested Soviet-era monuments, twelve monuments in Vilnius have survived the clash of the Soviet and democratic regimes or present political democracy. The list of the survived Soviet-era monuments are presented through the following monumental artefacts: *Lithuanian Ballad,* a monument commemorating the 650th anniversary of Vilnius city (1973[5]); *The First Swallows,* a monument honoring the Soviet cosmonauts (1987); a monument to Mikas Petrauskas, a well-known Lithuanian composer and singer (1974); *The Editor,* a monument to Pranciškus Skorina, a publisher of the first book in Lithuania (1973); a monument to Barbora Radvilaitė, Grand Duchess of Lithuania (1982); a monument to Kristijonas Donelaitis, a Lithuanian writer (1964); a monument to Žemaitė, a Lithuanian writer (1971); a monument to Petras Cvirka, a Lithuanian writer (1959); a monument to Salomėja Nėris, a Lithuanian writer (1974); a monument to Laurynas Stuoka-Gucevičius, one of the most famous Lithuanian architects (1984); a monument to Adomas Mickevičius, a Lithuanian writer (1984); a monument to Aleksandras Puškinas, a Russian poet, who had family ties in Lithuania (1955).

The semiotic analysis of the extant Soviet-era monuments explored their discursive level with a focus on the thematic and figurative aspects of the monuments. Pursuant to the significant sets that were distinguished in accordance with the figurative and thematic aspects of monuments and the analysis of recent documents addressing them, the Soviet-era monuments can be grouped into the following three types: monuments representing the promotion of the Lithuanian language and culture, monuments depicting the founders of Lithuania in medieval times and monuments having changed meanings.

> Nine of twelve Soviet-era monuments were built to commemorate writers and humanists. Seven monuments were dedicated to writers: Petras Cvirka, Žemaitė, Salomėja Nėris, Kristijonas Donelaitis, Adomas Mickevičius, Pranciškus Skorina, and

Aleksandras Puškinas. Two monuments were created to honor the representatives of the Lithuanian culture: the composer and singer Mikas Petrauskas and the architect Laurynas Stuoka-Gucevičius. The humanistic element unfolds in the monument *Lithuanian Ballad*. It signifies the features of the Lithuanian culture.

One of the Soviet-era monuments erected in 1982 was devoted to Grand Duchess of Lithuania Barbora Radvilaitė, who lived in the 16th century, a golden period in the history of Lithuania. This monument marks a prominent figure in the creation process of the state of Lithuania. The monument was approved by the Soviet officials because of its modern, unrealistic and very decorative aesthetics. Based on the current text analysis and the figurative aspect of the monument and using the Aesopian language in the aesthetics of the monument, it could be perceived as a sign of the Lithuanian roots and history in the narrative expressed through the Soviet-era monuments in Vilnius.

The last in the list of the survived Soviet-era monuments is the monumental artefact *The First Swallows* honoring the Soviet cosmonauts. This monument represents the group of monuments having a changed meaning. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the monument was not demolished due to some changes. Now it is associated with the first swallows of the Lithuanian freedom in the period of the restoration of the independence of Lithuania. The initial meaning of the monument was altered with the change of regime and dominating political elite and adapted to the new narrative of national identity.

To summarize the analysis of the Soviet-era monuments, a dominant feature is distinguished. In the realm of the figurative and thematic aspects of the discursive level analysis, cultural and linguistic components prevail. The monuments that were not removed after the collapse of the Soviet Union are mostly related to the Lithuanian language and culture or well-known personalities of Lithuanian origin.

The Monuments of the post-Soviet period

Of all the monuments built in independent Lithuania, 20 monuments have a commemorative value that is important for the formation of political meaning and national narrative. The overall sample of the monuments analyzed during this period are as follows: a monument to Grand Duke Gediminas, the founder of the city of Vilnius (1996); a monument to Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, a Russian and Lithuanian artist, scenographer, graphic artist and painter (2011);

a monument to King of Lithuania Mindaugas (2003); a monument to Chiune Sugihara built to commemorate the diplomatic aid to the Jews during the genocide (2001); a monument to Vincas Kudirka commemorating the national movement (2009); a monument to the Lithuanian deportees to Yakutia (2006); a monument to Vilnius Gaon Elijah ben Solomon Zalman (1997); a monument to Cemach Shabad, a physician, therapist, scientist and activist of Vilnius Jewish Community (2007); a monument to the victims of the massacre of the Jews (1993); a monument to Taras Shevchenko, an Ukrainian poet, writer, artist, public and political figure, who lived and studied in Vilnius (2011); *Lazdynų Pelėda,* a monument to sisters Sofija Ivanauskaitė-Pšibiliauskienė and Marija Ivanauskaitė-Lastauskienė, Lithuanian writers (1995); a monument to the three Vileišis brothers, initiators of the Lithuanian National Revival and creators of the first independent state of Lithuania (2018); a monument to Dr. Jonas Basanavičius, a guardian of national consciousness and creator of the first independent state of Lithuania (2018); a monument to Roman Gary, a French writer and diplomat who lived in Lithuania and wrote about it (2007); a monument to Jan Zvartendijk, a Dutch Ambassador to Lithuania, who gave Jews about 2,200 visas and thus saved them from death in 1940 (1999); a monument to Jonas Žemaitis, a Lithuanian partisan commander (1992); a monument to Konstantinas Balmontas, a Russian poet of Lithuanian origin who contributed to the promotion and dissemination of the Lithuanian culture abroad in the 19th century and the late 20th century (2010); *The Way of Freedom*, a monument dedicated to the 20th Anniversary of the Restoration of the State of Lithuania and inviting all the Lithuanian patriots to continue the way of freedom and unity (2010); a monument in memory of the Lithuanian soldiers who died in the Soviet-Afghan War (2006); a monument to Vladas Jurgutis, a Lithuanian economist, first Chairman of the Bank of Lithuania and the founding father of the Lithuanian currency Litas during the period of the First Republic of Lithuania (2015).

Regarding the results of the semiotic discourse analysis and especially the thematic and figurative aspects of the monuments as well as the discourse analysis of existing documents, the following 6 types of the monuments constructed in Vilnius after the restoration of the independence of Lithuania can be distinguished:

> *Monuments to the Lithuanian writers and humanists*. The four monuments erected after the restoration of the independence honor the Lithuanian writers and humanists, thus providing Lithuanian language and culture an appropriate role in the creation of the national narrative through monuments.

> *Five monuments are devoted to the foreigners who participated in the Lithuanian cultural life and historical events.* The cultural and humanistic element is developed in the second category of monuments as well only here the objects of commemo-

ration and remembrance through monuments are foreigners who promoted Lithuanian culture abroad or lived in Lithuania and fostered Lithuanian values. By giving attention to the foreigners involved in the Lithuanian culture, a Lithuanian motif, pointed out in the first category of monuments, is reinforced in the narrative of national identity represented through the framework of monuments.

Monuments to the founding fathers of the medieval Lithuania. The monuments to Grand Duke Gediminas and King Mindaugas commemorate two medieval figures who laid the foundations for the origins of the Lithuanian state in the Middle Ages. Thematically and figuratively, they are related to the image of the Lithuanian origins and ancestry.

Five monuments to the founders of the first Republic of Lithuania established in the interwar period. The republic was established in 1918 after the liberation from the Russian Empire and the end of the First World War. The monuments of this group mark the practices of remembrance implemented through monuments and representing as well as involving the founders of the first Republic of Lithuania in the narrative of national identity. It is important to note that three monuments of the first and fourth categories overlap. The monuments to writers and humanists, i.e. the Vileišis brothers, Vincas Kudirka and Dr. Jonas Basanavičius, can be associated with writing, while the Humanism played an important role in the establishment of the first Republic of Lithuania during the interwar period. In this context, the elements of the Lithuanian language and the origins of statehood are strongly interrelated. The people who cherished the Lithuanian language also promoted the idea of the independence of Lithuania that laid the foundations for a modern state and political community. However, it is noteworthy that when we talk about the states that were established in the 20th century, hence the first Republic of Lithuania, we talk about modern states having an institutional structure specific to the formation of modern political communities. On the other hand, analytically, the features of the formation of political community and political institutions are not remarkable. Only one integral feature of the modern state and political community represented through monuments is found in the monument to Vladas Jurgutis, i.e. the development of financial and monetary system. Yet another monumental artefact, i.e. the monument to the partisan commander Jonas Žemaitis could be related to the political community. Thematically and proved by the analysis of currently existing documents, this figure is associated with the fights for maintaining the independence of the first Republic of Lithuania, i.e. the preservation of the established political institutions, self-government and fight against the Soviet intervention in the modern Lithuanian state established in the interwar period.

Monuments marking significant events. Of the three monuments, only the one in memory of the Lithuanian soldiers who died in the Afghan War is out of context, whereas the other two mark the continuity of the Lithuanian statehood. The monument to the Lithuanian deportees in Yakutia honors those who were deported to Siberia when the first Republic of Lithuania was occupied by the Soviets. Although Lithuania was incorporated in the Soviet Union, the state institutions established at the beginning of the 20th century were destroyed and the people were deported to Siberia, the Lithuanian spirit was preserved by the people in diaspora. Furthermore, a considerable number of deportees to Siberia were the intelligentsia who in a significant number of cases are related to the first category of monuments for having a great knowledge of the Lithuanian language and culture and their promotion.[6]The restoration of the independence of Lithuania after the collapse of the Soviet Union is considered a natural continuation of the Lithuanian spirit preserved during the Soviet era. It is reflected in the third monument of this category *The Way of Freedom* dedicated to the 20th Anniversary of the Restoration of the State of Lithuania. The restoration of independence is considered not as a new concept but as a restoration and continuation of what was created during the interwar period and preserved in the Soviet era by cultivating the Lithuanian spirit. What is more, based on the discourse analysis of the existing texts, the movement for the independence of Lithuania in 1990 was closely related to the intelligentsia, i.e. professionals in the fields of language and culture, who encouraged the National Revival and liberation from the Soviet Union.

Monuments dedicated to the Jewish history. Five of twenty monuments are associated with the Jewish history in Lithuania. The history and genocide in the 20th century are presented through monuments as an integral part of the national identity narrative. Although much attention is paid to the Jewish history in the general context of the national identity narrative, in quantity terms, the monuments that incorporate the Jewish history into the Lithuanian identity narrative do not dominate. It is proved by the monuments of this category in the context of the national identity narrative. The history of the Jews, especially those who lived in Vilnius, plays a significant role in monument construction, however, figuratively, it is considered as a period intervening in a common representation of identity through monuments but having no features of continuation connecting Lithuania in the Middle Ages, the First Republic of Lithuania and the current Republic of Lithuania.

The post-Soviet period monuments in Vilnius and their thematic categories raise a question as to what they reveal. Grouping monuments in line with the principles of typological analysis and monument meanings revealed by figurative and thematic aspects outlined certain patterns of monuments, erected after the restoration of independence, narrative of national identity. Two dominating narrative lines of national identity are singled out. The first line links the first and the second category of the post-Soviet period monuments, while the second one connects the third and the fourth category. Also, the narrative lines display a motif of the Lithuanian language and culture through nine monuments to writers and humanists representing Lithuanian identity. The second line highlights the construction of national identity through the search for the origins of the ancestries. Seven monuments are associated with the attempts to find the origins of Lithuania starting with the Middle Ages and continuing to the establishment of the modern state at the beginning of the 20th century. In fact, the thematic values of the three founding fathers of modern Lithuania overlap with those of writers and humanists, thus reinforcing the importance of the Lithuanian language and culture in the process of constructing identity. The domination of the language and culture motifs is connected not only with the third and fourth categories, but with the fifth category of monuments marking the events related with the Lithuanian intelligentsia and thus the knowledge and maintenance of the Lithuanian language and culture as well.

To sum up, the dominance of the Lithuanian writers and founding fathers of the medieval and modern Lithuania as well as the attention to foreigners who were an integral part of the Lithuanian cultural life and the dissemination of the Lithuanian culture implicate the importance of the Lithuanian language and origins. Moreover, it represents the idea of common ancestry based on the Lithuanian language and culture. In other words, perceiving monuments as symbolic entry points in reading and interpreting the narrative of national identity implicate political meanings with strong cultural connotations.

Monuments as visual tools to construct national identity: The importance of ethnicity

Following the elitist perspective on the relation between monuments and politics, especially when the change of political regime leads to the change of monuments and through them to the changes of constructing or reconstructing national identity, we have an answer to the question why there are changes in the Lithuanian monuments after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The change of political regime results in the political implications that are implemented and consolidated through monuments. However, the aspect of their continuity through aesthetic characteristics and visual canons common to the monuments of the Soviet era and post-Soviet period remain uncovered.

According to the visual analysis of the extant Soviet and post-Soviet era monuments carried out by researchers Šapoka (2009), Kučinskaitė (2011), Jankevičiūtė (2015) and Antanavičiūtė (2018)[7], semiotic reading of monuments in Vilnius showed that 'a deep-rooted belief that a monument must be big, heavy, shiny and have a shape resembling a man comes from the Soviet times' (Jankevičiūtė 2015: 38–42). It is evidenced by the visual grammar similarities among Soviet and post-Soviet period monuments in Vilnius. From the perspective of similarities and differences, it is noted that aesthetically eleven of twelve Soviet-era monuments and twelve of twenty monuments erected after the restoration of independence use a human-shaped aesthetic expression of monuments. In quantity terms, massiveness, majesty and realistic expression dominate the aesthetics of both period monuments.

If based on the theoretical assumptions made at the beginning of the article we perceive monuments as texts that, as a whole, develop a narrative revealing national identity and look for the answer to the question how we can account for both the continuities and changes in the Soviet-era monuments and the ones erected in independent Lithuania, we can see characteristic features of both periods reflected in the monuments. These include not only similar aesthetic and stylistic features of monuments acknowledged by the visual grammar similarity revealed during the semiotic reading. Certain similarities were noted also in the terms of political meaning. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the extant Soviet-era monuments that still play a role in the narration of the history of national identity in Lithuania are mostly related to the Lithuanian language and culture or well-known personalities of Lithuanian origins. The dominance of the linguistic and cultural motifs is also recorded in the monuments of the post-Soviet period.

Considering monuments as the objects of identity expression and with respect to the linguistic and cultural aspects, it is useful to look at the classical concept of identity. Smith (Smith 1991) introduced two concepts of national identity: political and ethnic concepts of a nation. Political nation is related to common laws and political institutions, while ethnic nation is seen as tracked down by native intellectuals having strong relationship with language and common origins and ancestry.

> Historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, and common civic culture and ideology are the components of the standard Western model of a nation. [...] At the same time, a rather different model of the nation has developed outside Western Europe, namely in Eastern Europe and Asia. [...] We can term this non-Western model an *ethnic* concept of a nation. Its distinguishing feature is the emphasis on the community of birth and native cul-

> ture, while the Western concept states that an individual can choose a nation to belong to. The non-Western or ethnic concept allowed no such latitude. (Smith 1991: 21)

In this context, the two classical concepts of the nation allow a unanimous reading of the analyzed monuments as texts and reveal the direction of the formation of meaning revealed through the isotopy of national identity: ethnic concept *versus* political concept of the nation.

Having in mind that geographically Lithuania belongs to East-Central Europe and with regard to the expression of culture- and language-related connotations and domination of the extant Soviet-era monuments and those unveiled after the restoration of independence in 1990, it is obvious that the national narrative created through the remaining political monuments of the Soviet era and post-Soviet period could not be related to the symbols of self-determining political nation but could be associated with a passive cultural community bounded by language and common culture as well as common origins and ancestry.

Ten of twelve Soviet-period monuments that remain in the public spaces in Vilnius and still participate in the constructing process of the narrative of national identity, represent the significance of language and culture. If we look at these monuments from the perspective of Smith's two concepts of national identity, we could notice that they have no links with the political concept of the nation. None of the extant monumental artefacts are related to common political or legal institutions. On the contrary, the figures of writers and humanists point out the direction of reading the meaning and highlight the motif of intelligentsia directly connected with the ethnic concept of the nation.

An analogous situation is noticed in the analysis of the post-Soviet monuments in Vilnius. Certain connections with the political concept of the nation can be traced in the monument dedicated to the founding father of the Lithuanian currency or the monumental artefact honoring the resistance fighters who during the Soviet occupation aimed to preserve the first Republic of Lithuania and its institutional and political system developed in the interwar period. The monuments to the creators of modern Lithuania that was established at the beginning of the 20th century could be considered to have political messages aiming to develop a political concept of the nation having characteristic features, such as legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, common civic culture and ideology. Unlike the case of Soviet-era monuments, the monuments built after the restoration of independence include the semes related to the political concept of the nation for the formation of meaning. However, the semes directing the monuments' reading to the meaning related to the ethnic concept of the nation take up a dominant position. The key founding fathers of the first Republic of Lithuania are considered the persons represented through the monuments, i.e. writers and ambassadors of the Lithuanian culture. The interrelation of the state formation, cultural figures and the monuments' thematic aspects which reveal the figures of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, who fostered Lithuanian language and culture in the narrative of national identity, emphasize the importance of language and culture related to the ethnic concept of the nation.

Comparing the monuments of both periods, it becomes clear that similar aesthetic and visual features of monuments built in the context of different political periods in the analytical position based on semiotics, and particularly the discursive level of semiotics, lead to thematically overlapping monument values that are strongly interrelated in common political meanings. The dominance of language and culture becomes one of the most significant features of the monuments in the creation of national identity linked with the ethnic concept of the nation. The statement is supported by the researches carried out by Miroslav Hroch. He revealed that: 'intelligentsia is in general considered to be the most active factor in the Lithuanian national movement (Hroch 1985: 87) and functioned as the guardian of the language and cultural traditions. The narrative of the Lithuanian language and culture emphasized by Hroch presents the Lithuanian national identity based on the concept of ethnicity.

Ethnicity is evident in the analysis of the Lithuanian national identity shaped through the still standing Soviet monuments and those erected in independent Vilnius. If a political concept of the nation is present in the analysis of the monuments constructed after the restoration of independence, there are no Soviet monuments representing this concept in Vilnius. As the Soviet monuments that testify the political concept of the nation would also express the identity of any other country, they are not present in the current national narrative of Lithuania. In a political context, Soviet monuments and the ones erected in independent Lithuania are not united by a political concept of the nation related to national identity created through political, legal and economic institutions but the ethnic identity constructed on the basis of the native language and culture that dominate the monuments of both periods.

In conclusion, the answer to the question why we see changes of political elites, regimes and agendas but also notice similarities in the monuments of different periods is the ethnic concept of national identity evidently expressed through the monuments erected in both the analyzed periods in Vilnius. In this case, the Lithuanian national identity is based on the ethnic group, belonging to that group and the importance of intelligentsia, such as writers, in the formation of the Lithuanian nation. Therefore, in this situation, some similarities among aesthetic forms lead to the vocabulary of semiotics, stable thematic aspects of monuments and stable political meanings based on the ethnic concept of the nation.

Concluding remarks

All the monuments that have a commemorative value make a text the analysis which allows to reconstruct national identity. If we refer to the traditional approach of explaining the relation between politics and monuments based on the elitist perspective that the change of political regime lead to the changes of monuments related to the representation of national identity, we notice that the motive of the monuments change. Consequently, the change of political regime induces the change of the national identity narrative and its practices, i.e. the monuments. Nevertheless, the experience of Lithuania and other post-Soviet countries show that when a political system changes not all the monuments representing former systems are removed. The remaining ones are recontextualized in a certain way and integrated into the reconstructed national identity.

Furthermore, as previous researches carried out in Lithuania on the visuals of monuments revealed and the semiotic reading of monuments proved, the monuments built in the Soviet period and those erected after the restoration of independence actually have aesthetic and visual similarities, common characteristics and similar trends. The analysis of monuments as texts through which a narrative uncovering the national identity is presented revealed that the answer how can we account for both the continuities and the changes in monuments is the ethnic concept of national identity evidently expressed through monuments erected in both the analyzed periods. Although the component representing national identity – the political concept of nation – is present in the monuments erected after the restoration of independence, it is eliminated from the Soviet monuments. Therefore, what is related to the ethnic concept of nation in the national narrative becomes a factor explaining the aspects of monuments' stability that remains in spite of changes of political elite, discourse and regime, and the related changes in monuments. Comparing the monumental artefacts of these two periods, the dominance of the Lithuanian language and culture became one of the most remarkable features. It explains the signs of aesthetic stability of monuments essential to their political relevance. Some constant aesthetic and visual similarities of the Soviet-era and post-Soviet period monuments portend for recurrent political meanings based on the concept of ethnicity. The visual expression of political monuments and political meanings becomes the ethnic concept of the nation founded in both Soviet monuments and those erected in independent Lithuania.

NOTES

1 A brief historical overview of the development of the Lithuanian state and key moments of statehood will help to better understand the specifics and problems of the case of Lithuania. The name of Lithuania was first mentioned in the written sources in 1009. Grand Duke Mindaugas, who was crowned in 1253, is considered the first ruler who united Lithuania and created the state. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania existed in the Middle Ages. In the 15th century, Grand Duke Gediminas expanded the territory of Lithuania quite significantly. In 1569, the Union of Lublin united the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland into a single Commonwealth of Both Nations that existed before the division in 1772-1795. After the division of

the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795, the territory of Lithuania was incorporated into the Tsarist Russian Empire, where Lithuania remained till the end of the First World War. In 1918, the independent state of Lithuania was created and thus the first Republic of Lithuania emerged. It existed till 1940 when Lithuania was annexed to the Soviet Union by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. When the collapse of the Soviet Union began in 1990, Lithuania restored its independence.

2 The authors Kęstutis Šapoka, Giedrė Jankevičiūtė, Rasa Antanavičiūtė, Justina Kučinskaitė, etc., discuss the cases of aesthetic overlapping and coincidence from the perspective of art history and criticism. For more information and aesthetic analyses of monuments, refer to: Kęstutis Šapoka. *Kultūros barai [Bars of culture]* 9, 2009; Justina Kučinskaitė. *Vilniaus skulptūros viešojoje erdvėje sampratos pokyčiai po 1990-ųjų [Changes in the concept of Vilnius sculptures in public space after the 1990s]*, Master's Thesis, Vytautas Magnus University 2011; *State Cultural Heritage Commission of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Culture Comfortable and Uncomfortable Heritage*, research seminar-discussion material: Giedrė Jankevičiūtė. Soviet Heritage in the Face of Conflict of Values, 38–42.

3 Grunskis, T. 2012. A Monument to Freedom – a Dilemma between Space and Object. In: Mikalajūnė, E., Antanavičiūtė, R. eds., *Vilnius monuments: A story of change*. Vilnius: Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 29.

4 It is proved in Visuotinė lietuvių enciklopedija [Universal Lithuanian encyclopedia] 2017. Available from https://www.vle.lt/Straipsnis/lietuvos-skulptura-118228 and http://www.mmcentras.lt/kulturos-istorija/kulturos-istorija/daile/skulptura/paminklai-idejoms-zmonems-formoms-xx-a-78-desimtmetis/79476. [accessed October 5, 2019]

5 The year in which the monument was erected is given in brackets.

6 At the beginning of the Soviet occupation in 1940–1953, the deportees to Siberia were the intelligentsia and upper-class landowners.

7 For more information and aesthetic analyses of monuments, refer to: Kęstutis Šapoka. Kultūros barai [Bars of culture] 9, 2009; Justina Kučinskaitė. Vilniaus skulptūros viešojoje erdvėje sampratos pokyčiai po 1990-ųjų [Changes in the concept of Vilnius sculptures in public space after the 1990s], Master's Thesis, Vytautas Magnus University 2011; State Cultural Heritage Commission of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Culture Comfortable and Uncomfortable Heritage, research seminar-discussion material: Giedrė Jankevičiūtė. Soviet Heritage in the Face of Conflict of Values, 38–42.

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Viktorija Rimaitė is Junior Assistant at Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University, Lithuania.

Email: v.rimaite@gmail.com

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The mass: A neglected plastic sign of sculpture

Sergei Kruk

By and large visual semiotics still misses a comprehensive method for the analysis of sculpture. The paper demonstrates that sculptures have a peculiar plastic sign – the mass. Intrinsic to three-dimensional objects, the mass determines the forces of gravity and inertia possessing a potential to suggest connotations of the artwork. Taking as examples the large monuments built in Soviet Latvia in 1960-1990, the paper distinguishes among three categories of monuments – static, dynamic and ambiguous – which owe their particular characteristics to diverse exposure of the mass enabled by various constructive techniques. As iconic signs these monuments represent actual identities and events while the exposed mass, as a plastic sign, conveys additional connotations like stability, change, motion, standstill, slowness, speed enabling a more nuanced interpretation of the represented persons and events. As a physical property of objects mass can be evaluated by handling them directly but the public is supposed to look at sculpture not to touch and handle it. The current psychology of perception holds however that the perceiver goes beyond the information given in the visual input, the process of perception depends also on the perceiver's knowledge and purposes in the contact with reality. Ubiquity of outdoor sculpture suggests that our accumulated experience of 3D artistic objects can be embedded into the elaboration of the visual input thus the viewers can perceive the mass and enrich the interpretation of sculpture considering the meanings of this plastic sign.

Keywords Sculpture, Three-dimensional Objects, Tectonics, Plastic Sign, Mass, Visual Semiotics, Soviet Latvia

Semiotics of three-dimensional artwork

More than a century ago sculptor and pioneer of the formal analysis of visual art Adolf Hildebrand ([1893]1914: 68-69) wrote that sculpture originated from drawing as it was turned into relief. Sculptors start carving the stone keeping in mind only one view from one particular

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position. Drawing a picture on the main surface of stone sculptor respects the formal rules of the figurative activity of a painter. Accordingly, viewers are expected to perceive sculptures just like flat pictures.

Suffice to glance over the content pages of some contemporary books on visual semiotics and semiotics of art to find out that sculpture is not treated as a kind of visual representation *sui generis*: it is relegated to flat pictures or neglected altogether (e.g. Calabrese 2006; Eugeni 2004; Lancioni 2012; Nöth 1990; Volli 2008). The real 3D characteristics are being studied as visual effects on 2D pictures: impression of weight on flat images (Arnheim 1974), illusion of texture created by lines, dots and hatching on smooth surface (Danesi 2004: 75-80; Eugeni 2004). These authors do not notice that sculpture is a corporeal phenomenon: sculptors assemble their artwork from objects possessing mass. Mass is a measure of amount of matter in an object described by the formula $m=V\rho$ where V stands for the volume and ρ for the density of material. Mass also is the measure of gravity and inertia or resistance to acceleration. The more is the object's mass, more force is required to change its state (Deeson 2007: 270; Prokhorov 1998: 392). Physical characteristics related to the mass determine a variety of the object's qualities and states: motion *versus* standstill, fast *versus* slow, change *versus* stability. Manipulating with the load and support distribution the sculptor can visualize these abstract notions thus investing the artwork with a surplus meaning which cannot be derived from the iconic representation of a person or an event the sculpture is dedicated to.

British art critic Herbert Read (1956) explained that the neglect of corporeality was due to a particular historical function of sculpture which was subordinated to the architecture during the millennia. Placement in the front of a building prevented viewers from observing statues from different visual angles and consequently the artists developed a painterly conception of sculpture. They were concerned with the coherence of surfaces rather than with the realization of mass. The Renaissance released statue from the building however the free-standing sculpture in the round failed to find its proper place in the arts because a new aesthetics lagged behind still. Triumph of the painterly conception doomed the art of sculpture to a progressive degeneration until the end of the 19th century and Hildebrand's concept belongs to this trend. The concept privileged visual sensibility whereas sculpture engenders tactile sensations also, Read contends. He does not mention Johan Gottfried Herder's name who expressed the same idea almost two hundred years earlier. In an essay *Sculpture* ([1778]2005) the German philosopher sought to rehabilitate the special status of sculpture as a 3D object. Sight and hearing were two privileged senses classifying the fine arts, explained Herder. But 3D objects are physically present, they are tangible and therefore can be touched. Herder anticipated the ecological theory of vision (discussed in section 5) contending that the viewer actively explores the surrounding objects over time. '[A sculpture] presents a *human being,* a fully *animated body,* it speaks to us as an *act;* it seizes hold of us and penetrates our very being, awakening the full range of responsive human feeling' (Herder [1778]2005: 80).

Herder's idea was reanimated by Russian art historian Alexander Gabrichevsky (1923). He reminded that the discipline of aesthetics had borrowed most of notions from the visual perception whereas plastic art evokes tactile sensations first of all. Sculpture cannot be reduced to flat images because it possesses the mass which is a resource of connotations. Namely, plastic artwork creates an impression of perpetuation because its physical qualities are opposed to temporal fluctuations and mutability. Besides, 3D objects have an anthropomorphic organization, i.e. they are commensurable to humans. For example, more massive constructions are perceived as abstract and symbolic.

Making a stand against Hildebrand, Susanne Langer (1953) reminded about the voluminosity of sculpture. She treated this artwork as shapes placed in a real space creating a virtual space; however, these are empty shapes. Stating that sculpture realizes 'an integral mass into actual space' (1956: 71) Read filled them with material. As a physical object sculpture possesses characteristics absent in painting: volume, weight, mass and occupation of space. Unlike canvas, touching and handling objects provides more information about their qualities. Viewers need a plastic sensibility to these characteristics: a sensation of tactile quality of surfaces; a sensation of volume as denoted by plane surface; and a synthetic realization of the mass and ponderability of the object. Read does not propose details about the visual perception of the mass and its connotations. Sometimes he confuses mass with the material and reduces its perception to tactility, palpability. He argues, for example, that tactile values can be 'conveyed directly, as existent mass' and all the art of sculpture becomes 'an art of palpation' (Read 1956: 49). He agrees that mass of the small objects can be estimated by handling them, as to the large-scale sculpture it 'is felt by the sculptor toward his carving whatever its size' (Read 1956: 74).

Denis Alcan (1981) exposed a specific meaning of material and mass in Constantin Brancusi's plastic artwork. Brancusi drew attention to the difference between everyday objects and sculpture. The artwork resembles the object by the similarity of volumes, but it is the sculpture's mass which negates the meaning suggested by the visual similitude. Alcan described one series of sculptures, but he has not formalized a method of analysis.

The notion of plastic sign invented by Groupe µ (1979) and later developed by Algirdas Julien Greimas (1989) opened a new perspective for the semiotic analysis of sculpture. Visual artwork refers the viewer to somebody or something by virtue of the iconic likeness to the referent. Greimas argues that iconic signs are composed of minimal units which themselves can evoke meaning related to their materiality. For example, colors evoke concepts of warmth or coldness; curvilinear and rectangular forms hint to femininity or masculinity. The interest to these minimal units called by Greimas 'plastic figures' (or plastic signs) was raised by the abstract painting devoid of iconic likeness: here plastic signs qualify as the only carriers of eventual meaning. Jean-Marie Klinkenberg (1996: 378-382) distinguishes between iconic signs which point to something by virtue of mimetic likeness and plastic signs which mobilize the codes independently of mimetic pointing to something. He mentions three plastic signs: form, colors and texture. Plastic form is a spatial form which is subdivided to smaller *formemes* possessing their own potential meaning: position, dimension and orientation. Colors as well have smaller unities called *chromemes*: chromatic dominance (a certain wave length which we label usually by words *red*, *green*, etc.), saturation (proportion of two types of light: white light and one corresponding to the given chromatic dominant) and luminance (quantity of the luminous energy). Finally, texture is related to quality of a surface: smooth, granular, etc. Unevenness of surface as a textural characteristic could qualify as a 3D phenomenon. However, Groupe μ (1992) argues that it is applicable only to planar images while three-dimensionality is a characteristic of the material support of pictures. Granular surfaces determine effluence of paint spots; painters consider the texture when they select paper expecting to obtain certain effects.

Greimas, Klinkenberg and Groupe μ reduced the study of plastic signs to planar representations. Just like Hildebrand they do not notice at least one important characteristic which sets sculpture apart from pictures: the minimal units in sculptor's disposal are the solid bodies, casings and grid-shells whose intrinsic property is the mass which can carry meanings related to the phenomena of gravity and inertia. As a semiotic phenomenon mass is treated explicitly by Michael O'Toole (1994: 32-84) who took over all the qualities of sculpture mentioned by Read attempting to conceptualize them theoretically. Alas, with no success. Five qualities are grouped under a category *mass as a system*: 1) center of gravity; 2) solidity / penetrability; 3) interplay with space; 4) line / relief; 5) plasticity. Despite the title only the first quality has a relation to the mass – it will be discussed extensively in this article later. Qualities 2 and 5 describe the properties of solid bodies as such rather than their mass: resistance to a more solid body and strength under load. Quality 3 is treated in terms of volumes; it is not specified whether and how the material filling is implied in this interplay. Quality 4 is related to the object's contour and surface; the author's explanation of its physical relation to the mass is untenable: 'A stress on relief and plasticity in the surface [...] draws attention to the mass more than to its linear qualities' (O'Toole 1994: 34). In no wise 'draws attention' explains how the mass is estimated by viewers and what effect the estimation has on interpretation.

Another problematic category is *equilibrium as a system* encompassing two qualities: 1) verticality (vertical, steep angle, shallow angle, horizontal) and 2) chtonicity (merged with the earth, earth bound, thrusting, airborne). Actually, equilibrium is the state of all sculptures otherwise they would fall down. What makes the plastic artwork to stay firmly on the ground is the correctly calculated center of gravity. Being the function of mass, it fits the category *mass as a system* better. An image of disequilibrium can be created for the artistic purposes by distributing masses in an unusual manner and holding the whole artwork together by special constructive structures.

Inadequacy of the concept of mass becomes evident when after the theoretical introduction O'Toole goes ahead with the analysis of monuments. He dispenses with the mass altogether treating three-dimensionality in Langer's way as a spatial property only: proportion of the parts, placement in the urban space and relations with the viewer. In the 30-pages long analysis of four sculptures the term *mass* appears only once in a quotation.

Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2006) dedicated a special chapter (titled: *The third dimension*) to sculpture and toys. The specific properties of these objects are material, surface, overall shape and composition; the mass is not mentioned at all. The main difference from pictures is that sculptures can be intended for observation either from only one side or from many sides because the viewer can move around. Surface and material engage tactile perception which helps the viewer to make sense of physical objects. Objects are not only looked at but also used. Nevertheless, art objects exposed indoors are not allowed to be approached and touched; for this reason, the viewer cannot see them from all possible angles and interact physically.

Robert Vance (1995) contends that a visual image owes to a combined work of different senses, but he explains nothing about the physical characteristics of sculpted objects which convey these senses in action. Observation of a sculpture evokes tactile, haptic and kinesthetic imaginings which involve somatic sensations; exercise of the latter engenders identifications with the sculpture so far that it is felt as an extension of the viewer's own body. In the final account, the feelings determine the visual features, i.e. what the viewer actually sees. 'The sculpture will look dynamic, threatening, or inscrutable, because it feels dynamic, threatening, or inscrutable' (Vance 1995: 225). Vance's feelings and imaginings are dispossessed of visible physical stimuli therefore the question remains open: why it feels like this?

Some more scholars expressed the urgent need to respect the phenomena of corporeality and mass, but they did not offer theoretical models and methods (e.g. Rogers 1962; Martin 1978; Serres [1987]2014: 89-111; Marsciani 1999; Koed 2005; Chateau 2010; Klinkenberg 2010; Savage 2010). Even a collection of articles under an intriguing title *La sémiotique visuelle: nouveaux paradigmes* (Costantini 2010) did not propose a new approach to 3D objects. The Soviet scholars on their part did respect the mass writing about large scale monuments but their problem was a lack of analytical precision. The notion of tectonics borrowed from the vocabulary of architects permitted to connect mass to meaning, but unfortunately the scholars failed to formalize the method of interpretation using the term as a metaphor. This is why we need to shift to architecture in the next section.

Tectonics of buildings

The term *tectonics* has a long history in German and Russian literature on architecture. It differentiates between the material and aesthetic aspects of construction industry. Karl Bötticher (1852: 1) has defined tectonics as 'the building and furnishing activity'. The construction activity depends not merely on physical requirements advanced to buildings but on beauty as well. To distinguish between two phenomena, Bötticher proposed the notions of core-form

(*Kernform*) and art-form (*Kunstform*) (1852: 21-26; see in Mallgrave 2006: 532). Core-form are the mechanical qualities of construction which keep it safe and stable while art-form expresses the mechanical functions of constructive parts. Bötticher favored those art-forms which articulated the physical laws intrinsic to core-form. Gottfried Semper ([1851]1989) in *The Four Elements of Architecture* regarded symbolic expressions as autonomous rather than dependent on constructive parts. In *Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst,* published one year later, he wrote about intrinsic and extrinsic variables. The former are the materials and technical means of production, the latter are the local, temporal, national and personal factors affecting the work.

Moisei Ginzburg (1927: 164) introduced the notion of tectonics in Russian discussing the constructivist architectural style. Tectonics refers to technical aspects of buildings such as articulation and proportion of parts of the whole. Subsequently other Russian authors added aesthetic aspects of constructions to their definitions of tectonics but still today there is no agreement on the proper use of the term. The various definitions connote one of these three features of the design:

> *Constructive*: rules of combination of parts permitting the stability of construction. Definitions highlighting this feature account for the technical aspects of constructions: relations between bearing and load, static strains.
>
> *Expressive*: visual exposure of the intrinsic qualities of constructive structures; the structure exists by virtue of relations of the real forces thus the structure might function as an ostensive sign of its own tectonics. Definitions respecting this feature refer to an image of forces keeping the whole building.
>
> *Artistic:* application of extrinsic artistic means to express the intrinsic qualities of constructive structures. Definitions stressing this feature hold that tectonics is an artistic tool evoking connotations.

Like Bötticher, the Soviet authors that adhered to rationalist architecture subordinated aesthetics to mechanics. Since safety of constructions and conveniences is valued above all, the building's visual appearance must represent the static strains truthfully in order to assure customers that it will not collapse. In the 1930s, authors greeted the return back to the principles of classicism because the clear mass of constructive bodies, delimited space, order composition and harmonious proportion of forms constituted the ideal of architecture (Lunacharsky 1934; Nekrasov 1934). Alexey Nekrasov ([1945-1946] 1994) defined tectonics as an image of a construction, i.e. an image of mass organized in order to preserve statics, balance and thereby the forces of gravitation, weight and stress intrinsic to the construction. Nekrasov treated the Rococo style with contempt exactly because its excessive decorations concealed the constructive elements ensuring the building's stability. Similar definitions of tectonics were given by other Soviet sources: artistic expression of structural patterns intrinsic to constructive system of building (*Bolshaia,* vol. 2, 1970); an expression of material and technical structure by aesthetic means and plastic expression of physical qualities of material (Tits 1976: 93). The most recent literature mentions similar arguments: architectural decorations should be used to imitate the structure's real forces, underline visual safety of constructions, stability of bearing and load proportion, strength of frame units, ponderability of bases (Artiukhovich 2011: 639; Batorevich and Kozhitseva 2001: 300; Ikonnikov 1986: 61; Ivanova and Stepanov 2007: 37; Pluzhnikov 2011: 26; Vlasov 2004: 160; Yusupov 1994: 352).

Gottfried Semper's book was published in Russian translation in 1970 but his idea of autonomous artistic expression got no acceptance among Russian authors. Alexey Tits and Elena Vorobyova (1986: 47-48) recognized what they called 'false tectonics' or 'atectonics'. They contend that for the artistic purposes the decorative forms may misrepresent the bearing capacity and the stress of construction elements. Still some authors characterize it as unnatural, inharmonious and sham (Sotnikov 2009: 54). Art historian Grigory Revzin (2002: 85-108) pointed that the disdain for atectonics prevented the Russian scholars from understanding the 19th century eclecticism. This style takes on special significance when one sees the façade as an expression of incorporeal surface on which decorations are hanging and gliding in the air.

Another ambiguous term is architectonics; its relation to tectonics is stated in three different ways:

> Architectonics is a synonym of tectonics (*Bolshaia* vol. 2, 1970; dictionaries of Russian language).

> Tectonics connotes the structure or intrinsic constructive qualities; and architectonics connotes the surface or extrinsic artistic exposure (dictionaries of architecture; Vlasov 2004).

> Architectonics is a general term encompassing the principles of composition in arts; tectonics is a particular term referring to 3D objects (dictionaries of culture).

There are historical reasons explaining and justifying the use of building vocabulary in plastic art. Making a bid for the state and municipal contracts the scholars of arts discussed sculpture in close coordination with the new architectural design of the modern industrial urban environment. Consequently, the sculpture's dimensions increased in proportion to the surrounding buildings and sculptors needed an adequate language to talk about these monumental structures. Next section traces back the gigantism turn of the outdoor sculpture in the Soviet Union.

Soviet sculpture becomes massive

The idea of political communication by means of sculpture – *monumentalnaya propaganda* – advanced by the Bolshevik government in 1918 provided the political rationale to artistic endeavors. The Russian adjective *monumentalnaya* signifies that the political communication is being accomplished by means of commemorative signs. In the given economic conditions, the government had no intention to carve huge 'monumental' sculptures. Among the first monuments there were many small busts cast in non-permanent materials – plaster and concrete. In 1925, a government commission supervising the production of outdoor sculptures pinpointed about *monumentalnost'*: 'a part of an architectural composition inextricably connected to its environment and having the nature of a permanent structure (e.g., monuments, busts, bas-reliefs)'[1]. The turn to gigantism occurred in the early 1930s and it is related to the tender for a monument to Columbus in Santo Domingo. Soviet constructivists designed several projects for the competition but all of them were rejected by the jury on the ground of missed monumentality, static and sublime character (Kazus' 2010). Specifications of the ensuing tenders in the Soviet Union reveal that the managers of architecture took in account the international critique. A tender for Lenin monument atop the beacon in the Leningrad seaport specified that the 120-meters-high construction had to become the highest monument in the world (*Pravda* 8 December 1931). In February 1932 the Government committee supervising the project of the Palace of Soviets in Moscow demanded the *monumentalnost'* of architectural forms (*Soviet* 1932). The *monumentalnost'* turn can be explained as a response to what was perceived as a new trend in the international outdoor sculpture set by the Columbus monument competition jury but there was also a local pragmatically dictated necessity. Having realized the lack of capacity to provide comfortable housing for all, the government opted for designing ostentatious ceremonial ensembles (Khan-Magomedov 2001). Industrial structures and urban planning provided for spacious areas which required large sculptural decorations to complete a good composition. Convergence of architecture and sculpture was imminent in 1930s (Azizyan 2010). In 1937 the sculptor Sergei Merkurov used huge concrete blocks to erect the first gigantic statues of Lenin and Stalin at the entrance of the Moscow Canal, at Dubna near Moscow (Figure 1). In the same year a factory *Monumentskulptura* was founded in Leningrad to cast a politically important 7.8-meters-high bronze sculpture of Sergei Kirov, the very recently killed mayor of the city. By this time the maximal size of sculptures produced at the industrial facilities could not exceed 6.5 meters. Soon after the inauguration, the industrial plant manufactured four monuments 7.2–9-meters-high.[2]

Figure 1: S. Merkurov. Stalin monument in Dubna. 1937-1961. Concrete, h=37 m. Courtesy of the National Archives of Estonia.

An unpublished dictionary of notions of arts drafted by the arts scholars in late 1920s inaugurated the treatment of *monumentalnost'* in terms of physical dimensions: 'mostly it is related to emphasizing the mass' (Chubarov 2005: 285). From 1950s the trend to gigantism is respected in the Russian language dictionaries and encyclopedias. The Russian has two words to designate outdoor sculpture. What the Oxford Dictionary defines as 'a statue, building, or other structure erected to commemorate a notable person or event' is *pamiatnik* (*pamiat'* – memory). Another Russian word *monument* designates a large commemorative structure. The noun has absorbed also the connotations of English adjective *monumental* – 'great in importance, extent, or size'. The first edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* made no such a distinction still. There is no an entry *monument*, while the entry *monumentalnost'* disclaims the importance of dimensions: 'Almost usually the bourgeois art historians treat *monumentalnost'* from the quantitative point of view (dimensions of monument), which is absolutely wrong' (*Bolshaia* 1938, vol. 40: 156). The second edition recognized the new trend in the definition of the word *monument*: 'usually monuments are of large-scale and mighty, monumental forms' (*Bolshaia* 1954, vol. 28: 262). The third edition defined monument as 'a *pamiatnik* of a considerable magnitude in honor of a great historical event, great public personality etc. Often monument is a conceptual and spatial-extensional dominant of architectural ensemble' (Bolshaia 1974, vol. 16: 550). Sculpture in the round was included among the objects of architectonics / tectonics (*Bolshaia* 1970, vol. 2: 296).

Latvians develop a new plastic language

Despite the new role assigned to sculpture in the architectural environment of industrial towns, a new plastic language of *monumentalnost'* was developing slowly. Among the reasons was the absence of appropriate workshops and disregard of peculiar properties of large-scale sculpture by customers and artists who used simply to scale up an easel work to the given proportions of urban space[3]. An idiosyncratic plastic language of *monumentalnost'* was pioneered by Latvian sculptors. The founder of the Latvian school of sculpture, Teodors Zaļkalns (1876-1972), drew inspiration from the huge monuments of Ancient Egypt. The Soviet government made possible the realization of his artistic ambitions in practice: the new urban design fostered production of large artwork while the function of political communication assigned to outdoor sculpture facilitated access to large financial resources. From mid-1960s to 1990 successfully Latvian sculptors and architects lobbied for state and municipal budgets (Kruk 2010) and accumulated a great technical and artistic experience of assembling large monuments from heavy solid bodies[4]. Browsing 10,000 photos of Lenin monuments collected by Dmitry Kudinov at *leninstatues.ru* one can easily find out that Latvian sculptures were the most interesting; their grandeur evokes more connotations because of the effective use of the mass as a plastic sign.

Technically, mass sets the limits on spatial manipulations with the building blocks of monuments, i.e. on the load and support proportions. To assemble an artwork from heavy pieces of metal and stone the sculptor must consider the mechanic forces keeping the parts together. Latvian artists applied various engineering solutions enabling creative manipulation with load and support so that the unorthodox distribution of masses evoked more connotations besides ones triggered by the iconic images. Scholars of architecture and design disapproved a sophisticated distribution of masses concealing the secure constructive structures: seemingly violating the gravity law it makes constructions to look unsafe. Impression of safety is less important for the artwork because viewers are not obliged to 'risk their life' approaching and touching the object. However, designers use to play with atectonic unsafety for the emotional purposes. For example, to access the exposition of the memorial to Nazi victims in Salaspils one has to walk upstairs by the unstable knocking cement footsteps. Kinetic and auditory experience causes a visceral response when entering the place of suffering.

Atectonic structures prompt viewers to restore the impression of physical balance by reinterpreting the visually perceived mechanical strains created by the seemingly unbalanced distribution of masses. Pointing at the mass the sculptor evokes connotations related to gravity and momentum forces: motion *versus* stasis, fast *versus* slow, change *versus* stability. Mass as a plastic sign makes possible an analytical delimitation of three currents of the Soviet sculpture which mobilize meanings specific to static, dynamic and ambiguous solid bodies.

Static sculptures are tectonic objects: exposure of constructive structure reveals safety of the installations. Stone monuments are realized as monoliths or assembled from granite blocks; bronze sculptures are screwed from constitutive elements avoiding jutting parts that would have displaced the center of mass. Sculptures stand firmly on a plinth or a larger pedestal. Mechanical strains between load and support connote stability, constancy, authority, power, certitude. In the political context of Leonid Brezhnev's Soviet Union of the 1970s, later dubbed *stagnation*, these connotations conformed to the dominant discourse of the victory of socialism and stability. An art critique explained the connotations of Lenin monuments carved by Juris Mauriņš (Figure 2).

Mauriņš does not represent a concrete documented event in the image, he does not strive for a nuanced psychological characterisation. Rather he tries to express the essence by the very sculptural masses. In town of Balvi the Lenin monument personifies the orator's persuasive force. A monolith, dynamic granite figure is arising from the tribune in a rapid motion... Tectonic expression has been magnified by the silhouette, figure's dynamics, and sharp linear rhythms of sculptural masses. This reinforces the symbolic meaning of the image. (Cielava 1980: 56)

Figure 2: J. Mauriņš. Lenin monument in Balvi. 1973-1991. Granite, h=6 m. Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Lenin's monument in the central square in Alūksne (Figure 3) suggests that it is not the body's volume that makes the space proportional. The 3.5-meters-high red granite bust was put on a granite plates coated pedestal of approximately the same height but more than twice wider than the sculpture. By virtue of its mass – the bust's weight is 55 metric tons – the monument is a centripetal focus of a large square organizing gravity and balance of masses of surrounding buildings. A light conventional portrait stature could have not provided for a similar sense of proportion.

Figure 3: G. Grundberga. Lenin monument in Alūskne. 1970-1991. Granite, h=3.5 m. Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

The 7-meters-high red granite monument to Red Latvian Riflemen, unveiled in Riga in 1971, represents three men on guard (Figure 4). The sculpture dominates the central square in the old town destroyed during the war and reconstructed to accommodate the monument. Actually, the square was redesigned as a gravitational interaction of masses. Perpendicular building of a museum cuts the large area in two and the monument organizes the space between the building and the river. In post-Soviet years the important political symbol was degraded by making its mass at odds with the general arrangement of the square. A kiosk and tourist bus parking place arranged nearby displaced the center of gravity so far that the robust piece of granite became a foreign body here.

Gravitational function was accorded to a static standing figure of the Soviet Latvia government leader, Pēteris Stučka, unveiled in Aizkraukle in 1978 (Figure 5). The town was founded just two decades earlier as a dwelling space for the employees of a hydro-electric power station inaugurated in 1965. Built-up area consists of many standard four-story houses with monotonous brick facades; buildings are distributed symmetrically leaving a large free space for public manifestations. Star architecture places the bronze statue in the geometrical center of dynamic forces and its mass connotes the gravitational center. Sculpture is comparable to houses in height but its compact volume, the material and evenly spaced location creates an impression of balancing the entire urban composition which otherwise misses some historically developed and semantically anchored attraction points.

Figure 4: V. Albergs. Monument to the Red Latvian Riflemen in Riga. 1971. Granite, h=7 m (figure). Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Figure 5: M. Lukaža, I. Lukažs, Z. Ķēde. Monument to Pēteris Stučka in Aizkraukle. 1978-1991. Bronze, h=7 m (figure), granite, h=1 m (pedestal). Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

The generation of young sculptors that graduated the Arts Academy in 1960s renounced the tectonic principles of their teachers in order to explore the connotative resources of dynamic atectonic constructions. Sophisticated techniques permit the misrepresentation of mechanical load / support strains. The load bearing structures of sculptures are concealed in two ways: 1) the casing of metal plates hides its supportive carcass, 2) the contact area between sculpture and its support is disproportionally small and the joints are not exposed. Since the exposed distribution of masses violates the gravity law, the viewers are expected to imagine the load as a gliding body, evoking connotations of motion, change and tensity.

Projects put out to a tender for the construction of the World War II memorial in Audriņi, in 1962, reflected the artists' efforts to discover the expressivity of complex constructive structures (Figure 6). The jury selected a traditional design with clear tectonics (a scaled-up easel sculpture); a more dynamic composition provoked controversial appraisals. A jury member claimed that the project was too far modern and incomprehensible for the public, whereas an art critic praised the contrast between light architectural forms and strong figurative sculptures (Červonnaja 1962). The rejected design envisaged an irregular form column with a cantilever platform in its lower part on which a small figure of crying child was standing. The construction symbolized the remaining carcass of a masonry stove of a house burnt to ashes. The atectonic memorial indeed stands for an unsteady building having lost its constructive strength in flames. Sculptors Zenta Zvara and Valdis Albergs and architect Ivars Srautmanis proceeded with false tectonics in a World War II monument in Vietalva in 1968 (Figure 7). They drew the symbolical advantage of the load/support proportion. A tapping copper sculpture of two battling knights (sword and shield refer to the battles of Latvian tribes against Teutonic knights) is placed on two short columns which stand on a disproportionally large pedestal erected on an artificial hillock. Two metal beams serving as an immediate support to the sculptures connote the frame of what is recognized as a mythical event described in an epic poem. The gliding effect on the sky background strengthens immateriality of the image thereby justifying the presence of a mythical scene in the war memorial.

The bronze monument to writer Andrejs Upītis, rather cautiously, departs from the granite-like statics by imparting dynamics to a minor accessory: a coattail is deflected suggesting a breath of wind (Figure 8). The image of a World War II hero, Imants Sudmalis, carries more impressive signs of motion (Figure 9). The personage wears a waterproof cape fluttering in the wind, his right arm is bended and left arm is stretched back. Looking from the side the bronze cape appears as misbalancing the figure; to make sense of the artwork the viewer has to interpret this portion of bronze as an accessory cast in light material.

Figure 6: Z. Zvara and V. Albergs. Design of the monument to the Nazi Victims in Audriņi. 1962. Courtesy of the Latvian Academy of Arts.

Figure 7: Z. Zvara and V. Albergs. World War II memorial in Vietalva.1968. Copper, h=3 m (figure), reinforced concrete, h=18 m (obelisk). Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

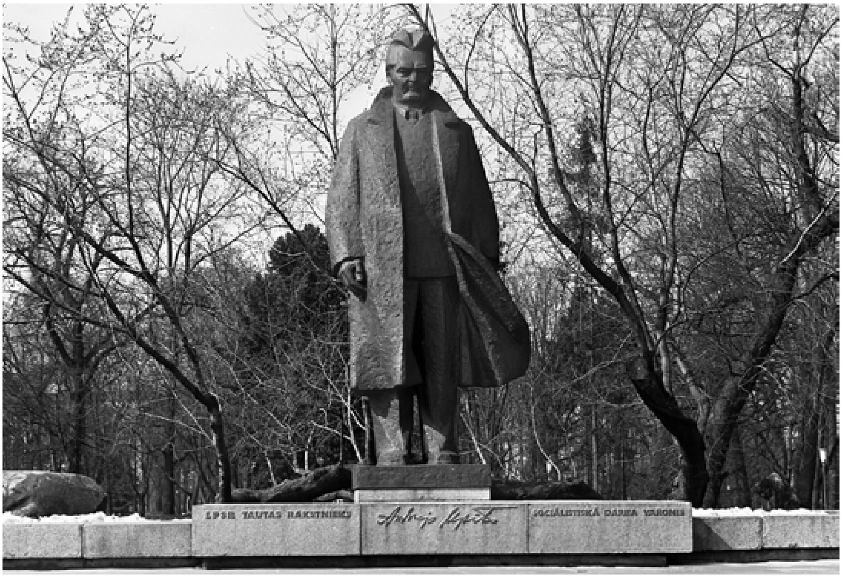

Figure 8: A. Terpilovskis. Monument to the writer A. Upīts in Riga. 1982. Bronze, h=4.5 m. Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Figure 9: V. Albergs and G. Grundberga. Monument to World War II hero I. Sudmalis. Liepāja. 1978-1995. Bronze, h=7 m (figure), concrete, h=7.5 m (haut-reliefs). Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Casing on a carcass permits a more complex manipulation with masses. Rasa Kalniņa-Grīnberga designed a monument to World War II soldiers (1984) in Jelgava (Figure 10). The image represents three heads of warriors emerging from the flames. The sculpture was molded in steel reinforced plaster and sheathed with copper plates. Due to negligence the plaster had not been removed from the sculpture; the reinforcement bars corroded in the course of time undermining the stability of construction. The municipality disposed no resources for the restoration, to escape the imminent collapse the monument had to be dismantled in 1997.

Figure 10: R. Kalniņa-Grīnberga. World War II memorial in Jelgava.1984-1997. Copper and granite. Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Cantilever technology is another means imparting dynamics to monuments. *Muse of Revolution* is a bronze female figure supported as a cantilever on a column (Figure 11). The effect of a gliding body is strengthened by the dynamic positioning of hands. World War II monument in Valmiera consists of two travertine faced walls whose bases are narrower than upper parts (Figure 12). The walls are united by horizontally attached cantilevers – bronze figures of soldiers. One of them is firmly attached to the wall – a fallen man, the second looks rising on his feet.

It is not the material that dictates the construction technique. Some artists working in bronze and copper treated mass just like their colleagues did with granite. Figures have lowered hands, closed legs-columns stand on a low plinth – the center of mass secures a firm balance. Pauls Jaunzems on his turn manages to impart dynamics to bulky stone compositions. As the joints between stones are not visible, the whole aggregate leaves an impression of precariously balanced masses. The visually perceived meaning is grasped by the titles: *The Balance*, *The Sign* and *The Sky* (Figure 13). These compositions are made of two ellipsoid polished stones placed on each other. The stones are joined in the point of contact of two elliptic surfaces without any evidence of metal reinforcement. The viewer expects a quick sliding of the upper body due to its mass and low friction of polished surfaces however a precarious balance is enduring. A metaphorical interpretation can reconcile the viewer with physical impossibility of persisting mechanical tension.

Figure 11: A. Gulbis. „The Muse of Revolution" in Riga. 1971. Copper (figure), travertine (wall). Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Figure 12: Z. Fernava and Yu. Tishchenko. World War II memorial in Valmiera. 1985. Bronze (figure), travertine (wall). Photo by Sergei Kruk.

Figure 13: P. Jaunzems. Decorative sculpture „The Sky" in Jūrmala. 1990. Granite. Photo by Sergei Kruk.

Concerns with the mass induced connotations were behind the choice of material for the monument of cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin (Figure 14). The initial design envisaged a granite bust, but underway the authors opted for the bronze. The spherical bust represents the space-suit helmet and also it resembles the spaceship *Vostok* descent vehicle. A narrow contact area between the sphere and its pedestal connotes the readiness to lift off, the upward direction is indicated by two clusters of eight meters high duralumin poles arranged behind the sphere. A round plinth connoting the launch pad strengthens the impressions of final countdown and vertical dynamics. In this isotopy a hollow metal artefact has more chances to get off the ground than a heavy granite object envisaged initially.

In 2008, Pauls Jaunzems achieved the opposite effect contrasting body's shape to mass. A composition *Morning* consists of 15 bright polished red granite balls of 65 centimeters diameter regularly arranged in the museum's hall. The spherical form and polished surface connote smooth movement whereas the granite mass hampers this interpretation. The balls are placed amid the Tuscan order columns which magnify the effect of stark stability. Seeking to visualize the mass the installation of exposition was turned into a spectacular athletic performance. Weightlifting athletes carrying the granite balls into the museum reminded the public that the mass can convey meaning too.

Figure 14: O. Siliņš. Yuri Gagarin monument in Ventspils. 1972-1992. Bronze, dia=3 m (bust), duralumin, h=8 m (poles). Courtesy of the National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Ambiguous sculptural bodies engage mass in consideration explicitly. Sculptor Aigars Bikše exposes the mass of his artwork drawing the viewer's attention to its material structure. The content of the visual message – the figurative image – is relegated to the second plan because the author wants to deconstruct the meaning of the word *monument*. In 2009, a sculptural image of Lenin was placed in Riga right where the monument was standing in 1950-1991 (Figures 15-17). The image was made of soft plastic material which was inflated and flattened periodically. Light as the air the monument can be removed, stored and re-erected with ease. The sculpture turns the famous expression of Karl Marx against the Soviet variant of Marxism: the Lenin monument that once was solid melts into air. Ironically such a kind of monuments suits well the giddy turnabouts of the East European countries with their abrupt changes of political regimes. Inflatable sculpture is a handy tool for the symbolic expression of loyalty. Five years later Bikše carved sculptures representing German, Polish, Swedish and Russian rule in Riga since the 13th century. Fixed on hoisting devices inside a black wooden box these sculptures emerged above the box-pedestal one after another. Bikše's urban installations are monuments because they commemorate a prominent person or a historical event by virtue of iconic likeness; but the material structure deprives them the status of monument because they are not durable and can be dismantled effortlessly.

Figures 15 and 16: A. Bikše. A parody on Lenin monument in Riga. 2009. Photo by Sergei Kruk.

The third example is an installation in support of the Contemporary Art Museum in Riga whose project has been delayed for several years. Fourteen plastic sculptures of snails were scattered on the urban streets and parks in May 2014. Wooden planks placed behind the snails carried a text: *Stand up here and push! Help us to the Contemporary Art Museum project to get started. Take a picture of yourself pushing*. The artists envisaged that a direct experience of mass would motivate the passers-by to reflect on their verbal message and to create meaning of this public intervention in government cultural policy.

Figure 17: V. Ingal and V. Bogoliubov. Lenin monument in Riga. 1950-1991. Bronze, h=6 m (figure), granite, h= 6.25 m (pedestal). Photo by Boris Kolesnikov. Courtesy of the author.

Explicitly this last case respects Herder's idea that perception of objects involves the sense of touch. Nevertheless, there are many objects which we cannot touch even if we are allowed to. How can we perceive the mass as a plastic sign observing monuments visually?

Perceiving and interpreting the mass

The load/support strains increase a connotative potential of sculptural artwork. But how can we perceive the physical characteristics of its constructive blocks when we cannot explore them haptically i.e. by touching and handling them? I have not found a direct answer to this question in psychology of visual perception. Nevertheless, the progress of this discipline suggests some encouraging findings for semiotics of sculpture. Neuroscientists maintain that human vision is not a unitary psychological ability; seeing is not a single kind of action (Jacob and Jeannerod 2003). A distinction between inferential and ecological theories of perception (Lappin 2013) is helpful explaining the difference of semiotic analysis of 2D and 3D phenomena. Inferential theories are preoccupied with elementary attributes directly related to elementary coding processes of a single sensory modality akin to Peircean Firstness. The belief that the information about other qualities of a visual object is being merely inferred from the sensory data in the course of cognitive process accords priority to directly perceivable plastic signs like forms, lines and colors. The brain creates a coherent 3D organization of perceived scenes, characteristics and meanings from a limited sensory evidence about objects and events. Empirical and theoretical evidence however exposes the inadequacy of this conception. Our visual perception cannot be reduced to the study of the sensory input alone (Gordon 2004; Grossberg 2004; Mausfeld 2010; Reisberg 2010). Visual exploration of objects is influenced by our ability to act on the environment. Relations between perception and behavior are examined in the ecological theory. 'Efficient visual exploration depends on deciding how to coordinate visual exploration amidst the informational and motor demands of other ongoing actions [...]. Nearly every study of naturalistic visual exploration shows the importance of task, self, and whole-body exploration' (Franchak 2019: 219). Inferential theories study vision as looking at rather than as looking around. James Gibson, the founder of the ecological approach in psychology of perception, distinguishes between the visual field and the visual world. The former 'consists of a patchwork of colors something like a picture' whereas the latter 'consists of familiar surfaces and objects one behind another' (Gibson 2015: 196). Looking around is an active process involving not only eyes but movement of the head and body. We become aware of the world actively exploring the environment over time. Not only the appearance of an object is interesting for us, but we might want also to know about its functions. The entire process of perception depends on the perceiver's knowledge and purposes in the contact with reality, the ecological theory contends (Franchak 2019; Lappin 2013). Properties of objects which are not expressed by purely visual attributes can be grasped visually by the viewer. 'This capacity is part of our more general perceptual capacity for making causal assignments and for embedding all of our experiences into various kinds of internal causal analyses' (Mausfeld 2010: 159). The perceiver goes beyond the information given in organizing and interpreting the visual input. Two different paths of visual stimuli processing revealed by neuroscience – ventral and dorsal – are comparable to *looking at* and *looking around* modalities. A teacup, for example, can arouse a visual percept and also it can be the target of reaching and grasping. 'The semantic processing of a visual stimulus yields a visual percept, whereas basic pragmatic processing yields a visuomotor representation of a target for action' (Jacob and Jeannerod 2003: 247)

Iconic representations of faces, bodies and objects, geometrical forms, colors, spatial distribution of volumes – these visually perceived features might suffice to understand the artwork. Sculptors choose construction materials and techniques of blocks assembly in order to draw viewer's attention to the physical qualities intrinsic to solid body. As viewers we have enough time to explore the outdoor sculpture which is a part of our everyday life. Since it is present to our attention constantly, we can observe it from different angles, in different weather conditions, being in different emotional and cognitive states ourselves. Also, we act towards the sculptures: we pass them by daily, at the foot of monument we make a date, lay flowers and take photos. Practical experience of the surrounding world helps us to tell materials one from another. In any case, the sculptor does not set a riddle to solve using the formula $m=V\rho$, where the density ρ most often cannot be estimated visually. Artists may imitate the surfaces and disguise the solid body's mass behind a coating made of less dense material. Mass as a plastic sign should not be confused with the physical mass of the object. Manipulating with the load/support distribution the sculptor makes the viewer to think about the mass which sparks off new meanings related to gravity and inertia forces. Physical mass tells us about the technology of solid image production, mass as a plastic sign engages us in semiosis.

Conclusion

There is a long tradition of analyzing sculpture like planar images. The notion of plastic signs as minimal units composing complex iconic signs and carrying meaning specific to their materiality allows treating mass as a semiotic resource peculiar to sculpture and 3D objects in general. The minimal construction units of sculptures are solid bodies, casings and gridshells possessing the mass. Assembling an artwork, the sculptor distributes the masses of construction units in space. Being the measure of gravity and inertia, the exposed mass evokes connotations corresponding to these physical qualities: motion, standstill, slowness, speed, change, stability. Even if touching and handling sculptures often is not possible we can infer the object's mass from the visual input, psychology of perception suggests. The mass qualifies as a plastic sign *sui generis* because it is a signifier which we can perceive visually and it is related to a range of signifieds which we can actualize interpreting the context of artistic message.

NOTES

1 Central State Archive of Literature and Art in St. Petersburg, TsGALI SPb. F. 283. Op.2. D. 1105. L. 29.
2 TsGALI SPb. F. 283. Op. 2. D. 3964. L. 9, 14-19.
3 TsGALI SPb. F. 78. Op. 1. D. 363. L. 13.

4 Estonian law erected bureaucratic barriers to large-scale art exceeding 15,000 rubles cost (Kruk 2016). The easel sculpture tradition was more significant for Estonian monument-makers. Lithuanian artists followed the path of traditional and Catholic baroque wooden sculpture.

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Sergei Kruk is Professor of Communication at Riga Stradins University, Latvia.
Email: sergei.kruk@gmail.com

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The non-monuments: Popular artifacts

Ariel Barbieri

The article pursues two main aims: first, to construct a definition of what I call a 'non-monument', based on a dialogue with the field of commemorative monumentality and deconstructive anti-monumentality; second, to describe possible variants of these popular artifacts as well as potential criteria that allow their classification. Inspired by the reflection on American aesthetics proposed by Rodolfo Kusch and in dialogue with semiotic categories developed by Juan Magariños de Morentín, I take the assumption that non-monuments, despite proposing a deconstruction of the commemorative as anti-monuments do, they do so from a different perspective: they put into practice those discourses located in a specific territory that belong to the doxa, to the people, to the forms of popular saying (Magariños 2010). In this sense, they are non-monuments because a) they do not continue neither deny the commemorative monumentality nor the different forms of anti-monumentality and counter-monumentality; b) they do not recover official, social, historical or underground memories; c) they do not propose the same themes as the commemorative sites for the construction of collective identities; and d) despite all this, they are singular artifacts that propose to articulate the habituality of the discourses in order to put popular culture into action.In this way, from the development of this definition, in a second moment, different non-monumental proposals are described, as popular artifact projects for the Viedma-Carmen de Patagones comarca, province of Río Negro and province of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Projects that are born from an archaeological work with popular discourses for their implementation.

Keywords Non-monuments, Anti-monumentality, Commemoration, Popular Artifacts, Argentina

Introduction

The field of contemporary art is confronted with the issue of setting theoretical categories for the analysis of works of art holding no direct relation to the conditions and places within

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which art is created in the context of Latin America. Stemming from Western philosophy, the suggested conceptualizations on art in Latin America establish a kind of analysis that seems to disregard the wide variety of ways to do and to think about the *est-ético* (esthetic-ethic) in this territory (Ongaro Haelterman 2016). In this sense, developing a proposal to validate a planned work of art which I have entitled non-monuments/popular artifacts is, above all, a controversial task within academic spheres, as it challenges previous work that has historically allowed to prove the validity of artistic creations.

Firstly, as it involves a methodological and epistemological approach that questions the positive grounds for the concepts taken into consideration when considering a work of art. This opens the possibility for a kind of reflection that suggests deconstructing the methods to stay away from building mere tautological knowledge (Kusch 1975). Secondly, putting such a proposal into practice also involves considering art, the subject and the object, from a new philosophical field reconciling the body, the act of inhabiting and cohabiting in the symbolic universe in progress. In other words, the illusion of referentiality of that modern subject disappears and, as a hypothesis, he is built up through a way of inhabiting, speaking, emerging with the language. Thirdly, it is the symbolic order that enables us to consider culture as the necessary framework for the development of a theory. This theory is born from a praxis, a way of doing or a state of being throughout that process as the conditions, in our case, of the culture within a specific territory – as a symbolic template that shapes life. Such theory allows to develop interrelations with this proposal to establish the meanings to build the scope of memories and stories projected by the work of art under consideration.

In the present paper, the term *territory* refers to the concept of country as a crystallized convention of the idea of nation state. In this way, it is possible to go back over the process of doing that takes into consideration not only historic determinations of a continuist discourse, but also, the reinvention of a heterogenous place that when spread allows for the emergence of a new space where we can think about ourselves. Furthermore, I also deem necessary to define what is understood as theory. The purpose of Kusch´s philosophical anthropology is not to define a theory, but a way of doing which lead to a theory, as the categories of technical rationality are left aside in order to consider a new subject of study: the people. Being this the case, theory does not precede practice, but practice reinvents theory (Kusch 1975).

Next, it is worth mentioning that the present epistemological development that comes from the Latin American anthropological philosophy is introduced in the present paper in an experimental dialogue with categories developed at a semiotic level by Juan Magariños de Morentín in his last two papers: the research project *La Universidad de la calle* (The University of the Street, 2011) written in Jujuy, Argentina and the lecture presented at the *X Congreso Mundial de Semiótica* (10th International Congress on Semiotics) entitled *Relación entre la historia de la humanidad y la historia de los sistemas semióticos* (Relation between the history of humankind and the history of semiotic systems). This is not a random convergence but the result of my own eclectic journey as, along the different paths, I was able to establish connections between the field of semiotics and the field of contemporary art, and in this case, this experience establishes a unique articulation for this planned work of art in progress: the non-monuments.

Finally, this paper aims to hold a dialogue with a developing area within the field of semiotics from a propositional search that describes the conditions of possibility for the construction of a concrete artifact in a territory. In this sense, the present paper may share, in some way, the analytic framework of contemporary semiotic research on monuments and memorials, such as those by Federico Bellentani and Mario Panico[1] in their work on the meanings of monuments and memorials, Natalia Krzyżanowska[2] analyzes the counter-monument discourse and the material commemoration in contemporary urban spaces and Ignacio Brescó and Brady Wagoner, that describe a possible analysis of the affective intertwining of personal and collective memories, looking at the connection between monuments and an inclusive *we*.[3]

After these first clarifications, this paper provides an epistemological foundation that provides support for the non-monuments to take part in or be part of the construction of public space. In this way, they may be able to bring together the different meanings introduced by official discourses in the cultures with in Latin America. In this sense, this paper does not exhaust the subject it deals with: on the contrary, its main purpose is to set the conditions for future developments that help systematize the current proposition.

Between commemoration and Western deconstruction

A monument, in its oldest and most original sense, is a human creation, erected for a specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events alive in the minds of future generations. (Riegl 1903)

What we call non-monumentality can be firstly defined taking as a reference the definition of monument introduced by Alois Riegl at the beginning of last century. The elements present in this definition may serve as suggested guidelines that lead our thoughts. First, Riegl states that a monument is a human creation; second, that it is created for a specific purpose: to keep single human deeds or events alive in the minds of future generations. Therefore, this creation that is the monument intends to communicate what happened so that future generations can keep this classification in mind and the past can become a closed file that gives the illusion of acting as a reference. A symbolic icon which seems to spare ourselves of the need to remember. Nevertheless, keeping these facts as symbols of the illusion of immobility of the past, we need to count on the performativity of the artifact, and also on a series of rituals and rules that set the conditions for potential interpretations and expressions.

As Rosalind Krauss (1979) points out in connection with the gap in the conception of modern monumentality in the late 1960´s, regarding both, the different ways to do in sculpture within an expanded field, and the questioning of the continuist historicism of a history of art that seems to be waiting for facts to emerge in order to place them along the same time line, what seems to validate the transformation of monuments is the appearance of works of art in the public space which take distance from their possible reference, opening the possibility for conceptual dispersion and allowing us to bring to the forefront those elements that are part of the artifact, the different roles artists may have and the possible meanings that interact with the landscape and the architecture when we do not only have a commemorative purpose.

This point of view suggests breaking away from modern forms of commemoration, while being pioneer in denying the modern, Western and European monumentality, from this experimental connection with sculpture and with the different languages combined in the public space. From experimentation, this gap sets the conditions of possibility to engage into a discussion within the field of arts and the interrelation between contemporary art, social and human sciences to create public art and, specifically, anti-monumentality and negative memories. In this way, what several authors and artists define as negative memory and anti-monumentality in the West[4] is the result of not only a new conceptualization of memories and histories after gathering other facts, such as tragedies and crimes against humanity, but also the construction of works of art that deny Western monumentality. In this sense, and along two paths that complement each other and come together, the use of metalanguage suggested by European and American contemporary art, which revolves around the object monument with the aim of exposing its boundaries and a conceptual ambiguity that deconstructs that modern ritual, finds the need to establish a new representation of the memory of tragic and collective events after World War II. In other words, anti-monumentality is possible thanks to a previous experimental period, a practice that elicits certain ways of thinking, and expressing. Hence non-monumentality becomes a new practice to aesthetically and conceptually deconstruct traditional commemorative monumentality: see for example the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (1982) by Maya Lin; *Aschrott Fountain* (1987) by Horst Hoheisel; *Monument against Fascism* (1986-1996) by Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz; *Stolpersteine* (starting from 1990) by Gunter Demnig.

At this point, we can observe that the theoretical pair *monumentality/anti-monumentality*, which holds a correlation with the pair *positive memory/negative memory*, seeks to regroup different actions, site-specifics, architectures, performances to make negative memories clearly visible essentially in the second pole: anti-monuments. Anti-monuments are diverse and heterogenous, but they share a common feature: they establish a criticism of commemoration from recovering some versions of the past set aside and/or absent, disclosing tragedies and crimes taking place in a specific territory or included in the rituals and the agenda of nation-states. Nevertheless, this proposal has been introduced from a static interpretation, as a result of the political group or groups taking part in the project development. As stated by Horst Hoheisel (2009):

> Everything produced by artists to remember the crimes of the past is wrong, including my own work. We simply have the chance to do it more or less incorrectly. However, we will never be able to draw the real picture of true history. What is true history? Is true history the one told by those in power to keep power, or is true history the one suffered by the oppressed? The Holocaust has been the most extreme event in the history of humankind so far, and every attempt to find an artistic metaphor for this event shapes a single great metaphor: the impossibility of portraying and reminding ourselves of the Holocaust through art. (Hoheisel 2009: 263)

By opening the possibility for deconstruction, this dichotomous pair developed in Europe establishes a necessary connection with monuments and turns them into places able to revise history and places of remembrance (Nora 1984) even by denying, demystifying or pluralizing them, as there is still a monumental reference in this criticism of a continuous lack of reflection in conflict. I also believe that anti-monuments are still places that hold an opposite referential link to monuments as it exists a correlation between the territory where they are created and the ways of building and conceptualizing both artifacts. Nevertheless, there are some Latin American cases (among others, Nele Azevedo in Brazil and Doris Salcedo in Colombia) that engage in a dialogue with the features of artifacts created in a different territory, establishing a transcultural conversation with anti-monumental experimentation making a significant distinction from those proposals. This is the case, for example, of the remembrance of the Jewish Holocaust, as its recent wounds are still open. In some of these cases, the work of art can be an artifact used by the state as a landmark to commemorate certain events or identities, as it is the case of Salcedo's *Fragmentos* analyzed by Patrizia Violi in this very issue.

As a result of the unique way of being-there in the territory of Latin America, apart from the contemporary proposals mentioned above, there may be other artists that aim to create different aesthetic artifacts based on certain semiotic operations providing the possibility to recover other histories and memories, which emerge from a new place: popular practices and discourses. There is a third position that neither commemorates in a positive way nor deconstructs in a negative way (nor the combination of both) but proposes to recover popular knowledge to give context to other ways of living and projecting, not only with a sense of the past and the present, but with the founding operation of a mobile identity.

State of being in the streets, a dialogue along the borders

In one of the last papers that Juan Magariños de Morentín published before his death, he reflected on the Argentine popular expression 'the university of the street' with the aim of specifying the possible scope of this concept, defining a research problem and, at the same time, developing a unique approach to the concept of social cognition from the analysis of semiotic behaviors. In this article published in issue 39 of *Cuadernos de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales* (Notebooks of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) of the *Universidad Nacional de Jujuy* (National University of Jujuy), Magariños (2011:20) defines the university of the street as such: '(...) the knowledge gained outside any specific institution (1) but acquired through the daily effort to live or survive in this vast area of personal relationships: in short, what people do to make a living or have an even better life'.

I believe this popular oxymoron allows the author to establish an articulation with the analysis of the doxa by understanding that the field of indicial semiotics and semiotic behaviors are those capable of creating the necessary conditions to produce popular discourses, metaphorical projections and projections of different objects, shapes and images that we learn without a systematic education and in connection with different practices represented/interpreted in the great teaching classroom called university of the street. Magariños conceives the streets as a unique place for the social construction of life skills needed for survival. These are learnt without our consent while inhabiting a specific time and place, while we are out in the streets, in a specific cultural context. According to this view, being-there in the streets, in a specific cultural context, projects a dynamic and open interpreter that moves around borders (Magariños 2008). Even when it comes from a different epistemic origin, this being-there can have a dialogue with the proposal developed by Rodolfo Kusch that defines the diversity of the being when there is a being-there that, as a sign, becomes the prelude for multiple possibilities of being.

Following Kusch, to inhabit a territory means to inhabit a language, as culture involves populating the world with signs and symbols in search for an existential home.[5] Those signs and symbols provide, yet momentarily, the understandings of the world needed to survive; as the author points out, it is needed to return to being-there as a condition for the pre-ontological possibility for the multiple ways of being we can project, while inventing our lives in Latin America. The term *inventing* is used because this is not an essentialist issue proper of inhabiting the South American region to seek an origin or an ultimate truth. On the contrary, what Kusch develops from his study on indigenous thinking, or on the 'style of thinking in the south of the American continent still present in some Creole populations' (Kusch 1970: 259)[6], is a close bond between being-there and thinking in a specific context. He makes evident the need to deny Western academic thinking to go back to those ways of inhabiting and saying that allow to articulate our own way of thinking in the context of a specific territory. For this reason, he understands that 'in order to trace that primary substrate, aboriginal tools are more important than the latest contributions of anthropology and psychology, as they both fail to understand the unique inwardness of the American people (Kusch 1970: 261).

In *Esbozo de una antropología filosófica Americana* (Outline of an American philosophical anthropology), Kusch (1978) considers the difference in meaning between being and being-there in Latin America by establishing and defining some of the etymological meanings of these verbs. This distinction, proper of the uniqueness of the Spanish language, introduces a signification of the terms *ser* (being, to be seated and static) and *estar* (being-there, to be standing and ready for action); this distinction allows Kusch to suggest a change in the attitude to think of and from Latin America: in his proposal, being-there comes before being, which is ultimately a temporary consequence of being-there[7]. In this and many other senses, this dialogue between Magariños and Kusch may pave the way for new criteria to do research on our ways of gaining knowledge in the collective space. At the same time, this unique semiotic operation described by Magariños may become the starting point to consider what is popular and what are the popular discourses arising from behavioral manifestations of personal and collective knowledge. From Kusch´s perspective, this knowledge is gained by the state of being with others in Latin America.

In the proposition of his research paper *The University of the Street*, Magariños analyzes the existing connection between popular saying, proverbs and behavior in the street. All these are not learnt through systematized teaching and are not taken into consideration as pedagogical knowledge:

> No pedagogical program includes such knowledge among its objectives, as it is considered degraded, vituperable and not deserving academic discussion (or is it the other way around?). I believe, however, that this practice involves cognitive aspects of which there is little awareness, either because it is preferred to leave them in the subconscious, for not considering them worthy to take the form of concrete and politically structured thoughts, or for keeping them to the unconscious, with the intention to ignore them in order to deny the importance of the vulgar in the construction of our identity.
>
> It is curious that, however, they have given rise to an extensive textual production and that this has been analyzed and interpreted in multiple ways in the academic contexts: such are the proverbs, which I consider to be verbal expressions of that popular and materialistic knowledge, which is not taught in schools or universities. Whose production and empirical transfer I intend to address. Nevertheless, I do not suggest going from proverbs to behavior, because once again we would fall into the trap of the words which, with its rules and constructive demands, would make us see the phenomena we are studying as their mere reflection, without being aware of that trap and assuming that what we see are common behavioral characteristics rather than features of the language that describes them; as a consequence, it would be included again in the formal knowledge. In any case, I believe that the itinerary should be the opposite: going from behavior to proverbs next. (Magariños 2011: 24, my translation)[8]

Both proposals by Kusch and Magariños suggest a unique bond between being-there and a way of gaining knowledge, from which the opportunity to project unconventional forms of history and memory in public spaces is created. Histories and memories allow us to witness popular behavior and discourses that come to life when conducting an archaeological excavation of popular knowledge in discourses that arise from different human relations in a specific territory.

Popular imagination as a gap

At this point, I would like to return to the semiotic process of popular non-monuments in concrete aesthetic operations. To do that, this section defines the suggested epistemological framework. Following both Kusch and Magariños, the considerations on being-there in a certain culture allows to understand the way in which the experience with what is unnamed and non-systematized becomes knowledge useful to live, to coexist with others, to live our emotions and eventually to survive. In this way, Magariños de Morentín goes back to the definition of social cognition provided by the cognitive-sciences dictionary, which is as follows:

> [...] The field of knowledge and competences related to people (oneself and others); the interpersonal relationships between individuals identified by functional and personal standards, in an immediate or relayed relation (communications, processes of mutual positioning and influence); relationship within a human group or between groups; social situations. These knowledge and competencies are related to emotions and affections, motives and intentions that animate social agents, habitually or in a particular circumstance, to the processes of adjustment, influence, avoidance and dissimulation. (Magariños 2011: 22, my translation)[9]

According to this definition, Magariños increases the distance between what he considers the learning style introduced by the intermediary social discourse of modern pedagogical practices, the knowledge of the world suggested by nation state and popular discourses resulting from other experiences, which help create other possible worlds.

> In short, when we try to study the world, what we study is the way in which the social discourse we perceive allows us to perceive that world. This social mediating discourse is constituted by the set of texts constructed with symbols, images, objects and behaviors, and reconstructed, always from a contemporaneity, like the update of those historical social discourses that have managed to be memorized, the spread of the current social discourses that have been heard and the display of social behavior that has become visible.

> I am saying this to be able to establish a space apart from all this, constituted by other apparently unnecessary or even embarrassing knowledge and, as such, excluded from conscious memory, hidden from perception and unprovable, and where one is witness to another landscape which is the result of another history; a space where one can find the cognitive contents of the University of the street, away from the golden prison of the pedagogy, but equally conciliatory in the construction of another world. (Magariños 2011: 23, my translation)[10]

Therefore, following the author´s ideas, it is possible to consider the way popular practices, or the semiotics of behavior in the streets, set the conditions for the development of popular expression. This popular expression creates a gap as it projects and shapes the everyday knowledge that is not gained through systematic study and is yet learnt and used as metaphors in popular discourses, even when forgetting about it[11]. That said, the conceptual hypothesis that the condition of possibility for the existence of non-monuments, as popular artifacts, is given by the behavior and popular expressions artists use or can use to create a new gap going from words to material projections. By combining different languages, this gap projects that knowledge in places other than memorials and official discourses pronounced by the pedagogy of a nation state, where other memories and histories may describe that untold closeness that was possible through the collective practice of being-there with others in the street, in a certain cultural context.

Popular artifacts: A located aesthetic-semiotic operation

At this point, the process that gives origin to non-monuments might be defined as ontopoietic, following the way Magariños considers the history of our understanding of the world where, apart from the reason, he also includes emotions and behavior in the streets (Magariños 2009). In his lecture at the 10 International Congress on Semiotics in La Coruña, Magariños looked at the history of humankind and the history of semiotic systems. He found a connection between three concepts to postulate the necessary semiotic operations that help explain the way we understand the world. This connection established through ontology, ontopathy and ontopoiesis, allows Magariños to explain how heart and reason come together when understanding the world. Reason is not enough: what remains untold, that feeling under our skin and that suffering can only be explained through an intended intervention in grammar. This perspective allows to get closer to understanding the world through ontopoiesis, i.e. the cornerstone for rational knowledge and sensorial perception. In the former case, with an explicit agreement with the grammar rules applied in a specific language at a given time; in the latter, introducing an interruption to create a gap for the emergence of emotions.

This intentional pause in the continuity of grammar opens the possibility for aesthetic considerations in any materiality. At the same time, in contemporary art, there is a unique articulation of artistic languages that come together in the creation of a work of art. Even if Magariños points out that this pause in grammar is not enough and there must be something that remains unexplained and keeps our emotions awake, a pathos), we can suggest this initial scheme as a possible semiotic description to consider not only modern art, as illustrated in the text quoted by the author, but also popular artifacts or non-monuments. In this way, this extrapolation opens the field of aesthetics-semiotics to the possible description of artistic gestures as conscious voluntary actions from which to establish a connection between sensory impressions and the intellect; an aesthetic operation or, as defined by Claudio Ongaro Haelterman taking Rodolfo Kusch´s ideas, operative aesthetics as a meeting point with the funding operation that defines the voluntary gesture made by the artist by breaking grammar rules and forcing an indicial ambiguity that bridges the gap between the heart and reason (Ongaro Haelterman 2008; Magariños 2009).

As Rodolfo Kusch explains, the American continent is a territory of mixed races where the ways of European thinking have had an influence on the available conceptual schemes to analyze the Latin American reality in that place in the world; epistemological assumptions have defined the being of Western modern philosophy as the necessary substrate for the genealogical development of this way of thinking in the south of the American continent to understand the world.

In the same way, to develop an American way of thinking, following the proposal introduced by Kusch, it is necessary to go back over the European philosophical pronouncements that have defined the peoples of the American continent. At this point, it is particularly important to look at the work developed by Kusch in which he suggests considering the temporality of the being, i.e. to learn about their mobility, their unique way of dwelling in provisional symbols that do not crystalize a specific meaning, but allows to temporarily inhabit a territory by being-there (Kusch 1978). In this sense, behavior is shaped by the pre-ontological being-there. Nevertheless, it is not pre-semiotic because even when there is no being: there can be a sign to name that stage as a state of doing, acting, moving. That state of doing that remains unnamed but we all know by means of the experience of learning by being-there and that has already become a sign, facilitates the emergence of new knowledge.

Likewise, the semiotic process for the projection of non-monuments could be the following: a given set of behaviors (being-there) is organized under different metaphors included in popular discourses and proverbs (a possibility of being) and eventually represented in the work of art located in a territory where other histories and memories (state of being) can appear. One of those beings is made up by popular behaviors and discourses as they help shape life´s lessons: proverbs, metaphoric projections in the streets, acting and inhabiting a territory.

Another possible being, that suggests a movement for this process of recovering knowledge from the university of the street, is bringing to life these discourses and behaviors through a work of art in the attempt to name our being-there, yet transitionally. In this way, a new articula1The experience is intimate, collective and unspeakable because that popular knowledge is created in the interaction with others, but also in our emotional privacy. These emotions remain untold and, in this way, allow to renew our suffering and other histories and memories that may, even temporarily, find a place in a specific territory.

Nobody will build a monument in your honor, a work in progress

Drawing on the epistemological framework proposed above, it is possible to develop the research and artistic creation project named *Nadie te va a hacer un monumento*[12] (hereafter Nobody will build a monument in your honor), which takes into consideration popular behaviors and discourses to build and develop different ways of making a work of art.

Nobody will build a monument in your honor is an Argentine popular proverb that means no matter the effort we make to achieve our goals, nobody is actually going to build a monument to commemorate our life or any aspect of our existence (Barbieri 2017). This demonstrates our marginal participation in the official history and makes evident that any possibility for assemblage is the result of conditions beyond our will. Nevertheless, *Nobody will build a monument in your honor* is a popular discourse resulting from the experience and learning gained by being with others in the streets, creating a language proper of our bodies, gestures and behavior designed by which takes into consideration popular behaviors and discourses aiming to build and develop different ways of making a work of art.

In his work *Geocultura del hombre americano* (Geoculture of the American man), Kusch develops a relevant idea for the present project by describing the opposition between being someone and just being-there, establishing a dialogue with another dichotomous pair: external encyclopedic knowledge and inner knowledge, inside ourselves. Kusch points out that being someone in our American culture involves using the tools provided by the Western encyclopedia, a tautological form of knowledge or instrumental knowledge, to be part of the cultural property, individualize ourselves and, in this way, overcome the fear of being dispersed.

On the other hand, being-there involves confronting the knowledge of not knowing we live and that we cannot explain, and as that knowledge is common to all, because it is part of our emotional privacy and it raises questions regarding the experiences of our daily life:

> (...) a child is born, a relative dies, we pass an exam, we feel bitter or happy, things that happen. It may be that 'just being-there', and it is interesting to note that for that being-there there is no explanation, apart from those mythical 'why' questions we confront in our lives and that, after all, provide no explanation. (Kusch 1978)

That is why just being-there, as it brings out our unique way of dwelling in the Latin American territory, becomes the starting point to invoke what is temporary. In this way, it establishes the possibility for the existence of what is ephemeral, nomadic and two-sided (Kusch 1958), i.e. the necessary mobility to understand and accept the uniqueness of inhabiting Latin America without having the need to be someone.

NOTES

1 The present paper includes the foundations for a semiotic approach that projects, among other things, the way the context surrounding the construction of monuments allows to explore the origin of their meanings, by opposing different interpretations provided by diverse communities in a specific cultural context (Bellentani and Panico 2016).
2 Krzyzanowska describes counter-monuments as particular forms that follow a semiotic code based on the recontextualization of languages and ways of commemoration, both within private and public sectors, and that are actively displayed in the urban space not just as a place, but also as an issue or possible speaker to exchange reflections on memory and identity that are being introduced (Krzyzanowska 2009).
3 According to Vygotsky´s account of semiotic mediation (1987), memory and experience emerge and are shaped through different cultural tools and symbolic means. They are taken from a social group and work as mediators for memory, as culture in action. This mediation involves the transformation of a relationship through the intervention of a new factor, as it might be to remember through a photograph, a knot in a rope, or a monument´ (Brescó and Wagoner 2019).
4 I highlight the work developed by several authors in the book *Memorias urbanas en diálogo: Berlín y Buenos Aires* (A dialogue of urban memories: Berlin and Buenos Aires, 2009), collective work on this type of memories.
5 ‘The deep cultural sense is given by the fact that it populates the world with signs and symbols, creating our place of residence in the world to avoid feeling naked or helpless’ (Rodolfo Kusch 1975).
6 ‘The problem of the indigenous way of thinking –as we understand it– has two aspects in the American continent. On the one hand, it might be connected with one ethnic group so it is related to seven million of natives according to the last statistics issued by Rosenblat. However, on the other hand, it is worthy to take into consideration the creole population that, be it for their physical appearance or their lifestyle, is connected to the first group. The latter reaches more than seven million inhabitants, it comprehends a greater number and includes the city center. What has been known as *cabecita negra* in Argentina, *roto* in Chile or *cholo* in Bolivia and Peru, has no direct relation with the indigenous world, but takes, in some way, some characteristics from a distant past, which are, at certain times, useful for the political, social and cultural cohesion in open opposition to mere Western peculiarities’ (Rodolfo Kusch 1970).

7 According to Kusch, the territory of Latin America is a relevant and contextualized practice that gravitates and moves centrifugally from being-there to the possibilities of other beings that will appear in time and space. Being-there in the streets, being-there in Latin America or simply being-there constitute a learning stage for life as we are not but in a state of being. And we are in a state of being with others, as that being-there constitutes a *we*. The possible being that emerges might be able to express that can be appear in different transitional ways, what we can define as people and/or seminal thinking.

8 (...) ningún programa pedagógico incluye a tales conocimientos entre sus objetivos, se los considera como degradados, vituperables y no merecedores de respaldo académico (¿o es a la inversa?). Creo, no obstante, que esa práctica pone en funcionamiento aspectos cognitivos de los que existe poca conciencia, ya bien porque se prefiere dejarlos en el subconsciente, por no considerarlos dignos de tomar la forma de pensamientos concretos y políticamente estructurados, ya bien por remitirlos al inconsciente, en cuanto al deseo de ignorarlos para poder negar la importancia de lo vulgar en la construcción de la identidad.

Es curioso que, no obstante, hayan dado lugar a una extensa producción textual y que ésta sí haya sido objeto de múltiples consideraciones analíticas e interpretativas, desde los sitiales académicos: tales son los refranes, a los que considero formulaciones verbales de ese conocimiento popular y materialista, que no se enseña en las escuelas ni en las universidades, a cuya producción y transferencia empírica pretendo dirigirme. Pero no sugiero ir de los refranes al comportamiento, porque una vez más habríamos caído en la trampa de la palabra la cual, con sus reglas y exigencias constructivas nos haría ver los fenómenos que pretendemos estudiar como su mero reflejo, pero sin advertirnos de esa trampa y como atribuyéndole al comportamiento lo que son características del lenguaje que lo describe; con lo cual volvería a quedar incluido en el conocimiento formal. En todo caso, el itinerario, a mi parecer, es el opuesto: ir del comportamiento a los refranes. (Magariños 2011: 24)

9 (...) el campo de los saberes y competencias relativos a las personas (uno mismo y los otros); a las relaciones interpersonales que intervienen entre individuos identificados por parámetros personales y funcionales, en relación inmediata o retransmitida (comunicaciones, procesos de posicionamiento mutuo y de influencia); a las relaciones en el seno de un grupo humano o entre grupos; a las situaciones sociales. Estos saberes y competencias se refieren a las emociones y los afectos, los móviles e intenciones que animan a los agentes sociales, de manera habitual o en una circunstancia particular, a los procesos de ajuste, de influencia, de evitación y de disimulación. (Magariños 2011: 22)

10 En definitiva, cuando pretendemos estudiar el mundo, lo que estudiamos es la forma conforme a la cual el discurso social, que se nos permite percibir, nos permite percibir ese mundo. Ese discurso social mediador está constituido por el conjunto de los textos construidos con símbolos, con imágenes y con objetos y comportamientos y reconstruidos, siempre desde una contemporaneidad, como la actualización de los discursos sociales históricos que han logrado

quedar memorizados, como la propagación de los discursos sociales actuales que han logrado hacerse perceptibles, y como la exhibición de los comportamientos sociales que han logrado hacerse mostrables. Y digo esto para poder establecer un espacio al margen de todo ello, constituido por otros conocimientos aparentemente innecesarios o incluso vergonzantes y, en cuanto tales, excluidos de la memoria consciente, ocultados a la percepción e inmostrables, y donde se es testigo de otro panorama que es el resultado de otra historia; espacio donde se sitúan los contenidos cognitivos de la universidad de la calle, evadidos de la dorada cárcel de la pedagogía, pero igualmente mediadores en la construcción de otro mundo. (Magariños 2011: 23)

11 Because these discourses have become fossilized and located, besides, in a marginal place in discourses that are available as semiotic materiality when projecting the world. 'We start learning directly out of experience (it would be absurd to assume we started learning only after there was a teacher telling us what to listen to or what to look at or what to smell or what to taste or even, what to touch, or, much later, what to read). We learned to keep memories in our mind, to remember past events associated to their consequences; association (and not only this) that was even referred to as its meaning and, after different experiences and the experience of different consequences of each experience, we would talk about different meanings of the same object, phenomenon or behavior. And we started trying to transfer this experience to others, because we either loved them or hated them, teaching them how to listen, look, smell, taste, touch and read. Others began learning indirectly through experiences they had not experienced or perceived, but that had been transmitted to them through other people´s words, images and attitudes. Faith and science emerged and, this means that people started trusting other´s knowledge (simultaneously with the opposite)' (Magariños 2011).

12 To do so, we will take different proposals from other artistic languages (or their combination) that include behaviors, proverbs and/or popular sayings for the creation of works of art. From this point on, also, the creation of a polyphonic, artistic and popular file that may serve as a new field of work for a kind of research that allows to set certain regularities to describe recurrent possible aesthetic operations used by Latin American artists when projecting the materialization of that popular knowledge projected in the mobility of the metaphors developed through works of.

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Ariel Barbieri is Adjunct Professor in Semiotics, Epistemology and Discourse Analysis, Universidad Nacional de Río Negro, Argentina.

Email: abarbieri@unrn.edu.ar

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Mediating mediations of the past: Monuments on photographs, postcards and social media

Eirini Papadaki

Classical and contemporary monuments are widely depicted on images produced and circulated by the tourist industry. They appear on personal photographs of visited places, functioning as souvenirs on notice boards or social media profiles. This paper examines the transformations of three-dimensional monuments in two-dimensional mediating practices and their socio-cultural and media settings. Moreover, it looks at the role of such visual resources in the overall signification process of specific sites and places. This examination will consider the practices of three visual mechanisms: postcards, tourist snapshots and images circulated via the Internet and specifically through social media. The paper proposes a similar ontological characteristic between monuments and photographs: their ability to capture selected instances of time and feed or shape memory.

Keywords monuments, photographs, postcards, social media, semiotics.

Introduction

The reasons for the wide circulation of monument images in modern societies are their public character, aesthetic value, character as history narration devices, strong connection with places and signifying practices, used to make identifications, stress localities and shape identities. Monument images are seen in films, various television narrations – such as TV series, advertisements and documentaries – tourist guides, brochures, leaflets, airline magazines, music videos, video games, flooding our imagescape with their structures. Almost all the culture industries recycle such images, in an eternal recasting of the world's cultural capital. These repeated reproductions can be compared to Baudrillard's *simulacra* (Baudrillard 1994), mean-

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ingless bodies of visual stimuli with no real referent, shaping preformed tourist gazes (Urry 1990) and offering ready-made perceptions to potential audiences. From another, more optimistic perspective, they can be praised as a democratization of cultural resources, invitations to experiences (Papadaki 2006b), guides to the perceivers' gazes and therefore indirect knowledge acquisition strategies. There are many gazers, of course, that deny instructions, following Hans Keller's (1987) beliefs that it is better to travel without a guide, exploring and discovering the newly visited place/cultural sign by oneself, following one's own aspirations, expectations and desires. Tourist photography can be seen as a way for a gazer to autonomously find the sites that he/she considers valuable of the photographic shot and the simultaneous entrenchment to acquisition, recollection and memory. Unquestionably, the tourist's familiarity with the mediated images of monuments or tourist sites, coded as identifying or topos-authentical mechanisms, forms predetermined guided gazes that work as a "treasure hunt" for every destination newcomer: every tourist holding a camera try to find the must-see sites of the visited land, photograph them and post the results on his/her social media profile – as acquired "trophies" from the invaded, exotic other (Papadaki 2004). As the Grand Tourist before him, the modern tourist follows a specific ritual: been there, done that, got the certificate (be it the souvenir, the postcard and more recently the snapshot or the selfie) and then put it on display (in one's living-room, on notice-boards, or more recently on social media posts). Even so, as every game, so the tourist 'treasure-hunt' of the pre-seen images, played when transcending 'imaginative geographies of places' (Larsen 2004: 242), entails improvisation and playfulness, genuine production, instead of sheer reproduction practices. The tourist as cultural producer is highly referenced in the bibliography of tourist studies (Edensor 2000; Larsen 2005; Scarles 2009; Haldrup and Larsen 2010).

Images on tourist brochures and other tourist agents, as well as the images mediated through such cultural industries as film, music or the media generate predetermined gazes at places, but also foster anticipation to visit the foreign lands and the objects depicted. Postcards invite tourists to explore beyond such images as they carry pictures of food, traditional musical instruments, or scenes from everyday lives of the place's inhabitants, signifying sentiments such as smell and sound and/or stressing otherness.

This paper examines the mediations of monuments as artworks and historic narrations, focusing on their signifying roles, through the analysis of three visual devices: postcards, tourist photography and relevant image posts on blogs and social media. The selection of the three modes of image discourse aims to follow what Robinson and Picard (2009) see as parallel, yet joined systems of representations: professional *versus* amateur images, widely communicated and alluring images *versus* personal mnemonic photographs of one's past holiday instances whether shared on noticeboards, in friends' gatherings or via the social media. Therefore, the specific devices were chosen as representative examples of the collective gaze, the personal gaze and the digital gaze respectively. They all focus on image discourse, leaving side for the linguistic only as a small commentary on or in the back of the image (postcard), during the discussion between friends/family (tourist photography) or as captions/hashtags/comments under the image in the digital environment (social media posts).

To study the influences of mediation in the shaping of monuments' stories, it is first necessary to examine the nature of monuments as public art, as mediators themselves, as narrators of social pasts, and – most importantly for our research – as signs.

Monuments as public art

By the 1960s, monuments started to be considered as public art, as 'artistic production with memorial claims' (Salvatori 2015: 931), architectural objects or practices regarding the occupation of public space, sketching a distinctive image of the city. The experience of architectural objects is an engendered pleasure whether we agree with functionalism – seeing form as inseparable from function – with the theory of space – experiencing architectural objects as experiences of space; whether we see them through Hegelian eyes – as expressions of their time – or through the theory of proportion – as harmonious order, giving specific rules and principles for the combination of their parts. Agreeing with Scruton (1979), architecture can be perceived imaginatively, depending on the viewer's conception of the architectural object.

Monuments are chosen to be erected in central points within villages, cities, communities. They transform the image of the specific surroundings and the everyday image of the place's inhabitants, first aesthetically and in a second extent symbolically. Monuments are first and foremost public artworks. Their aesthetic value is as important as their historic narration.

Monuments as mediators of social pasts

Monuments are made to last and remind their viewers of the times they were built. The word's root is the Latin *monere*, which means *to remind*. Monuments are therefore, apart from aesthetic architectural items, maintainers of memory and reconstructions of hegemony (Miles 1997: 74). If Connerton is right in saying that 'our experiences of the present largely depend upon our knowledge of the past and our images of the past commonly serve to legitimize a present social order' (Connerton 1989: 3) then the importance of monuments for shaping and maintaining social memory is quite straightforward. They function as traces or marks, something that our predecessors left behind and helps us appreciate and maintain social memory. Monuments enhance the significance of particular locations and enter the consciousness of the people who live around them. They represent a highly visible past and were created to make that past broadly known (Papadaki 2006: 60).

As every part of history cannot be shaped in the form of a public monument, it is only evident that there are certain aspects of past events or specific heroic people that are chosen to inspire a monument's theme. Monuments have been criticized as only partly representing history, deliberately hiding uncomfortable aspects of it, even intentionally falsifying it. Political wills and image making play an important factor in the decisive process regarding the represented subject, the kind of monument, the specific form, the artist and the place that will host the final creation. It is exactly this manipulation of history by political authorities that explains the various protests and demonstrations expressed for and on the site of certain controversial monuments by the inhabitants of the place, reaching to the extent of damaging, altering or even demolishing the specific monuments.

The study of the relationship between monument and document has been extensive in the writings of Foucault and Le Goff during the 1960s and 1970s. There is also much scientific discussion on the gradual distancing from the traditional notion of the big, stable, representational monument-statue to more abstract, contemporary art installations, where 'collective and individual experiences basically intersect' (Salvatori 2015: 932), aiming at the production of 'plausible supports for memory, even when they undermine the traditional forms of commemoration' (Salvatori 2015: 934). New terms such as anti-monuments, counter-monuments (Young 1990), immaterial or invisible monuments (Wajcman 2010) describe places that 'provide time for memorial reflection' (Young 1999: 9), offering a process, not a definite and unquestionable answer to the acquaintance with or the perception of historic narratives.

Monuments as signs

The most important attributes of monuments, however, is their signification practices (Bellentani and Panico 2016) or the symbolic metaphor they are shaped to express. Monuments are shown and seen as major signs of people and places: they 'belong to the universal language of travel' (Barthes 1979: 4). Symbols from the ancient world, such as columns, obelisks or wreaths, arches or creatures with wings are commonly used on monuments' bodies to signify loss or death and victory or hope respectfully. In addition,

> [...] materials and forms are often endowed with a visual appearance that "translates" their functional and tactile qualities [...]. I may see a shape as "hard" or "soft", as "welcoming", or "hostile" [...] it must be possible to see not only colours and shapes, but also such properties as warmth, mass, solidity and distance. (Scruton 1979: 96)

Economic constraints of monuments' construction, visible in the selection of the materials used, can also promote specific messages to their viewers. The symbolic language of monuments, the codified purposes of the marble/bronze/stone bodies of statues/columns or other structural forms made for commemoration, are carefully studied before the formation of the final monument, during its interaction with the public (both inhabitants and tourists) and sometimes after its de-construction, in order to be transferred to another place, to be hidden in a state building or even destroyed. The historic event chosen to be represented, the point in the city selected to host the specific representation, the material, size, aesthetic choices of the creator, all add to monuments' signification process. It is broadly believed that the commissioning of statues and memorials proclaims the manufacture of a national cultural identity. It is that symbolic identity, that otherness, that will in later stages attract the gazes and the photographic shots of the tourists visiting a place.

To name just one example of a well-known sign-monument, I will refer to the Statue of Liberty which, according to Warner (1987) is identified with an American ideal of democracy. 'The sensual pleasure of the eye, when looking at the specific statue, is therefore, dependent not upon aesthetic delight but upon the psychology of vision' (Warner 1987: 13). We are looking at Democracy itself. Even so, Warner emphasizes the argument that the interpretation of each monument depends on the viewer. Monuments are encouraging us to find our own meanings through their marble bodies. Photographs and postcards can help make that interpretation personal, turning the social image into a personal souvenir (Papadaki 2006). A monument snapshot or a postcard can be seen as a captured personal memory fragment mixed with collective images (Lofgren 1999: 2; Papadaki 2006).

Monument mediations

Classical and even some contemporary monuments are widely mediated through tourist agents such as brochures, postcards, posters and digital narratives like tourist sites, blogs and social media. Some monument mediations transcend the sphere of the tourist industry, intermingling with symbolic content from other cultural industries, such as the movie industry, the music industry, video games and of course the media. The visit to the actual place is then translated as an attempt to see and admire the original referent of a familiar image – the true monument seen already on paper or screen – bringing forth the Benjamian thoughts on aura, ritualistic value and politicization of aesthetic objects. The Eiffel Tower, the Acropolis, the Pyramids are monuments everyone has heard or seen something about. Hardly any schoolbook, poster, postcard or film does not hold one of their images. To enter into one of those monuments is thought of as to enter into a historical or aesthetic sacred. This idea gives travelers the sensation of a power of intellection, as in front of the monument they try to remember and combine all the things they have heard and seen about the particular monument and then decode and understand it, solve its "puzzle" (Papadaki 2004). As Barthes explained (1979: 14) 'to enter a monument is to solve, to possess it'.

This procedure of decoding is highly influenced by the images and the narratives circulated through the cultural industries' repertoire. The visitors/tourists of a specific monument carry with them all the previous encounters they might have had with the object, direct or mediated, having already shaped a particular interpretation of its signifying practices.

Research shows (Robinson & Picard 2006; Ek et al. 2008; Sun et al 2014; Santos 2016 among others) that official mediations of monuments that appear in brochures or guidebooks usually offer overall views of the selected monument, focusing on its size, material and/or signifying practices. The photographs chosen to be included in such media are taken by professional photographers and follow specific photographic practices: distant view for the whole construction to appear in the image, powerful light offered through clear blue skies and general beautification techniques so that the monument to appear spotless and inviting. The text embraces the images, giving information on the object appearing in the photograph, its history, its relation to the place hosting it. These kind of tourist agents – the media that are meant to offer helpful instructions for the travellers and are therefore bought by the latter before their travel to a specific destination or before their get to a specific site, as the guide books and brochures mentioned above – are believed to hold the representative images of the place, the ones that will offer the first clues for the tourists' 'treasure-hunt' game when in the visited site. The mere appearance of a specific monument on the pages of such a medium simultaneously applies to the monument the label of a place's, a society's or a nation's sign.

Among the tourist agents wishing to attract the collective gaze, I will examine the postcard. The specific choice was made for many reasons. Firstly, because of the postcard's long-lasting appearance in our houses. The postcard is cherished, valued, stored. Either as a souvenir of one's travels or sent to us as a message from a friend or family member, the postcard is kept and looked for, unlike tourist guides or brochures which are dismissed the very moment they fulfil their role. In addition, as the focus of this paper is the pictorial mediation of monuments, the postcard is selected as a cultural resource that prioritizes image over text, despite the fact that it can, of course, be seen as a multi-modal representation mechanism, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) discourse. Furthermore, the postcard is addressed to a bigger audience as its messages' recipients include travellers, collectors and the receivers. As such, it cannot be considered as an 'official gaze', as it is not produced by national or local authorities, like official tourist guides and leaflets and because it has unquestionably formed new grounds for both tourist photographic practices and tourist communication. Lastly, the postcard's signification strategies are rather powerful and relatively understudied.

Monuments on postcards

As Jaworski (2012: 570) explains, 'despite its relatively humble status as a mass-produced, cheap and disposable artefact, the postcard has been an important and influential genre shaping the collective social and cultural imagery of the world since the beginning of the twentieth century'. Either as Lury's 'tripper-objects' (Lury 1997: 79), i.e. things that are meant to be brought home as souvenirs or as collection items, as quasi-mass media in corner shops (Papadaki 2001) or as sent to friends, postcards transfer messages and stories to distant places. Postcards 'shape collective ways of imagining people and places' (Jaworski 2012: 571) and are therefore believed to aim at the collective gaze.

Monuments, both classical and more contemporary, are one among the favourite themes depicted on postcards. The highly localized quality of monuments, their character as public objects, being works commissioned for a site of open public access, make them classic postcard images addressed to tourist gazes (Papadaki 2004). The postcard of a monument in a central square, for example, characteristically proves the function of a postcard as a souvenir. The monument is framed by its location in the particular social setting and this setting is what provides it with meaning and cultural value. Its highly localized quality is straightforward: there is no second copy of the monument anywhere in the world. Its authenticity makes it a classic city view site. Its existence at the particular spot – the spot being strictly related to the monument and vice versa – lends some authenticity to the place, making it classic as well. The spot then characterizes the whole city, becoming one of its main collectors of tourist gazes (Papadaki 2001). Through the postcard's 'staged authenticity' (McCrone et al 1995:46), the monument becomes the city's symbol. The name of the place printed on the monument's photograph, text and image intermingled, makes their separation impossible: the monument characterizes the place; the place's name should instantly bring in mind the place's monuments as its signs.

The tourist industry uses photographs and postcards of monuments as destination branding mechanisms (Papadaki 2017).

> Perhaps what is appropriate of a monument on a postcard is its value as a public representation of human life: appropriate for the tourist, that is, in that it is seen as a trophy from the visited country. He managed to acquire something sacred and authentic, because it is part of the difference and therefore uniqueness of the visited place, and that is why he sees it as a trophy. (Papadaki 2004: 367)

Postcards show whatever their producers think would give prestige to their countries – whatever they think would make them look both aesthetically attractive and culturally significant. Monuments are one of the best cases that could make this aim easily and directly met, as they are seen as high-status sites. The monuments that appear on postcards are the ones that look good in photographic reproduction.[1] The Eiffel Tower is for Barthes (1997) a universal symbol of Paris and therefore it is everywhere on the globe where Paris is to be stated as an image.

There is extensive scientific research on the relation between the architectural and the archaeological with photographic practices (e.g. Shanks 1997; Hamilakis 2001, 2008; Papadaki 2001, 2004; Bateman 2005; Downing 2006; Smiles and Moser 2005; Cochrane 2007), but very few papers appear in the scientific community on the procedures at work when a monument is captured by the photographic lens. Photography was from its first steps associated with archaeology and antiquities, as the world's classical monuments were one of the first favourable photographic subjects. 'The first daguerreotypes of the Athenian Acropolis were produced in 1839, the same year that the process had become officially known' (Hamilakis et al. 2009: 286). Archaeological sites, as well as classical monuments and antiquities were photographed as autonomous structures, isolated from the nearby buildings, traffic and citizens walking by. A photograph is able to isolate, but also 'to define, interpret, exaggerate or even invent a cultural value' for the photographed object (Campany 2014: 15).

As Hamilakis et al point out (Hamilakis et al 2009), both domains acquired clearing and exhibition strategies in order to attract tourist gazes: archaeology cleared and reconstructed sites and classical monuments, while professional photographers framed out of their optical angle traces of contemporary life and preferred images of isolated classical or more recent monuments, offering objectified gazes for tourist consumption. Notions of attention management (Crary 1992) or autonomous vision, a new visual economy (Sekula 1981), disembodied vision, spectacle and surveillance were examined in the new framework.

Details, close-ups, distances and various view-angles, whatever the eye misses could nowadays appear on a postcard, trying to attract both the romantic gaze and the cultural tourists' interest. Among the picturesque landscapes and the traditional settings, a postcard may carry images of a monument's detail, adding to its signifying power. An image of timeless stillness, a frozen moment, with no people involved, is offered to the viewer as a gift-image. The illusion that the person holding the postcard is the only viewer is enhanced by the absence of other people, the disassociation from the rest of the cityscape and the way the monument is captured, lightened, brought to the foreground. Unspoilability and remoteness are desirable tourist markers, as Cohen (1989) explains. The caption on the image or behind it can identify, explain or give information about the picture or combination of pictures shown.

Of course, a postcard view of a monument or public statue embodies a relation to the city these architectural objects are taken from. The monument is photographed against a background, which is usually formed by the nearby buildings and general surroundings. 'The specific surroundings of a square, park or street contain many extra signifiers that guide our reading of the images in question' (Sterkx and Engelen 2013: 446). In postcard photographs of more contemporary monuments aimed at the romantic gaze, passers-by walking nearby or kids playing often enrich the photographic scene, signifying the interplay between the monument depicted and the everyday practice of the inhabitants of the place where it stands. In antithesis with the isolated monument-sign on a postcard, these kinds of images suggest that the background of the monument offers necessary information without which any interpretation is not possible. In this context, the monument is seen as part of the city, in a constant dialogue with the physical and technical surroundings, in an eternal interaction with local people.

The landscape orientation is chosen when these surroundings are meant to be visible and meaningful to the gazer of the postcard. Portrait orientation is preferred when the monument is photographed against the blue sky, from a low angle, stressing the monument's size and its imposing character. Sterkx and Engelen (2013) believe that picture postcard is a photographic genre in its own right, an interaction between art studio photography and snapshot photography.

In a complete analogy, similar to the monuments' role as devices of social control, a way to make people forget some aspects of their history and remember others (Papadaki 2006), postcards can be seen as visuals for tourist consumption, stating a place's narrative that is far from being neutral. Both standing in a complex relation to time, the monument and its mediation, namely the photograph on the postcard, make choices, produce meaning and form social and cultural value. The capacity of monuments to signify the social past is already evident in the present text. The capacity of photographs to create symbolic capital has also been proven (Tagg 1993; Edwards 1996).

Postcards can be seen as carriers of the monument's cultural charisma and transmit it to the gazer (Papadaki 2004). Through photography, the 'taste of the personality of a society' becomes visible to people outside the specific society (Shore 2008).

> One cannot visit one of the world tourist destinations without visiting the corresponding monument and usually the visit ends by a look at the little shop situated near the exit. It is, as I have already pointed out, the tourist's little ritual: to travel somewhere, visit the well-known sites and the famous monuments and buy himself/herself a souvenir to remind oneself of a past experience and show to the friends and family. (Papadaki 2004: 365)

The more familiar the image on the postcard, the more proof that one has visited the place. The famous monument on the postcard also lends some of its pride and cultural status to the visitor – only cultural people visit cultural sites – and consequently to the receiver of the postcard. According to Kürti (2004: 47) 'postcards certainly have assisted in the popular mediatisation of our lives with the use of (Foucault's) heterotropias'.

In an attempt to examine the nature of the mediation practices used when transferring the image of a monument, I will recast the character of the photograph as a mechanism capturing not only the image, but also the essence of the featured monument, as well as the memories of the photographer.

Photographs as monuments: Mediators of personal pasts

As Buck-Morss' (1992) prosthetic sensory device, Freud's 'artificial memory' (1984: 430) or Benjamin's (1969) technological enrichment of human sensory perception, the camera captures specific moments that the hand holding it finds worth keeping. Most of the people living in developed countries own a camera. A plastic eye that accompanies the visitor in his trips, a device to experience the world through lenses. The photograph arrests reality, but the individual is involved in the deliberate cropping of reality through the lens. A photograph is reality seen through the photographer's eyes.

What is photographed seems to be acquired by the owner of the camera. Through photographs, one sees reality having the chance to hold in his hands and ponder on people, experience and information (Papadaki 2006: 55). Most people own photographic dossiers – albums – and try to collect as many photographs as they can, to classify their experience through its existing pictures, to create a chronological file of events, beloved people and memories. Time passes and the only thing one can be positive of concerning his past experiences is the moment those photographs were taken or given to him. Photographs cease to be an instrument of memory, helping to reinforce it. They are starting to function as an invention of it or its replacement (Sontag 1977).

In a sense, a photograph can be seen as a monument of one's personal history (Cavallucci 2010), as it choses specific viewpoints to record past moments. A photograph entails personal choices, individual aesthetics and framings based on the photographer's aspirations, cultural background and previous knowledge.

Photographic practice, however, can also be influenced by social factors, as well as the unconscious adopting of an imagescape shaped by the media and specific tourist agents. As Bourdieu (1990) suggests, agreeing with Berger (1972), photographic practice is socially patterned and learned, determined by family function and ordinarily associated with the high points of family life. It cannot free itself from the occasions that determine it and turn into an autonomous practice. Everyone takes pictures of and within the contexts of their family. 'It is via the family group that the primary function of photography becomes the responsibility of the photographer, who is asked to solemnize important events and to record the family chronicle in pictures' (Bourdieu 1990). The family album expresses for Bourdieu the essence of social memory (Papadaki 2006: 56). Fish's 'interpretive communities' (1980: 150) come to underline the similarities of encoding and decoding practices between members of the same group of people, be it family, co-students, colleagues, inhabitants of a place or tourists.

Many researchers focus on the strong bond between travel and photography (Sontag 1979; Larsen 2004; Robinson & Picard; Scarles 2009; Santos 2016). Photographic practice is paralleled with tourist practice and in many cases the two are seen as inseparable. Scarles (2009) sketches photographs' characteristics as political artefacts, reflexive performances, the imagination of space, embodied visualities and ethical prompts. The politicization of photography lies on the pre-existence of certain gazes (Urry 1990), offered by tourist actors and media, predetermined staging (Edensor 1998) or cultural scripts (Baerenholdt 2007). All these pre-seen, framed gazes are seen by Scarles as 'signs that guide tourists' interpretations' (Scarles 2009: 474), as tourists tend to capture with their cameras what is already captured by professional photographers or circulated through the tourist industry's agents and the media. Photographs, however, have a strong connection with memory, remembrance and rethinking on past moments and previous gazes. As reflexive performances (Crang and Travlou 2001) or windows to one's past instances, photographs are re-examined, talked about, shared and commented. Photography is not exhausted in the capturing instance of the heard shot. It is on a later stage selected, printed, displayed in frames or shared via the social media. In its second living instance, photography helps tourists re-live experiences through reflexive intimacy (Haldrup & Larsen 2003). The photograph, especially when printed, is tangible and present whenever searched for, available for re-casting one's gaze upon, able to offer to its holder glimpses to past experiences.

The imagined is interwoven with the real in a tourist's photograph while implying active, embodied engagement and actual action (Crang 1997). It is self-evident that ethical issues may arise regarding the power of the photographer over the photographed other.

Returning home, the tourists carry cameras – or other photographic devices, such as mobile phones or tablets – with a large number of photographed materials, among which many pictures of monuments, both classical and more contemporary. These were the images they were meant to find in the foreign land, were they follow the instructional gaze encountered through their media wanderings.

Monuments on photographs

One must take 'endless precautions in Paris not to see the Eiffel Tower' (Barthes 1979: 3). Monuments' role as landmarks of particular locations is non-negotiable. In front of a most celebrated monument the tourist poses placing him/herself near the charismatic signs of difference and otherness. One can see the queue of people who want to be photographed in the same scene, taking an identical posture with the one photographed before them (Papadaki 2006: 56), controlling 'the objectification of one's own image' (Bourdieu 1990: 83). The photograph of a traveller in front of a monument can provide aesthetic experience as well as memories of personal thoughts and feelings felt while being at the site. The photograph does not function only as a souvenir of the buildings and statues seen there, but also as a souvenir of *my* being there, as a souvenir of *my* past experience.

With the monument as background, the tourist poses in front of the photographic lens. Certain site symbolisms inspire various types of performances, as Stylianou-Lambert (2002) shows in her research on tourist photographic practices in front of Aphrodite's rock in Cyprus. 'Different roles, scripts, choreographies, group formations, instructions and cues are followed' (Edensor 2000: 326). Robinson and Picard focus on the evocation of play in the tourists' photographic narratives. Hom-Cary (2004) talks about 'tourist moments', the connection with the other, the temporal intimacy of the tourist with the visited place.

A photograph of a monument makes the moment objective, as Terdiman (1993) would say. If no other person is nearby, the photographer captures the site with his/her camera. He/she has the impression of owning it, when holding the print paper on hand or when looking the site's digital *analogon* in the camera. This is the reason for the long queues of tourists standing patiently to be photographed in front of a well-known site: they prefer waiting for hours for the spot to be clear of other people, then to photograph themselves besides other tourists. They are willing, of course, to be photographed along family and friends adding more images to the snapshot versions of life (Chalfen 1987).

Social media offer to the photographer the opportunity to write a small text, a caption or a comment underneath each photograph, including hashtags, as an interpretation of the photographed entity that helps towards the decoding of the formed message.

Monuments on social media

Social media are important channels distributing information on cultural resources nowadays, whether as an outcome of a formal organization's or a professional's effort to communicate with a targeted audience or an individual's personal photo narrative. In recent times, such images are uploaded in social media profiles, underlying the status and cosmopolitanism of the photographed subject (Papadaki 2014) and/or shared between online communities. Social media can be seen as a vast archive of photographic representations of monuments. The levels of engagement, interactivity and participatory experiences that can be offered through social media are the focus of many recent research articles and it is widely accepted that 'the ease of translation from one type of engagement to another' (Shanks & Svabo 2013) is bigger than ever before. Technoculture tells the tale. Moser (2009) underlines the way people participate in a more collaborative, co-creative way when playing computer games. Monuments have appeared on video games and even named some, like the 2014 *Monument Valley*.

Urry's 'imaginative mobility' (2011: 155) and bodiless travel through books, film and television has been extended to include digital travelling, including browsing through official sites of world destinations or gazing the posted snapshots of friends when abroad. The eWoM[2] mechanism works parallel to the circulation of status-enriched portraits or selfies of travellers in front of the most celebrated world monuments.

The difference of the digital photography lies on the element of time: the selfie is taken and uploaded in a few second on social media profile, in antithesis to the classic tourist snapshot that was printed, framed and displayed in one's living-room, stored in a photo album or shown to friends and family on an occasion. The digital photograph can therefore be seen as being directed towards an immediate audience (Larsen 2008), forming the contemporary 'culture of instantaneity' (Tomlinson 2007:74).

In social media posts, monuments are added to personal narration, in a sort of diary or chronicle of life instances. They both transmit their charisma to the person photographed in front or besides monuments and help the digital gazers get to know or interpret them. In this sense, photographs of monuments in social media aim at targeted audiences, i.e. the photographer's or photographed friend network. The personality of the person that is photographed or commented on the photograph may influence the viewers' perception of the monument. A funny posture near the monument sketches the humorous potentials of the spot, a romantic hug of a couple makes the monument romantic and so on. The captions, hashtags or comments of the creator of the post also guide towards the creation of the monuments' meanings, just like the hand-written message on the back side of the postcard did.

The reactions to the posts could also shape the monument's popularity or fame. The photographs and selfies uploaded to social media ask for likes, shares, comments. The number and the kind of such reactions add to the monument's story, re-creating its meaning and visiting value.

Conclusions

Monuments carry important messages. They are meant to tell past tales to their visitors, both locals and tourists. Different interpretations can arise among these two interpretive communities. For locals, monuments will evoke memories from lived experiences or from known facts of their past: either way the sentimental bond is apparent. Having been placed in particular environments, monuments enrich the location's significance and are usually connected with commemoration ceremonies, adding more memories to local people. Tourists, on the contrary, see the monument in a simpler way, as a step in their search for the views already seen in various media before the trip. They pose in front of the monument with wide smile and carry the photographs back home as souvenirs, mementoes or trophies, or post them online, as their personal photo-narrative.

According to Warner, monuments are given meaning by their viewers and it can change according to what they see or want.

> The Statue of Liberty does not record the past, except for the allusion to the Declaration of Independence. It anticipates continuously a future that is always in the process of becoming: hence Liberty's determined step forward, her lamp held up to illuminate the space we cannot see, the time to come. She expresses intention, more emphatically than act; we are all subjects of incorporation in that regard. We all hope to be free, we could all be free. (Warner 1987: 14).

Freedom is different from the one person to the next. The idea of the anticipated future may be common to all those people standing in the crown of the Statue of Liberty, but exactly what each of them is determined to make out of that future is another matter. As we place our heads in the hole made as Liberty's head at a paper imitation of her we are the ones who step forward, waiting for the future. It takes a lot of imagination to take part in a process of recreating a past that is later recalled and of making it play an important role in the present.

Even if for Warner the statue of Nike represents a town's victory, its fortune or *Tyche*, its triumph, if the statues of angels are seen as success, glory, reputation or fame, she concludes that monuments are for rent. There is no set meaning. The interpretation depends on the viewer. Monuments are encouraging us to find our own meanings through their marble bodies. It is not that there is not a correct way of seeing them. Nike is a town's *Tyche* and a body with flying wings that will continue to symbolize triumph. But we can see it as our own personal triumph at our own personal achievement. Postcards can help make that personal interpretation ours.

Through mediation, the monument is equaled with the society's identity or differentiation, when the place's name is written on its paper surface or tagged online as its seal and undistinguishable attribute (Papadaki 2004). On photographs and postcards, monuments are practically without function: 'they are in the first place expressions of identity' (Warner 1987: 6). Despite the admirable aesthetics and form of the Parthenon, on a postcard it only is an Athenian symbol and a sign, trace or mark of human democracy. On posters, in films, on books and in newspapers the Statue of Liberty has been used for many different purposes. To provide a classic American image, to legitimize political campaigns, to seal a statement with moral dignity and so on. On a postcard, Liberty is seen as identification of the city and by extension the nation.

The three devices chosen for this study (postcards, photographs and social media) serve the commodity, the tourist and the digital gaze respectively. They all make an abstraction of the monument from three to two dimensions. They can work as mnemonic devices or traces to one's past and, at the same time, they can function as invitations to the visited site. They are all associated to – and for some are inseparable from – travelling and tourist practices.

Spectatorship is nowadays constituted through mixed images: tour operators, postcards, the media, professional or personal photography circulated in the digital environment materialize or objectify the tourist gaze (Sontag 1979; Urry 1990). For Osborne the similarity between the postcard and the photograph lies in their role as 'quotations of mass-media views' (Osborne 2000:79). The dystopia of the passive viewer and photographer is common in the bibliography of tourist studies, cultural studies, media and communication studies. According to that point of view, personal photographs actually reproduce the themes of mass media discourses, feeding the 'vicious hermeneutic circle' (Albert and James 1988; Osborne 2000; Schroeder 2002; Urry 2002; Jenkinks 2003), or certain 'place myths' (Shields 1991), equating experiences with photographed moments (Sontag 1979) and reinforcing widely circulated media images (Boorstin 1961; Caton & Santos 2008; Mellinger 1994; Urry 1990). On the other hand, more recent researches underline the energetic character of the site/monument gazer. In complete contrast with 'authorized heritage discourse' (Smith 2006: 5), photography is thought of as 'performed, rather than preformed' (Larsen 2004: 242). Tourists are seen as 'armies of semioticians [...] interested in everything as a sign of itself' (Culler 1981: 27). Gazing has been paralleled to a collection of signs or markers (MacCannell 1999: 41). The gazer (and photographer) is seen as highly interactive with the gazed environment, co-producing the interpretations and meanings of the newly discovered scenery. Finding the referent of the sign or capturing representative signs are, in themselves, creative processes.

Bourdieu (1990: 37) suggests that there are photographs which one must 'take' and sites and monuments that one must 'do'. Research has shown that tourists may be influenced by pre-established mediated gazes, but they actively re-construct and re-signify such images via creating their own (Garrod 2009; Scarles 2009; Stylianou-Lambert 2012). This practice is enriched and enhanced in the social media environment, where the receivers of the photo messages can actively interact with the monuments, commenting on it, uploading similar photos at the spot, as in a constant recreation of the monuments' meaning.

Both being mnemonic devices, photographs and monuments function in similar ways: photographs record personal memories, while monuments give shape to collective past instances. From the middle of the 19th century, monuments play a significant role as commemoration vehicles (Le Goff 1992), creating a new notion of public sphere. At the same time, the historic events that are chosen to become visible public statements are carefully chosen and often refined as to be unobjectionable and rather likeable.

Photographs and monuments are similar sign systems. Photography cannot but be seen as an abstraction, a codification of the elements believed as necessary to represent a connoted past moment. A monument is a symbol of local and by extension national identity through the emphasis on specific historical narrations of a specific place. As Bate (2010) explains, one can find identity or identification within a specific common visualized memory. When appearing on a photograph, the three-dimensional monument is reduced to two-dimensions, a sign on a sign. 'The photograph has the capacity to incorporate and absorb many other already existing visual memory devices within photographic re-presentation' (Bate 2010: 248). Serving the modernist inquiry of producing images of 'the individual and national self as other' (Downing 2006; Hamilakis et al. 2009: 285), the camera captures people and national symbols on paper. The monument also freezes time, as it captures on its bronze/marble/stone body significant people or historical moments, functioning itself as a symbol of a particular place or an entire nation.

Both photographs and monuments create static, fixed positions that cannot be altered, capturing fragmented moments, past testimonies, connections to personal or social history, codes and narrations. Both photographs and monuments can serve as documentation, evidence of existence, mnemonic apparatuses and communicative media, transmitting to their gazers significant messages.

NOTES

1 Paraphrasing Benjamin, who wrote that the kind of art that will triumph will be the kind of art that looks good in photographic

2 eWoM is the acronym for electronic Word of Mouth. In this context it is used as a marketing strategy of inviting people to the monuments and destinations shown in a friend's post. The positive experience of a trusted friend works as a guarantee of one's own positive experience and a strong criterion for the decision to visit the specific place.

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Eirini Papdaki is Professor of Media and Visual Culture at the University of Ioaninna, Greece.

Email: E.papadaki@teiep.gr

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Two museum visits in Lund, Sweden, and the streets between them: Accidental monuments between public and curated spaces

Orestis Pangalos

While visiting the Swedish city of Lund to attend the Conference Visual Semiotics Goes Cognitive[1] I came across two of the city's museum attractions, the Kulturen Open air museum and the Skissernas museum (the latter is translated as the Sketch museum and also as the Museum of artistic process and public art). Borrowing from the walking-inside-museums experience as well as from wandering the streets around them, the following text unfolds by way of observations on the nature of museums, on the exhibited items and what we encounter in the streets. In this context multiple examples of artworks, related practices and emerging matters are discussed too.

Keywords Open air museums, Art in public space, Lund, Street Art, Unintentional art

Intro / Entrance

Both the *Kulturen Open air museum* and the *Skissernas museum* (the latter is translated as *the Sketch museum* and also as *the Museum of artistic process and public art*) in the Swedish city of Lund deal in various ways with public space and/or the streets. This is the first thing I notice in any town or city: One reason for that is my background architecture studies, and another one is my street art studies, being a practitioner for nearly three decades myself. The following text is articulated in three parts, *Visit 1*, *Visit 2* and finally *The streets between and around the two visits*.

Visit 1 deals with what was seen as a monument worth preserving by being transported and exhibited to a new setting. It is quite brief and mostly descriptive but a few of the elements found there will relate to the next visit's subjects.

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Figure 1: Detail from an interior wall in Kulturen Museum.

Figures 2: A metallic street box in Lund's streets.

Visit 2 offers a chance to look at graffiti and street art, and comment on their partial official approval and institutionalisation.

The third sub-section takes a closer look at two city elements and their aesthetics that subsequently trigger relevant commentary on what will be described as *unintentional art*, but also on how artists have had similar approaches and observations in the past or nowadays. The two cases involve the traces on i) the traffic signs, ii) the telecommunication company metal boxes were the telephone cables connect servicing homes, workplaces etc. The process of the trace production is such that the result could be also described as *accidental*. The works produced by multiple interventions often offer a special aesthetic outcome that in any case is a basic typology of today's cityscape. The text underlies a central hypothesis about whether the objects that carry the various traces could be exhibited in the future as parts of a museum collection or in an open-air museum.

Visit 1. Kulturen open air museum.

Kulturen is primarily an open air museum, also including various permanent and temporary exhibitions inside the exhibited buildings. It extends to an area of two blocks that in a way resemble a village or a small town, a small district in the city center, or from another perspective *a city within the city*. It can be seen as a History, Architecture and Folk museum, as well as a Museum park all in one. Since about 100 years ago approximately 15 buildings were transported from other towns and settlements to the museum's location. Between the buildings themselves a whole new public space emerges, consisting of various sites and elements. One can meet gardens, sculpts, 'insect hotels', ponds, church bells, benches, old outdoor dance floors and various street equipment and public space typologies that one could find in cities and villages in past times. The buildings' exteriors themselves carry rich loads of information: the materiality of structural elements, the patterns schemed by the combination of construction wood, metal, bricks and stones, and ultimately the textures provided after the touch of weather, mush and time. The interiors, in many cases resemble the interiors of Swedish houses and workplaces representing aspects of urban and rural everyday life, in a range of the resident's activities and professions.

The journey was fascinating and the feeling was like walking in time-travel mode. However what captured my attention, were some ancient Runic engravings (Fig. 3) and the student's scribbles I found inside a 370-year-old church (Fig. 4). Right outside the building that functions as the museum's entrance, the visitors see large stones with Runic inscriptions on them. The Runestones date from around 1000 AD and they were transported from various locations in Skåne.[2] They actually are archaeological findings while the inscriptions provide historical evidence about the presence, the languages and the culture of the populations inhabiting the area. Another indication is the deeply rooted human need to trace their presence through writing on public surfaces. The other inscriptions I found were traces of recent activity. They date from the 1980s, and were most possibly written by students representing elements of their youth cultures. The old church in the Open air museum was built in 1652 in Bosebo and was moved there in 1895 with its full interior equipment, all of its decoration, paintings, sculptural elements and furniture. It serviced weddings, christenings, concerts and Epiphany vespers hosting the audiences of those events who evidently did not miss the chance to write on the seats and the desktops. The plethora of carved writings stay preserved together with the rest of the church and its elements as actual parts of the monument.

Figure 3: Runestone in the Kulturen Museum front yard.

There seems to occur a kind of twist here, regarding monumentality, memory and preservation. First comes the fact that the buildings did not make it to become actual monuments worthy of being preserved at their original locations. They were replaced by another construction. However, the mere acts of disassembling, transporting and finally reassembling-rebuilding them in their original form ultimately turns them into monuments, objects to be preserved, worthy of display and of actual historical commemoration. The various other smaller elements that consist the public space are also in this way celebrated as worthy of being saved, displayed and installed, and therefore have gained cultural value -in terms of aesthetics, design, function and overall significance, important for the museums mission to accurately represent past time objects and city streets imagery. In a sense, what was not conceived of as a monument on its original site, becomes a museum and a monument in the new location.

Figure 4: 1980s student graffiti in an old church interior. Kulturen Open Air Museum.

One such example that captured my attention was a 100 years old telephone booth with its elegant and dynamic design and graphics, the star in the center and the thunder-like arrows expanding to all directions. The central question became: What could be showcased in a future museum about today's street view and the image of the city? A set of possible scenarios will be offered later on, involving my street imagery, street art and scribblings interests. I could recall that in theater plays scenographers often use graffiti elements such as tags and pieces to create street references and scenes, in some cases even if the plays are about times and epochs when the New York graffiti style had not yet been born. Similar techniques are being used in film, and of course in advertizing.

Visit 2. Inside Skissernas, the Museum of artistic process and public art.

First evolve, the museum's thematic is sketches and scaled models for works that became artworks in public space. Many of those works are quite famous and often monumental - both in size and reputation. It would be fair to suggest that their display in Skissernas is in a way reversing and in fact complementing what the Open air museum is doing by bringing artifacts (sketches and models) and the whole picture (as a photograph) of monumental outdoor works *inside*. Artworks from all over the world are represented in the museum, thus they become 'museumized'. In this particular way they subsequently gain worldwide credit and even more value. Additionally their display recognizes the stages before the actualization of the work of art as highly significant process and celebrates the relevant artifacts as artworks too; turning them from private and sometimes obscure sketches to important items, accessible to the public, further elevating their importance, especially to the audience that is not much aware of the processes prior to the execution of a -large scale- artwork.

In the Skissernas museum one can also see various forms of *street art* too: not just in terms of official commissioned art in public space (such as sculpts, monuments, murals etc) but also of uncommissioned *street art* such as tagging, graffiti pieces, slogans, stickers, posters etc. In the Swedish section of the museum one can find exhibited tags on a frame as part of a painting by the native artist and graffiti writer Nug (Magnus Gustafsson). What differentiates this work from almost every other displayed in Skissernas is that his artwork (in collaboration with Carolina Falkholt) was not a sketch but an outcome as a review of their public art project in Mariestad Harbor silos (2010). In the museum's guide book the project is mentioned as the largest graffiti painting in the world. After the intervention the silos were demolished so the works -although commissioned- were destroyed too, as it usually happens with uncommissioned street works. Still, we should not forget that for the same style of tags (like those appearing behind the framed glass surface) the artist would find himself severely fined or even jailed if caught doing them in the streets -without commission. So, it seems that besides those legal facts and moral matters, some piece of recent graffiti *had to* be included in the museum. Actually, graffiti and *street art* (initially developed by graffiti writers) are ultimately largely recognized as the latest important art movements with uncountable works and massive participation. Last but not least, thy have also been a highly commercial exhibition genre guaranteeing popularity and attendance.

Of special interest is also the gigantic wheat pasted (and then painted over) paper cuts that monumentally cover two sides of the museum's courtyard. It reproduces the work by Brooklyn based artist Swoon, well known for her exceptional paper cut interventions in mid 2000s New York. The guiding catalog informs the visitors that the artworks are inspired by her encounters with refugees from Afghanistan and Syria, and that this as well as her other works and activities are part of community-based projects;[3] they incorporate collectivity -and in that sense politics as well. One of the courtyard's sides is the former exterior facade of the older building before the Museum's extension. The museum's interior courtyard looks much like an exterior, or at least like a real city environment while the mirror ceiling that reflects the lightly colored floor intensifies this sense. Placing Swoon's work there strengthens this feeling, and in this manner it is *representing* a street art piece in an excellent play.[4] Nonetheless, another 'installation' was set in the same space: Two long rows of tables and seats waiting for guests and the plates in place ready for the dinner to be served. The museum staff answered that it is usual to occasionally host some kind of event like that in the courtyard[5]. (Fig. 5)

This incident offers a chance to point out the limitations and dialectics of similar curatorial choices for acts once done without permission in the streets and now installed in the museum space: It has been noted that on the one hand such choices promote raising awareness, express tolerance for the reclamation of space and celebrate the free act of street art. On the other hand, they became subjects of institutionalization, assimilation and even exploitation. Depending to each given exhibitionary context, the artworks often loose their initial meaning and power, thus they cease to communicate their topics on a deep level. Crucial issues of critique, ethics and aesthetics arise here. However, Swoon remains an important artist to feature, her work vibrates positivity, the rows of tables are only temporarily placed there, and it was definitely not her decision to include them in the courtyard. A further comment might be necessary: Inside and around the courtyard a number of human-like sculptures had been placed. They were made by artist Maria Miesenberger (in 2005) and titled “Hide and seek”. One of them is crawling away (Fig. 6) and another is ironically facing the wall turning its back to the dinner tables. Their placement was quite playful, they look as if they are escaping and hiding from what they see. To some extent, it could be thought of as a sort of curatorial commentary on the museums’ own choices.

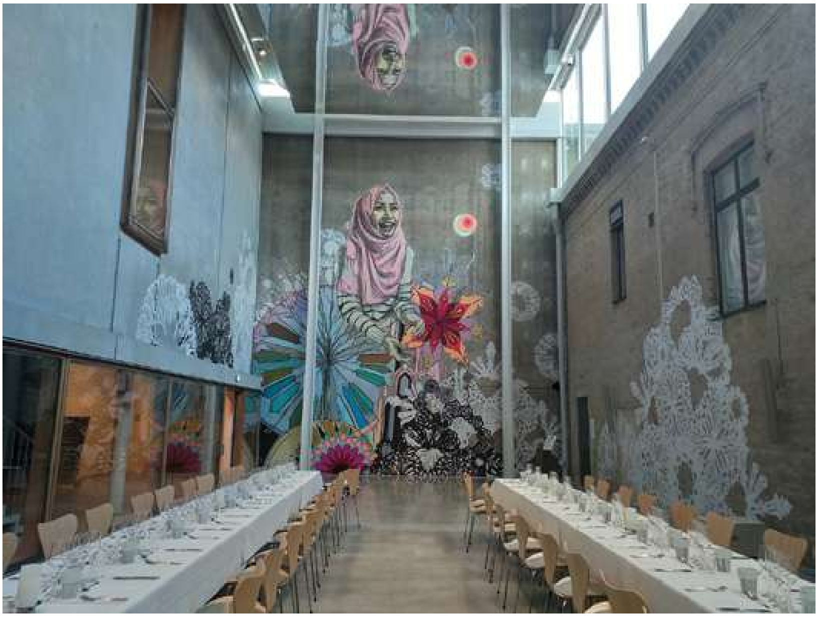

Figure 5: Swoon’s ‘Portrait of Maram’ in Skissernas courtyard.

Among many emblematic artists and a politically oriented section dedicated to Mexican muralism, the museum collection includes works by iconic artists such as Jenny Holzer, Gordon Matta-Clark, Jean Du Buffet and Juan Miro who were affiliated with graffiti in various ways. Holzer started her work in the mid 70s New York when the tags and pieces were spreading. In the late 70s and early 80s she did participate in workshops together with young graffiti writers. Matta-Clark was one of the first to document early tags on subway cars (in the early 70s, photographing them and displaying them as artworks) in some manner equating the young taggers' works with his own -an act of great significance since the former's activity was constantly demonized as mere vandalism, nonsense and crime. He also invited taggers to write on his truck. He later cut it into pieces and exhibited a painted fragment of it as an artwork. Du Buffet's work was inspired by even earlier examples of graffiti, from 1965.[6] The same is said for Juan Miro who has been caught in a photograph observing and admiring a kid's drawing on the wall.[7] In several forms, not just as highly sophisticated and elaborate murals, but also as inscriptions and other kinds of street art, street works are part of the museum's belongings and featured items. Many decades ago the featured artists expressed with their works their appreciation and political acceptance of those forms/acts, probably much more clearly and in depth than museums are doing today.

Figure 6: 'Hide and seek' by Maria Miesenberger. Swoon's wall installation in the background.

In a way, the dialectics of the acceptance processes could be sequenced as follows: free speech, resistance, non-legality, acceptance, tolerance, adoption, assimilation, appropriation, co-option, exploitation, neutralization, loss of initial meanings and total dissociation from signifiers. In a more dramatic style, the *political* could be distorted and turned into youthful exoticism, decorative ornaments while the artists could be transformed to brands. If that is happening now in museums -and long before that with the marketing and the cultural industries- it would make sense to wonder where are the politics in today's streets, or where might be the political art of today. If there is some acceptance of political art in the previous decades, what is happening now with today's political art; what are its forms and content, its techniques, strategies, mediations, and ultimately with its authenticity? Who are the subjects, the acting persons and the collectives who practice it?

The streets between the Museums. The streets of Lund.

A colleague quickly noticed and admired the tidiness inside the Centre for Languages and Literature building, compared to the polyphonic but sometimes quite messy look of University facilities in Greece. He found no political posters on the interior walls at all. Is there any politics here, one wondered -or is it just secured in the Skissernas museum as works of the Mexican revolutionaries, as acts of the glorious sixties and seventies, and maybe the eighties too? By taking it to the street level, was it really like that, so disciplined, 'protected' and ordered as it appears today? Walking in Lund one can witness various posters of all kinds placed in selected spots such as the dust bins, the telecommunication cables metal boxes, the post office metal boxes and so on. They were not spread all over like it is happening in Greece but they were definitely present and evident. Additionally, so as to not saturate the city, they stood out making a difference to the otherwise ordered public space.

Lund's walls are quite tag-free. The tags are not really many, not because they are not frequently written but mostly because of Sweden's zero tolerance policy on graffiti according to which they get wiped out systematically.[8] What one can see out there is the few tags remaining mostly on top of the originally grey metallic boxes mentioned above (Fig. 2). Those boxes' surfaces become an ideal host for tags, poster pasting, plus for every kind of stickers. Sticker pasting was a crucial practice in the advent of the so-called *street art* in the late 90s and early 00s, but also a 'vehicle' for advertizing practices and propaganda too. The poster pasting predated the aforementioned functions. The other surfaces that the stickers mostly occupy are the green columns on which the traffic signs are adjusted. There are innumerable stickers that have been stuck, removed, re-stuck and half removed from those usually forest green-colored objects (Fig. 7). In this essay's study, objects like the grey metal boxes and the forest green metal columns can be seen as the 'bearers' of the media and the 'canvases' of the sings. I would suggest that the media are not only the tools, the materials, or the act (in this case graffiti, street art, flyposting as *acts* and as *media*) but also the surfaces and the objects, be it walls, boxes, columns, street sign boards, benches and so on. Just as it was rocks, bricks or trees in the past. Name writing, message writing and drawings of any kind are in a sense one of the oldest forms of communication to date, and the walls and objects they appeared on are of the oldest and primary media.

The act of their mere placement can in many respects be called political as it embodies elementary forms of appropriating space for free speech and expression. But even besides those acts and the content of the messages, the sole act of their censorship and defacement could rightfully be considered political too.[9] After all, they present particular trends in graphic design and visual communication, potentially ranging from the most mainstream to the most underground. The verbal poetics is another topic worthy of extended examination.[10] However, besides subjects, themes, words and graphics, I also found a special interest in the unintentional forms produced by the censorship of those messages; the defacement of the stickers, posters and tags (that are anyway officially deemed as defacement and vandalism in the first place). Eventually, the defacements often result in compositions of various elements such as tags, torn posters, paint, paper remnants, half washed out paint and patinas: multilayered palimpsest forms, all unintentional collective visual productions.

The visual manners, the imagery and the language used in those stickers can anyway be further researched and analysed. They involve a plethora of sings and subject matters, and whatever comes from the everyday; from politics to football, from gender issues to social movements, from live gig posters to free radio station broadcasts, from demos to assemblies, from marxist to anarchist approaches, from collective affairs to any kind of personal taste or culture or group one could belong, from personal artworks to scientific conference logos.[11]

As noted, those stickers and posters are also evidence of politics going on consisting an important collection of artifacts for their verbal and visual languages as well as proof of symbolic actions of claiming public space beyond the law. At the same time, they are somehow honoring and continuing an older political tradition that is often celebrated in museums[12] or in documentaries broadcasted in the national TV networks. Thus, they are equally important and deserve a documentation for the same historical and cultural reasons as well as for the aesthetic ones explained earlier. They are worthy of documentation both as photographed pictures and as physical collected artifacts. Nonetheless, an urgent reason for a consistent documentation is their very ephemerality. In most cases they are shortly removed and destroyed, or maybe (especially in the case of posters) over-layered by another installment. Soon after, the larger picture changes.

Another aspect worthy of analysis are the forms and textures created by the stickers' and posters' partial removal; the remaining traces after their defacement. The action of removal introduces another factor, the persons and authorities who deface. The stickers' glue must have been very strong unless the removers were not patient enough -whether they are municipality and campus workers,[13] or independent individuals. Even if the printed surface layer of the sticker gets detached, a layer of glued paper still stays on the metal surface. So, much of a random texture is left on the objects, creating abstract shapes and a variety of textures. The visual result -whether of a composition of torn stickers or of a single sticker- in some cases is very interesting for some observers. Additionally, if one looks more carefully, one could see that the white paper that remained glued, was fertile ground for short vegetation like mush.

Similar tints are produced on the metal telecommunications boxes too, only this time it is the wheat paste glue that dissolves the boxes' primary grey or silver paint. Thus the removal of the posters reveals the newer patterns on the surfaces. In the end, what we see is an accumulation of actors, factors, processes, actions, materials and images all incorporated in a new image.

Since these objects are unignored elements of the city that bear specific messages and particular aesthetics the question finally returns to the initial hypothesis about whether they could be preserved and showcased in a future museum; as designed objects for a specific function in the first place, that on the other hand serve as the surfaces to host taggers' calligraphy, arty stickers, students posters, political messages that are visualized accordingly with the use of an extended vocabulary and imagery. Still, many might reasonably ponder whether it is serious or worthy, or if there is any real value in such a possibility. Nonetheless, whatever the response is, it is happening now, it indicates an activity, involves loads of information and evidence for further research, and in many respects appears to have certain aesthetic qualities too.

In praise of textures

It is true that such results have been witnessed in other cities as well. However, in Lund I can say that what remains after the removal of the stickers is a basic typology of its streets' image. A similar phenomenon occurs on the metal boxes: marker and aerosol paint tags blend with poster remnants, overlapping stickers, and the traces that the poster glue leaves to the prior surface when 'eating' parts of the boxes' official paint. At first I wondered whether my observations on the aesthetic outcome were that rare but I quickly realized that one might easily find similarities with older images from torn up posters and collages in the History of Art, as well as in popular culture. First, the textures provided by the half-removed sticker traces in some cases look like the patterns created by the random fluid acid textures in many etching prints. Secondly, the metal boxes' compositions are reminiscent of Dada collages or Abstract Expressionism paintings (Fig. 11). Similar textures were definitely not ignored by many artists' sensitive eyes and this is what their work certainly prove, for instance Rena Papaspyrou from Greece who diligently observed and photographed close ups of marbles, mosaics, or/and other tints created on aged walls[14] (Fig. 8). In a similar manner one could find similarities between the sculptural artwork that is adjusted on the exterior of Skissernas museum resembling the globe (Fig. 9), and the round-shaped moonlike stickers remnants on the traffic signs close by (Fig. 10). Taking it to other corners of the art-world, this charm was exactly what artist and filmmaker Dennis Hopper intended to capture with a series of photographs: fragments of spray painted tag lines, as if they were some professional artist's gestures carefully placed on the wall's rich textures in composition with torn poster remnants (Fig. 12).

Figure 7: Sticker remnants on Lund's street signs columns.

Figure 8: 'Geography', Rena Papaspyrou, 1981. Metal sheet with traces if cement, intervention with pencil, 270x100 cm. This particular picture was displayed in her own book front cover.

Figure 9: 'Glob en vand', Torsten_Renqvist, 1958. Installation on the northern wall of Skissernas Museum.

Figure 10: Sticker remnant, Lund 2019.

Textures have always offered some kind of 'unexplained beauty'. From my studies at the School of Architecture I remember that restoration we should respect the principles of buildings and paintings under restoration. They are actually important because of the trace of time -and this is what on is found a smaller scale in Lund's boxes. The aspect of time is there in all its splendor: textural surfaces like artworks created 'organically' by the multilayered human touch, that finally combine with the elements of weather and in some cases with vegetation; on the ground, on the walls, on various materials, and of course on the paper remnants too. Take mixed media products in a process of aging through a somewhat organic growth progress, where even the sunlight reflections or/and the humidity contribute to the whole picture and its feel. Photographers often choose old walls for their textures, their pigments and their gradient colors. In fashion photography models frequently stand in front of them. The textures add to the scenery's aura, and finally to the overall essence of the picture. Additionally, when a tag is included it is even more credible. The now invisible body of the tagger is left to be imagined: an unidentified street persona who left her/his mark at some moment, possibly during nighttime. Decorators in shops often try to artificially imitate textures, and more recently coffee shop owners do their best to preserve the original ones. In Paris some fifteen years ago friends explained to me how a formerly overcrowded Parisian cafe lost its character and its customers after the owners decided to renovate it transforming it to a freshly painted neat looking place. In the last few years in Athens when new bars open in formerly empty stores the decorators often act 'as if it is a crime' to paint over the textured and tagged walls where time has left its mark. Especially on the ceilings, a usual material of choice is simply a transparent varnish that emphasize the oldness of it. They seem to respect them as they would respect an aging wrinkled human face. But besides, behind and beyond this late trend, there is much depth and tradition. Such examples remind us the soulful and sensitive approach in Junichiro Tanizaki's famous book *In praise of shadows,*[15] possibly a quite suitable analogue to this conversation; a full insight to how shades, shadows, textures and patina makes a surface look alive contrary to a lighted solid painted surface that lacks traces, 'information' and interest. One could say there is some shared universal respect and intrigue to the textures, aesthetics and time-processes like the ones described above.

In praise of tags

Past forms of tagging are seen as historical evidence and so many old tags are considered worthy of being preserved. A famous tagger was Lord Byron. Less known for his tagging habits was Victor Hugo.[16] Guides do not miss the chance to point out Byron's carving on his name on the temple of Poseidon on Sounion, Attica. In Switzerland's Chateau De Chillion, his tag is protected by a glass framed in metal so that it stands out from the rest of the carvings.[17] One might think it blasphemous to compare anonymous taggers with famous personalities but you can never really be sure who is who and how to evaluate what she/he did with her/his life. For example, a New York tagger from the 70s was awarded a Pulitzer price when he grew older. He was a member of the famous crew The Crazy 5 (including graffiti legends Blade and Comet) which was quite important for the history of the movement for its innovations, quality and quantity.[18] He is not the only such example: Think of tags by tagging pioneers Phase2, Lee 163rd or Taki 183 that would all be of indescribable importance. Many would agree they would be worth a plexiglass cover protection placed in front of them. Their marks, as it has happened with Hugo and Byron. Guides would no way miss them in the lately popular *street art tours,* or other kinds of cultural tourism and *city walks.* Maybe a hundred years should first pass for tags to be fully appreciated but the difference here is that their names are not carved but painted on the surface so it is impossible to wait that much before they 'get buffed' or fade out. On the other hand, writers and tag aficionados do keep places with old untouched marks as their own secret monuments: hidden sacred "hall of fames" of surviving tags in places such as tunnels, rooftops, bridges and other passages that are usually not frequented by pedestrians and officials, so they have not been erased.

In some cases though, tags survive when written on objects or paper and their status is high since they are pieces of history and memory. For example, the lavatory door from the early subway writing movement researcher Jack Stewart, is exhibited as a rare artifact[19] and carries an extreme importance regarding the movement pioneers' signatures written on it. Martin Wong's collection of early pioneers' tags, each written on a small piece of paper, was recently displayed in the City Museum of New York loaded with the same or even more value than the paintings on canvas of the same exhibition.[20] Gordon Matta-Clark's metal piece of his truck stands like an archaeologist's finding or a collector's ultra rare item; like an 'urban ruin', a unique piece of history from the early '70s South Bronx environment and culture.

Returning to Dennis Hopper's photographs, one of my early personal encounters with an 'outsider's' appreciation on tags was his unique perspective described earlier. In a retrospective exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam 2001) visitors could admire fragments of enlarged tags on a monumental scale exceeding the height of the spectators. The detail of the enlarged lines fading in and out were impressive, as were the curves and angles schemed by the taggers' gestural moves and the release of spraycan paint under pressure. That was surely an arty touch on the wall, somehow regarded as a professional calligrapher's handwriting or an abstract expressionist's masterpiece and it was debating strongly that -now outdated- 'art or vandalism' binary. It *was* art because -luckily- Dennis Hopper thought it is, and because this narrative was part of a high status museum exhibition. Additionally, it celebrated not some established person but an anonymous artist's tag, a gesture that could have been made by anybody out there.

Figure 11: Tags and posters remnants composition on a metallic street box, Lund 2019.

The empty signifier

But there is more. In 1976, in his book *Symbolic Exchange and Death,* Jean Beaudrillard included his observations on the early tag signs. When I first heard that he had called the tags *empty signifiers* I had felt uneasy. My lack of familiarity with semiotic terminology wasn't helping me understand what *empty* meant. How could somebody ever claim the tags were empty of meaning?. That was my serious objection ignorant as I was to the fact that 'empty' meant 'open to multiple interpretations'. Despite the fact that the graffiti writing movement was still too young to be interpreted when Beaudrillard wrote about it, he seemed to have had a deep understanding that there were many signifiers that remained unidentified by the general public, including academics, journalists and the art world. In his insightful text, to my satisfaction, I read that although "their content (of the graphics) is not political",[21] "the political significance of graffiti becomes clear".[22]

Figure 12: Dennis Hopper, photography, Florence 1996.

Author Dumar Novy in his monograph *What do a million Ja tags signify?* about legendary New York tagger Ja (who has been unstoppably tagging New York City for more than 30 years) he summarizes the very essence of the graffiti spirit. At some point the author argues that Ja's one million tags can be used for one million interpretations, but in his own special manner Novy certainly reveals a good selection of them in various poetic metaphors. Based on Ja's devotion we read "Ja is what Marcuse advocates for in *Repressive Tolerance*, is what Ginsberg was jiving about in *Howl*, is the last word scratched in the prison wall by Guevara & proves most of what Marx wrote"."Ja is a different take on Bob Ross painting nature (…) [Ja] is painting a portrait of every single happy little resident of the city with his spray cans"."Ja is Vietnam".[23] Resistance, howls, revolution, economy, politics, city life, happy faces, smiley people, war. In the Arte TV Channel episode series *Ceci n'est pas un graffiti* the same author concludes that 'graffiti signifies life'.[24] According to New York pioneer writers of the 70s the tags were an extension of ones' style having a certain touch of personality; they were 'flying and singing', it was about who you are and what you are doing, to whom you are up together and down with.[25] Tags were the *Voice of the ghetto (*as Stay High 149 use to write), they were anti-segregating and overcoming barriers,[26] while European teenagers of the 80s and 90s were adopting tagging, graffiti and hip hop as totally antiracist practices and cultures.

Bringing it back to the late 19th century, former Mayor of Chicago Carter Harrison was one of the many hundreds who were writing their names all over, for instance on Ancient Egyptian monuments. He was criticized for that but he defended himself publicly in his travel letters published in the *Chicago Daily* newspaper: "By the way, sensible men justly inveigh the habit of 'vanity' in carving [their] name upon monuments and thereby defacing them. But there is sense in cutting one's name upon imperishable rock without defacing it. Some may come afterward, and, seeing it, feel as if meeting an old friend. My heart was warmed up here in Egypt when seeing the names of some old acquaintance now dead. I felt we were living over again a half-forgotten past.' I saw 'Jenny Lind's' name upon the pyramid. Did she (...) for a moment there come from the West, over the dead desert, a trill of perfected harmony ..."[27]. Memory and communication come to the surface. Friendships and networks of people, love and affection, persons and life stories, traveling the worlds, traveling the cities, all of them aspects of today's tagging which found an unexpected defender in Carter Harrison.

In praise of the unintentional, accidental art and its documentation.

So far, a number of works, their ingredients and substances have been discussed: stickers, posters, tags, objects, contents, meanings, and their visual results too; organic, palimpsestic, dynamic multilayered compositions, that contain fragments of words, dates, typefaces and handwriting that include various images and cultural references. provide textures and accidental unintentional results of certain aesthetics that in many respects they can be seen as art.

Already in 2001, such an approach to unintentional outcomes was documented and discussed in the film *The Subconscious art of graffiti removal*.[28] The filmmakers traced a good number of erased tags painted over with square surfaces of various dimensions and colors that eventually created compositions close to suprematism, minimalism, abstract expressionism and the Russian avant-gardes. At that point it was a really insightful contribution on the unintentional forms produced after the primary graffiti act and what follows after the traces' removal that are actually replaced by a subsequent mark. The 'buffers' -as they are called in the graffiti dialect- rarely succeed to use the same color on the wall beneath the tag, so they also create another trace in public space, usually orthogonal with its dimensions and proportions depending on the original tag or 'throw up'.[29]

However, when I visited the *Unlock book fair* in Cologne[30] I found out that a book with a similar approach existed: *Rail experimental - Belgian train worker art* actually showcases what remains after the partial removal of graffiti from the train's exterior surfaces. The workers use a chemical solvent that dissolves the graffiti paint but in the case that they do not totally remove it, it then transforms to a layer of smudged colors where the workers gestures can be traced too. Furthermore, the chemical sometimes dissolves the train's original paint or even the train company logos themselves.[31] But that was not the only publication of an 'unintentional art' documentation showcased in the book fair.

A second one directly travelled me back to Lund: In Lund, in contrast to the near absence of spray-painted tags on the walls, I had noticed another sign of spray-painted patterns, only this time on the ground -just a few hundred meters from Skissernas. After wondering for a moment, I quickly realized it was workers' signs who had marked the ground offering directions to the next shift of workers for the digging of holes, repairing the pavements or for other kind of constructions to be made. But a second thought came as fast: Could it be some kind of a conceptual street art project? Observing more carefully I assumed it was real construction work signs. Later I encountered more, similar markings connecting to ongoing constructions in Lund's streets. However, back in Cologne, the book I saw was firstly documenting such marks and secondly it presented what a graffiti backgrounded artist did on the ground: he got obsessed noticing and documenting them, then he got inspired by them, and finally he proceeded imitating the workers' lines and schemes in his own style camouflaging this way his non-legal tagging practice. Additionally, he could do it in daytime wearing a fluorescent worker's vest acting like it was a commissioned and necessary activity. As an accurate and playful description the book is titled *Out of Necessity* with double connotations: the workers' marks, and the artist's needs.[32]

The two books mentioned above help us underline another aspect of the graffiti game: Graffiti writers besides being artists are at the same time archivists, documentarists, researchers, as well as historians and critics of their guild's works. Additionally, many of them show deep interest and also document any other relating activity in public space, and processes of placement and displacement. In many cases too, they are collectors of the various artifacts from the street and the *art in the streets* universes. If they can, they would collect whatever possible and some of them maintain rare and unexpected collections of objects. Many of their private collections are contemporary *cabinets of curiosity*, capable of articulating complex exhibitions and even supporting whole museum concepts. Like archaeologists who seek new findings, like biologists who discover new species or like the 19th century *flaneurs* who are 'the botanologists of the asphalt', similarly so many graffiti aficionados are the contemporary botanologists of the vertical surfaces, their paint, their inscriptions and their textures in any kind of given public space, urban and rural too. Documentation and publications have always been important in initiating further discourse and developing. On the one hand they immortalize the ephemeral works *by nature*, on the other by mediating them they reach and influence non-local and international audiences.[33] Furthermore, the only *real* graffiti and other work of uncommissioned street art are the ones that happen *in the streets,*[34] and the only *real* actual works that make it to be exhibited in museums are the ones who are displayed as documented material in printed photographs or videos. Of course, the photographs and videos are themselves *representations* of the physical works. However, they still display the images of original ones that have been a result of a particular action in public and private space. That said, there can only be very few exceptions of *real street art* featured in exhibition spaces: one of them is by detaching a whole written/painted surface (from the streets) and finally transporting it to the exhibition space. If the work is not directly painted on the surface but first on a sticker or a poster, then their removal can still make them stand as *real* artworks that were detached. A second way to show street art is to display the works from the streets *on* actual exhibited objects who were once the bearers in the real streets. Afterwards those objects are removed as a whole (collected, stolen or even bought) by somebody from their original location and are finally transported into the exhibited spaces.

A last couple of examples will hopefully push further what has been discussed so far: The first comes with the recent publication *Punk Graffiti Archives: Madrid*, which introduces the largely unknown indigenous punk tagging movement from the mid 80s. Many of the pictures displayed in the book are *real* tags written on billboard paper. They survived physically just because they were cut out from the subway billboards and thus collected and still existing.[35]

The second example comes from Rotterdam in 2001 when the local sticker and street art scene was blooming and the term *street art* had not been coined yet. An international movement was emerging through artists with graffiti background and the Rotterdam scene was having an impact with serious contributors. Artists Erosie, Space3, Influenza and others organized an exhibition/event called ‘Public space expo (p)art(y)’ on a most possibly squatted the occasional spot - or at least a place that didn’t look official at all. The poster itself displayed an illustration of the city’s waste bins on which their stickers and paste ups were placed on, however the spotlight seemed to be on the bearer-object image. In the exhibition interior spaces of the otherwise empty building, among paste up installations who were covering entire walls,[36] a series of extra sized street waste bin images were dominating the various rooms walls. Nonetheless what mostly stayed in my mind and is still rambling until this text was a city element placed in the center of a room; in the middle of living room sofas and people hanging around. It was a mid-sized street column, like those preventing vehicles to enter parks but a bit higher, bearing a big variety of the stickers that were an element of the city landscape at the time. Yet on an underground level they were paving ways to what globally boomed as *street art* in the following years. Also, reflecting on their contemporary practices, they indicated the value of an object as a medium, and as an item worthy of being preserved and exhibited then and in the future.

Figure 13: From his exhibition in Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam 2001.

Figure 14: Image from the 'Public space expo (p)art(y)' flyer, Rotterdam 2001. Courtesy of the author.

Outro / Exit: A long stroll and its afterthoughts

What I have tried to explore in these final pages are the aesthetic processes of *unintentional art* in public space, as well as the removability and transportability of such street works, for example by detaching a sticker off an object, or by removing the whole object itself, like a real truck, an actual street sign, a real door, a whole bench or at least parts of them that bear a sticker, a poster, a tag or all of them in one. In other cases, it could be the removal of a whole wall surface made of wood or plasterboards, metal fences, shutters, tiles and so on, or in the most difficult cases, parts of a heavy brick or concrete wall. The starting point for those explorations was the experience in *Kulturen Open air museum* and the *Skissernas museum of artistic process and public art*. Together with the streets between and around them they triggered the initial hypothesis of what forms could be proper in order to represent the current epoch's streets, atmospheres and trends (in Lund but also in a universal perspective too) and if it would make any sense to include (in a museum exhibition) items such as a traffic sign column full of stickers or a metal telecommunications box bearing the collective products of what we have called *unintentional art* compositions.

Of course, the question is totally hypothetical, but according to the examples, facts and anecdotes explained above we could suppose it is fair: There is a tradition of sensitivity and appreciation of the aesthetics of textures, and there are approaches to the unintentional production of art. There is also a serious recognition of the significance of tags. Street art in its various forms, idioms and expressions has been recognized at large as an important influential movement which is highly commercial in the same time. Most of the topics discussed here are part of the *urban aesthetics* who is also a subject of high interest.[37] Regarding all those factors it can be suggested that the hypothesis makes sense, and maybe a similar project or plan is already happening in some place of the world.

However, even though I find the idea interesting, there is no guarantee any such effort would be necessarily successful. If for a while we forget *Kulturen* and *Skissernas* (institutions that take serious care of their material and curatorial responsibility) for any such ambitious project, a series of complex matters arise at once, matters of curating, knowledge, work selection, sensibility, credibility, representations and authenticity. At the same time, matters of context and respect of the artists, their works, as well as of their politics, ideologies, cultures and historicity, and also matters of research, aesthetics and ethics. Of course, the hypothetical nature of the question leaves open who the organizer would be and what would be the occasion of an exhibition or the wider concept. There could never be a specific 'manual' covering all these matters.

A set of technical questions still remain: Besides collecting them, who would save and store all these items, and cater for their preservation and maintenance. Considering such questions as well as the historical tradition of people collecting various artifacts, I would suggest there is a high possibility that many people collect this kind of items. There are definitely many who document such examples of works. Yet who would initiate an exhibition like that? One could think that the same kind of academic motivation and dedication that initiated the founding of Skissernas museum nine decades ago, could officially work in a similar direction. In a different perspective there could be other viewpoints and goals, thus other strategies to promote and create demand for similar projects. A promotional campaign could work, but regarding the essence of the subject nothing guarantees the consistence of the topic with its final exhibition outcomes. Also, the same marketing tactics could certainly include specific 'stars' in the field (as it happens with many of the street art themed exhibitions) most possibly excluding credible works, as well as the anonymous and unintentional ones too. Leaving aside the otherwise long debate about similar projects' necessity, one should also keep in mind that all those street works we are talking about were initially not made to live forever, and they were not created in order to become future exhibition items. Furthermore, their representations are not authentic works.

A last subsequent question follows. As mentioned above, there is a long existing tradition of collecting artifacts among people with street art backgrounds. So, it would be of exceptional interest if artists and/or some of their friends could present their collections to multiple audiences. Each one of them can potentially be a curator of her/his own archives and collections, in a way promoting a *museology of personal archives*, at the same time consistent with the self-education tradition of various street cultures. We should keep in mind that such efforts guarantee nothing as regards their final quality standards. We should also not forget that in some cases it still remains very hard and often a matter of privilege to preserve these artifacts, especially the heavy and oversized ones. The question (and the real challenge) lies in whether the same *do it yourself* ethos together with honesty and loyalty, deeply rooted in the years of these subcultures' birth and evolution, could create some equivalent in the ethos of display. In that respect, such endeavors would offer the chance for further first-hand testimonies, narratives and histories of the works, the art forms, and their cultures. Furthermore, their own perception of the city image, and their perspective on the urban memory and experience would form alternative narratives for a richer understanding of our times.

NOTES

1 12th Conference of the international Association of Visual Semiotics, *Visual semiotics goes cognitive*. Lund, August 22-24, 2019.
2 They were found in 1627, 1910 and 1931. Other runestones have been placed on Lund's University campus close by.
3 https://www.skissernasmuseum.se/en/exhibitions/kommande_utst%C3%A4llning/ The paste

up is a portrait of Maram from Syria. This work is what was left in the museum after her site-specific solo exhibition on Skissernas in 2017.

4 Since the work is made and displayed inside the museum it cannot be called a *real street art* piece, thus I call it here a *representation* of a street art piece. This will be further explained later in this text.

5 A piano was also permanently placed there, with a humorous close to ironic touch included: on top of it a sign informs the visitors that this item is ‘the grand piano’.

6 One might trace some similarities with the canvases and the commissioned murals that the famous Keith Harring did in the early 80s.

7 In a photograph that Brassai took in Barcelona, 1955.

8 Details about Sweden’s zero-tolerance in Jacob Kimvall’s PhD dissertation, also published in Kimvall, Jacob. 2014. *The G-word: virtuosity and violation, negotiating and transforming graffiti.* Årstra, Sweden: Dokument Press

9 They are political in their initial action/praxis but this is just a first stage. I would argue that beyond that there is a multitude of scales and volumes in how the the messages, the artistic perspective and even the political *consciousness* are incorporated in the *political.*

10 Although it might sound like a generalization to speak about all the various forms of leaving a trace in public space and their several messages incorporated all in one, the least that can be said about their marks is that they also are a kind of ‘semiotic guerilla warfare’, borrowing here from the way Hebdige quoted Eco (1972) in his seminal work on subcultures. The signs and signifiers themselves leave a serious amount of information to be collected and further investigated. Hebdige, Dick, 1979, *Subculture. The meaning of style*

11 Of particular interest is the *Urban Creativity Conference* sticker (of a conference held at the University of Lund) which is written in marker-tag styled fonts. A tag was handwritten, printed on a sticker and then placed in public space.

12 For instance, exhibitions such as the recent *Spring Torrents, Harvard Strike posters, Spring 1969*, Thessaloniki State Museum of Contemporary Art, 2018.

13 Skissernas is located inside the Lund University campus and many of the streets examined here are also part of it.

14 Papaspyrou, Rena, Paparounis, Mihalis, & State Museum of Contemporary Art (Greece). (2011)..

15 Tanizaki, Junichiro, 1977. *In praise of shadows.* New Haven, Conn: Leete’s Island Books. Originally published in 1933.

16 ‘Le 29 juillet 1835, Victor Hugo grava son nom et celui de Juliette Drouet au donjon de Septmonts.’ fr.geneawiki.com/index.php/02706_-_Septmonts

17 For further details on Byron’s story at Chillion: Hoffman, Detlef, 2019. “2000 years of Graffiti or each age has the walls it deserves”, in *Boulevard, in trespassing and culture,* 2019 Frankfurt: Boulevard. First published in *Graffiti: Tätowierte Wände*, 1985. Bielefeld: AJZ Druck & Verlag GmbH

18 In an interview in www.subwayoutlaws.com . The interviewed does not reveal his real name but only his partner's who won the price together with. He leaves a little 'homework task' for the reader who is really interested in finding out his real name and in the same respect it is left open here as well.

19 For example in the exhibition *Born in the Streets - Graffiti* presented at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain à Paris from July 7 to November 29, 2009. Access to the image: https://www.nyhistory.org/exhibit/graffiti-door

20 City as canvas: Martin Wong's collection, City Museum of New York, 2015.

21 Baudrillard, Jean. 1993. *Symbolic Exchange and Death.* London: Sage Publications p.76. First published: 1976. Original essay: 'KOOL KILLER, or The Insurrection of Signs' (1975)

22 Ibid. p.80.

23 Novy, Dumar. 2015. *What Do One Million Tags Signify?* Berlin: Possible books. pp. 28-31

24 *Ceci n'est pas un graffiti. Episode 8/10. Ich bin ein Street Artiste.* (2017) https://www.arte.tv/fr/videos/062822-008-A/ceci-n-est-pas-un-graffiti-8-10/ (5:20) Available online from 16/03/2017 to 30/11/2019

25 In the subway writers' own words in books such as Schmidlapp, David and Phase 2 eds. 1996. *Style: writing from the underground : ®evolutions of aerosol linguistics*. Viterbo: Stampa alternativa/ Nuovi equilibri & IGTimes, and Fliesher, Alan and Paul Iovino with introduction by Phase 2. 2012. *Classic Hits: New York's Pioneering Subway Graffiti Writers*, Stockholm: Dokument Press.

26 According to both graffiti writers and researchers such Joe Austin, Craig Castleman and Ivor Miller.

27 Originally published in partial letters - reports of his travels in Chicago Daily and then printed in Harrison, Carter H. 1889. *A race with the sun; or, A sixteen months' tour from Chicago around the world.* New York: G.P. Putnam's sons. p. 295 https://archive.org/stream/racewithsunorsix00harr/racewithsunorsix00harr_djvu.txt . First read about Harrison in researcher's Roger O. De Keersmaecker personal website http://www.egypt-sudan-graffiti.be/ .

28 McCormick, Matt, *The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal* (USA, 2001, 16 min). Also released in Barenthin Lindblad, Tobias, and Macarena Dusant. 2009. *Metagraffiti: graffiti art films*. Stockholm: Dokument Förlag

29 A larger, usually linear, format of tagging/graffiti.

30 International annual book fair dedicated to publications on graffiti, street art and the neighboring fields. http://unlockfair.com/

31 *Rail experimental - Belgian train worker art.* 2019. Belgium: Nokkio Institute of Zines https://hitzerot.com/product/rail-experimental/ Another recent publication that adds insight to the aesthetics of erased graffiti is the book *Buffantgarde* whose title is a wordplay of the words buff (erasing) and avant-garde. Stavrov, Konstantin, and Oleg Kuzneov. 2018. *Buffantgarde.* Saint Petersburg: Invalid books. The most recent book including relevant content was published in

Sweden in October 2019: Madsen, Carsen, and Claus Peder Pedersen. 2019. *Paintworks. Jonas Georg Christensen og Peter Olsen*. Årstra, Sweden: Dokument Press
32 *Out of Necessity.* 2019. Antwerpen: Nokio Institute of Zines
33 The documentation is what actually creates the *recorded* history in graffiti. For sure the oral history is a fundamental factor for each community's bonds and each scene's development but on the other hand it has its limitations: the stories will one day be forgotten and/or die if the oral history will not become documented in a written format.
34 The ones that happen *in the streets* are the only real ones, and not those works that are painted or installed on canvases on and/or inside the museum and gallery walls. The latter are *representations* of the actual ones. After all, galleries and museums are not the streets. What happens in the sanctioned places, as well as on legally commissioned walls lacks the fundamental act of appropriating space, doing it without permission.
35 As director of *Unlock Book Fair* Javier Abarca explained in the book launch, in Amsterdam 2018.
36 A photograph of that interior wall is featured on the back cover of Manco, Tristan. 2004. *Street logos.* London: Thames & Hudson.
37 Even if it is not about the aesthetics, designwise an object such as the telecommunications boxes will most possibly disappear from the city landscape because it will not be needed anymore. As it has happened with most telephone booths they will only be regarded as an object of the past.

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FIGURES

All photographs by Orestis Pangalos except 8 and 12.

Orestis Pangalos PhD, is an architect, artist, and researcher. He is currently teaching Art, History of Art, Visual and Cultural Studies courses in Postgraduate Programs at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Email: o.pangalos@gmail.com

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'This is the time. And this is the record of the time'[1]: A post-modern photographic *Grand Tour*.

Hercules Papaioannou

Landscape, architecture and monuments have been popular in photography ever since it was invented, due to their value and stillness. Contemporary photography rediscovers and renews this subject matter, often allowing for a new appreciation of the historical within contemporary context. Greek photographer Paris Petridis has created a significant body of work in the greater Eastern Mediterranean area, attempting to bring forth readings of various historical and cultural layers of what emerges as a very complex semantic field.

Keywords Photography, monument, art, Eastern Mediterranean, landscape, time, ruins

Architecture, monuments and landscape views were popular in photography from the very beginning, ever since the invention was announced in 1839. It wasn't just their established value in art and culture. In the early years, when exposing a sensitized plate required up to several minutes in bright sunlight, their immobility provided an undoubtedly privileged availability. It was only in 1839 that the Parisian optician Noël Marie Paymal Lerebours assigned to a group of converts to the new medium the mission of depicting landmarks all over the world, including the Parthenon, the Pyramids and Niagara Falls. The natural and cultural wonders of the planet began to head towards an audience increasingly thirsty for sharp images. Soon, in 1851, the French State commissioned the *Missions Héliographiques*: a record of towers, castles, bridges and churches around the country that established photography's value for recording the form of a monument as well as its condition (Rosenblum 1989: 99-100). The 'mirror with memory', as Oliver Wendell Holmes called the medium (Alan Trachtenberg 1980:74), was also utilized by colonialism, producing surveys from the ends of the earth, contributing to the understanding of its complexity while simultaneously constructing an illusion of universality.

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Characteristic here is the work of the British John Thomson in the Far East, between 1862 and 1872. It should be noted that archaeology (the science of rescuing and studying ancient and recent monuments), tourism (marketing these monuments) and photography which is massively (re)producing their image, were founded or invented in Europe the same period, that is the first half of 19th century, an era crucial in the process of forming nations-states (Papaioannou 2014: 88). The circumstances left their mark on the photograph of monuments, which was widely propagating *ruinophilia* from the 19th century, primarily through commercially-oriented images that at the same time validated local national ideologies, reinforced the collective memory of the past and introduced the audience of the 'periphery' to the modern values of the western gaze.

In recent decades, the photographic art has disengaged from the stereotypes of the picturesque and of documentation in the depiction of monuments. It often prefers to trace their broader condition, to dig for leads ephemeral or permanent, to include them in new aesthetic and conceptual practices. In Marialba Russo's series *Roma: fasti moderni. Il disordine del tempo* (1993), for example, the deep shadows falling on the Roman ruins appear as a metaphor for chasms of matter and time, the unbridged distance between what survives and what is lost for good. Lee Friedlander in the series *The American Monument* (1976) focuses, with the Vietnam war still fresh, on the small patriotic monuments spread all over the vast American territory examining, through the static or dynamic context of the surrounding space, how the persistent remembrance of the war constructs an abstract idea of heroism. In turn, Martin Parr in the series *Small World* (1985) observes how the crowds that swarm daily over the Parthenon or the Pyramids can substantially alter the experience one can have facing such timeless monuments. Evdoxia Radi and Epaminondas Schizas in the *Test of Time* (1995) took Polaroids of historical monuments in Greece and France, then inflicted multiple forms of violence on the instant image while it was developing.

Figure 1: Evdoxia Radi - Epameinondas Schizas, from the series *The Test of Time*, 1995.

By removing the Polaroid paper backing, they were left with a semi-transparent work in which the gaze seems to traverse layers of time. The unpredictability of the intervention, coupled with the triptychs composed from different angles, vitally deconstruct the relationship between form and color: if the monument bears on its body the texture of history's violence and time's corrosion, is it possible for its image not to echo the process?

In a different spirit, Paul Seawright in his *Sectarian Murder* (1987-1988) series depicted spots in Northern Ireland where murders took place, rooted in religious hatred. Everyday places like a playground, are inscribed here in the collective consciousness due to the journalistic shards which dig painfully into every image. Bernd and Hilla Becher studied *anonymous sculptures* for forty years, starting in the late 50s, that is the form of industrial buildings such as blast furnaces or water towers (Bernd & Hilla Becher 1970).

Figure 2: Bernd & Hilla Becher, from the series *Water Towers*, 1965-1997.

Their rational typologies involving groups of frontal views depicted structures in almost deserted industrial zones, exploring an unseen industrial aesthetic largely defined by functionality. The last two series mentioned here bring out the difference between *picturing a monument* and *monumentalizing* it through the image. In the first case, a monument is already perceived as such. In the second, the noun turns into a verb. The representation is called upon to validate the *commemorability* of the place or building. One doesn't even need to visit it; the photograph acts as a conceptual verification of monumentality. Of course, this view considerably broadens the idea of informal monuments via choices which differ radically from the state-controlled ideology of memory.

If these works constitute a very rough framework for considering monuments and their image in historical and contemporary terms, what is the postmodern Grand Tour of Paris Petridis bringing to the conversation, as he wanders in monuments in the Eastern Mediterranean (Greece, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, Egypt), cross-fertilizing the contemporary with the archaic, the classical, the biblical?[2] His photographs recall a genealogy of urban views free of people but full of their traces and deeds. The point of departure seems to be the famous daguerreotype *Boulevard du Temple* (Paris, c.1838) which Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre took from his window, in which the idol of just one person is recorded in the image, due to its long exposure time. The photograph, coming from the early experimental stage of the medium, was compared by Giorgio Agamben to Doomsday, due to the lack of people on a noisy boulevard. As Agamben commented, on Judgment Day each one will be called to confess alone (Agamben 2005: 36).

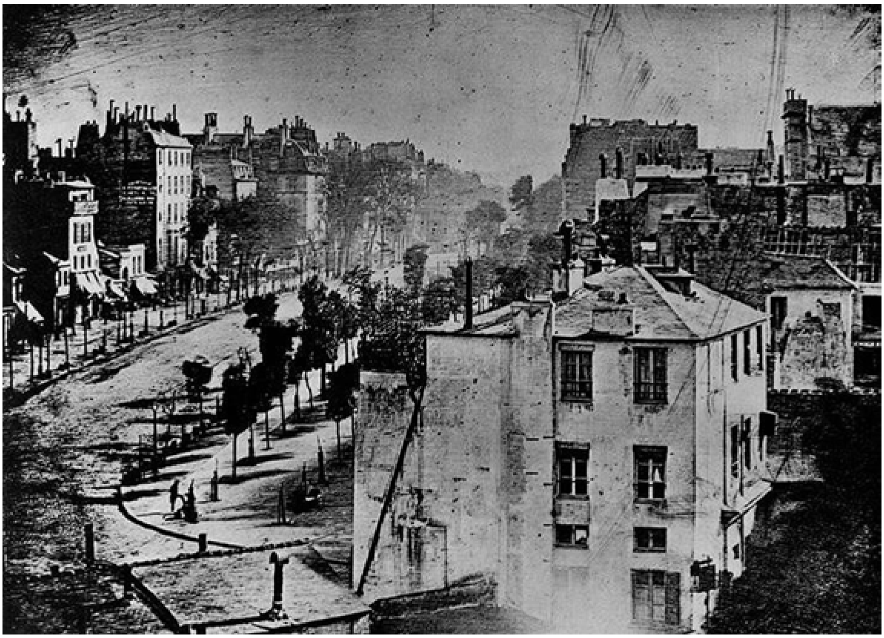

Figure 3: Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre, Boulevard du Temple, Paris, c.1838.

The genealogy crosses Charles Marville's Paris in the mid-19th century, an era when the grand changes to the city's urban planning were taking place, before moving on to Eugène Atget in the first decades of the 20th, in which he recorded the French capital before its transformation into a contemporary metropolis.

Figure 4: Eugene Atget, Mannequins, Paris 1925.

The American Walker Evans brilliantly connected this historical thread with the modernist ethos, invoking in his work the aesthetics of Gustave Flaubert: namely, the coexistence of naturalism and realism, the absence of subjectivity, the ‘documentary style’ (Goldberg 1981: 360, 364). These elements, discernible in the work of Petridis, endorse their spiritual affinity with the same genealogy. But nothing is often as vague as a ‘documentary style’ photograph, whose ostensible neutrality favors a generalized, at times even arbitrary interpretation. This perhaps explains why contemporary art embraced its aesthetic in an era in which an intentionally unspecific polysemy dominates almost programmatically (Papaioannou 2017: 10).

Representations of empty spaces, interior or exterior, abound in contemporary photography, appearing diametrically opposed in spirit from the postwar street photography, which vibrated with narrative immediacy, and was overflowed with the excitement and drama of everyday life. Max Kozloff would ask as early as 1980: *Where have all the people gone*? (Max Kozloff 1987:197) Both the *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape* (1975)[3] exhibition and the “Dusseldorf school” established in the 1970s by Bernd and Hilla Becher would play a crucial role in establishing this trend, which is based in clinical surveying and profuse arraying of information. Using tools similar and dissimilar, both the exhibition and the school favored an austere, detached way of perceiving place. Reacting to the human-centered rhetoric of the spectacular that advertising had rendered excessively omnipresent, and to the unjustifiable optimism of consumerism, a substantial part of photographic art turned to the experience of the commonplace, of disinterested detachment, the dark side. Donald Meinig had in any case issued the timely warning, which Petridis would frankly endorse, that landscape is 'something that might be observed, but not necessarily admired" as it may "involve aesthetics but it is not defined by it' (Meinig 1979: 2). This affection with the vacant space partially intersects with 'ruin porn', a recent eschatological inclination within photography to follow derelict places of all kinds which is related, closely but not exclusively, with the desertification of Detroit (Brian Doucet, Drew Philp 2016). The popularity of this iconography may also hinge on its offering the spectator a sense of oversight and control. A space evacuated, visually or actually, freezes and becomes devoid of action. If these images are correlated with another current photographic abundance, that of deadpan portraiture, one may conclude that the contemporary scene openly favors an inert, passive social condition.

Petridis does not use light to stupefy. Like Atget and the Bechers before him, he mainly works early in the morning, when the public arena is at rest, avoiding intense shadows or unnecessary tensions, often pursuing the kind of diffused lighting that pays democratic attention to every single detail. His photographs, with their high resolution and extended depth of field, present themselves as artful information records, in which the power of recording and describing covers the subtle aesthetic gestures. The views are often general, as in the photograph of the ruins of the Roman *Galerius Palace*, surrounded in a suffocative, if not threatening, way by robust massively developed apartment buildings. This may serve as an unintentional indication that democracy has prevailed over imperial aristocracy, a hegemony that does not seem here to have led to any discernible architectural refinement. And as the fencing has been carefully left out of the frame, historical and contemporary life seem to blend. The view is also general in Beirut's *Martyr's Square* which, although the scene of fierce battles during the civil war (1975-1990), was named after the Lebanese independence fighters executed there in 1931. A symbol of the city's division during the fratricidal conflict, appears today more like a political history open class: Roman ruins coexist with the new architecture summoned to efface the visible wounds of war. The new grand Mohammad Al-Amin mosque looms at the back, while in front of it, on a humbler scale alongside the flow of daily life, a Christmas tree stands out and a monument dedicated to the martyrs' sacrifice. How many generations of martyrs, of various ethnicities and religions, were sacrificed here between the Roman occupation and the recent war? The House of Beirut (*Beit Beirut*), another locus of deadly civil strife, is depicted using a medium-range view. The female portrait in the empty window announces an exhibition of works (hints of which are visible in the background) by a postwar photography studio. The vintage coiffure and melancholy expression point to a rather fragile urban prosperity, especially if combined with the noticeable time corrosion and what look like bullet holes. But not even the photograph in the front has escaped damage. Its mutilation seems literal as well as metaphorical, of a generation and an era.

Petridis prepares his shots using a micro-semiotic method, practicing such a meticulous control over every compositional aspect that recalls the art of stage design, often taking preliminary shots. The unnatural stillness of the images invites the viewer to study their content -usually dense with information- for signs and hints. If Robin Kelsey in his *Photography and the Art of Chance* (2015) researches chance as a factor in photography, the work of Petridis seems to consciously ignore it. The only notion of chance in his work is perhaps an impromptu counterpoint of signs or something entirely extempore. It is interesting, though, that the impromptu can occur even after such a level of control. That is the case in the *Davidka Square* photograph in Jewish West Jerusalem. The square was named after the mortar (in the center), a weapon that made a significant contribution to the 1948 victory, to which the monument is dedicated. The symbolism here is clear: little David (which is how this kind of mortar is named) won again huge Goliath—and, this time, not only in Scripture. The shot was taken during the Sukkot celebration, in the course of which tents are pitched in open spaces. The holiday stands as a symbol of the harvest and the forty-year long exodus from Egypt but, visible in public space, the tent potentially recalls a military campaign. A possibility of violence lurks in the atmosphere, as the mortar seems to aim a nearby building, but also because of the handicapped people sign in front of a war memorial. Lee Friedlander and his series become relevant here. On a rooftop in the image's upper left side, though, and on a balcony in a more central area, black and white portraits can just be made out. They belong to the series *Time is Now, Yalla!* (Let's go!) by the French street artist JR, in which portraits of casually posed Israelis and Palestinians are mounted side by side in public spaces in both communities. The work openly defending peaceful coexistence fades here almost entirely, leaving the narrative of rupture center stage. The photograph testifies involuntarily to whose voice has the greatest impact on the public discourse in the region.

Paradoxically, the monuments in Petridis' photographs are often neither centered nor in the foreground. In some cases, they don't even seem to be the subject. Take, for example, the photograph of the Giza pyramid on the outskirts of Cairo, in which the famous monument appears behind a tourist zone. The pavement here imperfectly echoes the pyramid's shape, just as reality in various parts of the Eastern Mediterranean bears somehow awkwardly the weight of history. Petridis spots a bent over tree whose trunk, thin but resistant, has risen up again into the vertical, a metaphor suited, as much it is accidental, to the Egyptian youth who stood up demanding change and reform (which, of course, extend far beyond the formalistic, such as the trimming of the tree's foliage). At another monument to the 1948 Independence war, in Tiberias on Lake Galilee, an off-centered canon is depicted in a disorderly view containing road signs, advertisements, wires, lamps. The wrenching difficulty of approaching the local and linguistic context of the image (the same holds for other images, too) reveals the superficial ease with which photography was hailed as a universal language in the postwar period. One can, of course, make out the red figure at the traffic lights demanding a stop (for observation?) in the empty public space; the road signs pointing the way to religious tombs (religion is a major cause of clash in the region); also, a solitary dollar sign (profit is a sure return of every war, beyond ideology and fanaticism); the vacant hotel parking lot decorated with flags, confirming tourism as the only widely accepted form of internationalism that invites peaceful, ephemeral invasions; the mural which, by transforming the pastoral into the urban, the traditional into the contemporary, appears, despite the abstract mood, to be a suitable metaphor for quite many countries besides Israel. The scene contains tension and complexity, elements inextricably woven into the condition of the region, and the poignant remembrance that war is never far away, as a weapon is once again silently threatening the public space.

The photographs in this group were mainly taken at street level. In one of the very few that this was not the case, Petridis gazes Thessaloniki's body from above. One traces the layers gradually, as if peeling an onion: the massively developed apartment buildings and their blind facades, neoclassicism and timeless monumentality, the minaret and the Byzantine curve, the austere volumes and the lack of nature. Everything means *something*, yet all elements together mean *nothing in particular*, unless part of the meaning is hidden in the unexpected opening, in the obvious withdrawal of history, the marked absence of the organic, the brashness with which the architecture of commercial apartment buildings imposes itself as a kind of causality.

But monuments do not all fall into the same category. Some are treasured hearths of civilizations, like Rachel's tomb in Bethlehem, where the gate proves to be a double boundary: an entrance into the womb of historical time and a violent spatial separation of two communities. Others, such as Alexander's bust in Alexandria's Stanley Quarter, are totally unburdened by historical time: Beside the humble, white bust a building rises up with Greek columns and meanders, as unfinished as the vision of the great conqueror, perhaps an echo of his centuries-long influence on the city that bears his name. Also, monuments have not always enjoyed respect. Many have survived the madness of the times and of people out of sheer luck, religiosity, or because obliteration itself is hard, and bureaucratically demanding, work. Or, as the series *Westminster Boxes* (2001) by Christophoros Doulgeris reveals, they have survived thanks to the providence of power: The day before May 1st 2001, on which a huge demonstration against the Iraq war would take place in London, the authorities covered a number of statues with wooden box-like constructions to prevent the vandalism of statues of national heroes and historical figures. Since when, though, have monuments required protection to the extent of hiding from view before a peaceful gathering of people?

Some, like the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, are grand in both scale and importance. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Ottoman fountain in another photograph looks like a barely noticeable punctuation. The *Indian Cemetery* in Dendropotamos, Thessaloniki, comes across as a paradox: Housing the remains of 520 Indian victims of the First World War, it ignores the Hindu cremation tradition. In the same place, one finds more victims of the same war in a de-sacralized mood dictated most probably by necessity: the remains of Hindu Muslims, Sikh, a few Christians and the ashes of another 220 Indians. The humble colonial servants of the British are buried separately and a long way from the city's British military cemetery, in an equally humble settlement on its outskirts where a bare fence is the only barrier dividing absolute poverty from deathly calm. In the photograph of the *Yedi Kule* (Seven Towers), a Byzantine castle in Thessaloniki which became a prison as well as a place of torture and execution), the rigidity of stone and an austere geometry dominate, despite the diagonal stairs and embrasures. This is an introverted monument, with all its openings closed, its heavy secrets sealed, no visible way out. The sign Teaching Class mounted on a rusty door may thus hint at the most vital lesson the place can offer: being able to eavesdrop on the torments of the imprisoned (who, for many years, also included political prisoners). Proclaiming the Yedi Kule a monument in the 1980s endorses a noticeable paradigm shift in the local monument history, as until the early twentieth century, academic interest in Greece stopped at the Hellenistic period.

Petridis' work in the Near and Middle East engages indirectly with the 19th-century tradition of depicting monuments exemplified by photographers such as Maxime du Camp or Francis Frith. Petridis even uses a slow, heavy, large-format camera reminiscent of that era. Back then, photography documented the existence of monuments in an allusive desertedness, in an enigmatically indefinite time. Individual figures would sometimes play the role of a scale index. Petridis' return today to the Parthenon and the Pyramids in a condition of artificial desertedness brings out a dense network of relationships, information and values that interrupt or redefine any attempt at recollection. Of course, photography, as a suspended narrative and a time switch, favors memory as much as oblivion; it can show as well as hide. And the decision on what falls within which side is not usually photographic. When, after the Wall came down, Hitler's hideaway was found in East Berlin, it was decided that, for reasons of domestic peace, it should be covered up for another fifty years (Funder 2008: 70). Diametrically opposed to that decision, the bell tower of the Gedächtniskirche in West Berlin was not restored after the catastrophic bombing of 1943 as a reminder of the Second Great War. But if memory (in Greek, the words 'memory' and 'monument' have the same root) is now aggressively besieged by ever-growing volumes of information, in the era of the absolute present tense and the one-way flight towards an undefined 'ahead', can monuments as material sites stimulate collective memory? Is there a place today for the monument in a shallow memory whose data is rapidly changing? And what, after all, is the meaning of an, often indirect, monument survey in a late capitalist, post-democratic era?

Petridis reflects on the broadening of the notion of 'monument' from a landmark of universal range to a construction which publicly serves the current political situation. In addition, he detects how a monument's historicity is repeatedly ruptured by the current condition, as it is increasingly perceived in terms of rapid stimulation shifts. If a monument is now situated in a flowing, complicate field of signs, in a public space that is traversed rather than experienced, can we still hear the echo of historical time? W.J.T. Mitchell is probably right to consider the landscape as a 'social hieroglyph' (Mitchell 1994: 5) offered up for close reading, like an image-text. Petridis's *landscapes with monuments*[4] adopt this view, piling up times, spaces and social data. After all, Petridis suggests, every epoch deals selectively with the past and gives birth to new layers of history. But as Stavros Stavridis is aptly pointing, "The past as legitimization of the present is almost always a past invented to justify, not a past explored to raise issues" (Stavridis 2002: 31).

This series of photographs, far from the exotic and picturesque tradition, seems to work on a critical boundary: the near tectonic friction between the historical and contemporary world, order and disorder, rationalism and improvisation, lethargic East and expansionary West, older ideologies and the prevailing one of our epoch: that of the free market. Petridis searched for critical boundaries in his previous work too: In his *Kath' Odon* (1998) series he crossed elliptically the Greek borderline, a neglected Cold War boundary and military buffer for the "Danger from the North"; in *Notes at the Edge of the Road* (2006) he anthologized his samples on the margins between civilization and nature; in the series *Here: Sites of Violence in Thessaloniki* (2012) he examined locations in Thessaloniki where lives were violently taken and crimes of all sorts committed; in *The Rum-Orthodox Schools of Istanbul* (2007) he researched the condition of the, once prominent and now decaying, Greek schools of Istanbul.[5]

Petridis is not the only one tracing such boundaries. The curators of the Greek contribution in the Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2002 proposed the "unconditional, absolute realism" as an 'unbounded desire for familiar space, for residing in a constant situation of need' (Koubis, Moutsopoulos and Scoffier 2002: 78). They claimed that the rawness of the Athens architectural paradigm should be examined beyond idealisms, utopianisms, ethnocentrisms. Much earlier, Richard Sennett spoke of the need to introduce some disorder into western cities as a condition of freedom (Sennett 2004). Very few of Petridis' photographs seem to represent this "raw" paradigm as well as the one from Athens. Here, arising out of architectural layers created over decades and neglected public space, there is a "deficit of collective will, the battle of entropy [...] in an area where things accumulate without tactical plan, use or aesthetics; where repeated discontinuities and vertiginous chasms weaken every prospect of cohesive meaning, leaving in common view what looks as if it was originally born as used, exhausted, left aside" (Papaioannou 2015). The quote may be from an essay on the landscape work of Yiannis Pantelidis, but refers equally to Petridis' urban views, no matter if the heterogeneity of the photograph is crowned by the absolute monument.

A lesson to be taken from Petridis' photographs is that even the most noteworthy monuments (those not recycled as eras change) cannot easily be seen outside of complex, fragmented contexts. If, in the past, the construction of a cohesive ideology (which included monuments) looked like a tight costume, the glamorous ideology of globalization allows us to swim in an, only seemingly broad, post-historical, post-ideological condition in which the monuments function as recognizable landmarks and are consumed mostly as visual signs. Or, in the words of Krasznahorkai, they allow the realization that 'history was, if not the most bitter, at least the most amusing proof that there is no possible access to truth' (Krasznahorkai 2015: 30). What Petridis examines, of course, is simultaneously an internal photographic affair: It is about the distance dividing the tactile materiality of a monument and the photograph which withdraws it –as an image now- into what is often a more private viewing, seeking to perceive it in a beneficial silence. The Bechers were right after all: Photography today competes in *mnimiopoiitiki* force with the natural status of monuments –both those already known and those declared by photography. If a monument is a time trap, photography proves itself equally adept at the process. And for a sensitive antenna, as that of Petridis, the transitions between history and contemporary life make the Eastern Mediterranean a suitable field for research, since its monuments often survive in a condition of "absolute realism". His photographs are rather meant to be discovered by someone bending over them and digging carefully like an archaeologist, instead of just attempting to make a strong impression on the viewer. This way, acknowledging the "constant situation of need", they grant an active role to the viewer, against the contemporary trend. And they recall the insistent destiny of photography in the lyric Laurie Anderson recited from above, in a clearly ominous song that is becoming ever more relevant:

This is the time. And this is the record of the time.[6]

Notes

[1] The Grand Tour appeared in the 18th century as a tour undertaken by aristocratic offspring, initially to the Roman monuments of southern France, northern Italy and Rome. Later, the tour was extended to include the Holy Land and Egypt, while in the 19th century it also came to include Greece and the Near East.

[2] The exhibition, which is considered emblematic for contemporary photography, was shown in 1975-1976 at the International Museum of Photography of George Eastman House, in Rochester, New York, curated by William Jenkins. Contributing photographers: Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Joe Deal, Frank Gohlke, Nicholas Nixon, John Schott, Stephen Shore, Henry Wessel Jr., Bernd and Hilla Becher.

[3] *Landscape with monument* could act as a contemporary metaphor of the historical term *landscape with ruins*.

[4] www.parispetridis.com.

[5] The Greek word *μνημειοποιητική* (monumentalizing) is coined from the Greek words *μνημείο* (monument) and *ποιητική* which stands for *making* and also for *poetry*.
[6] Laurie Anderson, lyric from the song "From the Air", released with the LP *Big Science* (1982).

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Hercules Papaioannou (PhD) is the chief curator at the MOMus – Thessaloniki Museum of Photography.

Email: hercules.papaioannou@momus.gr

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Public Monuments

Paris Petridis

Public Monuments is an ongoing photographic project in the Southeastern Mediterranean.

Paris Petridis (PhD, University of Sunderland) is a photographer based in Thessaloniki, Greece. He has published eight photography albums and he has exhibited widely. He is currently adjunct lecturer at the University of West Attica.
Website: http://www.parispetridis.com

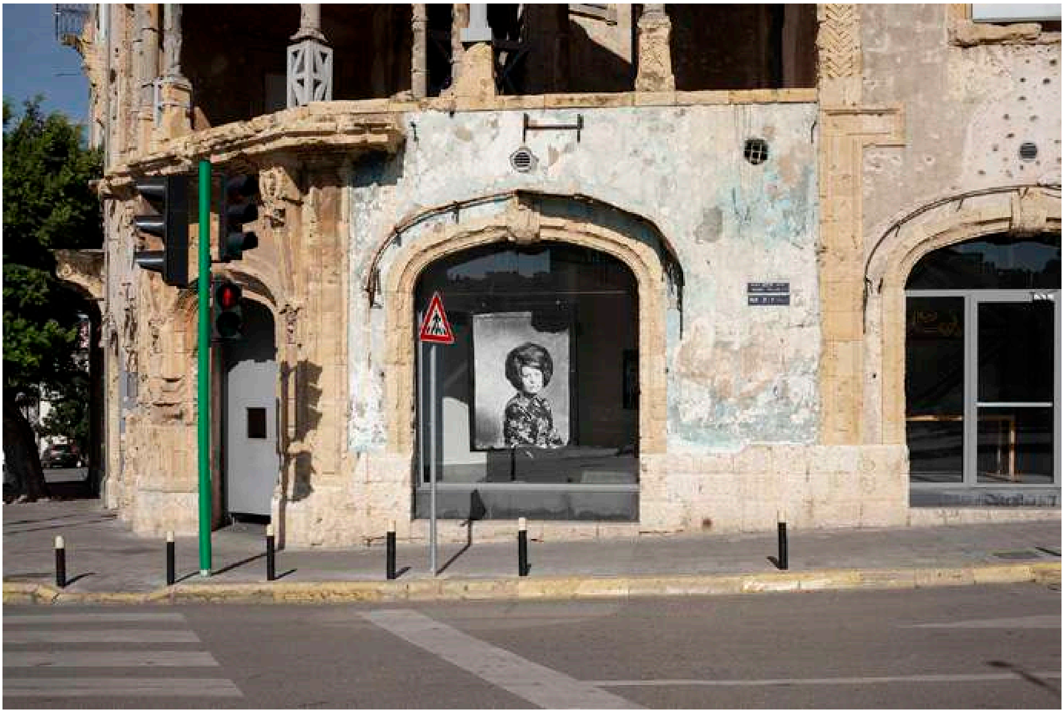

Figure 1: 'Beit Beirut', Beirut, 2018

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Figure 2: Acropolis, Athens, 2005

Figure 3: Davidka Square, Jerusalem, 2011

Figure 4: Entrance, Rachel's Tomb, Bethlehem, 2012

Figure 5: Galerius Palace, Thessaloniki, 2015

Figure 6: Giza, Cairo, 2010

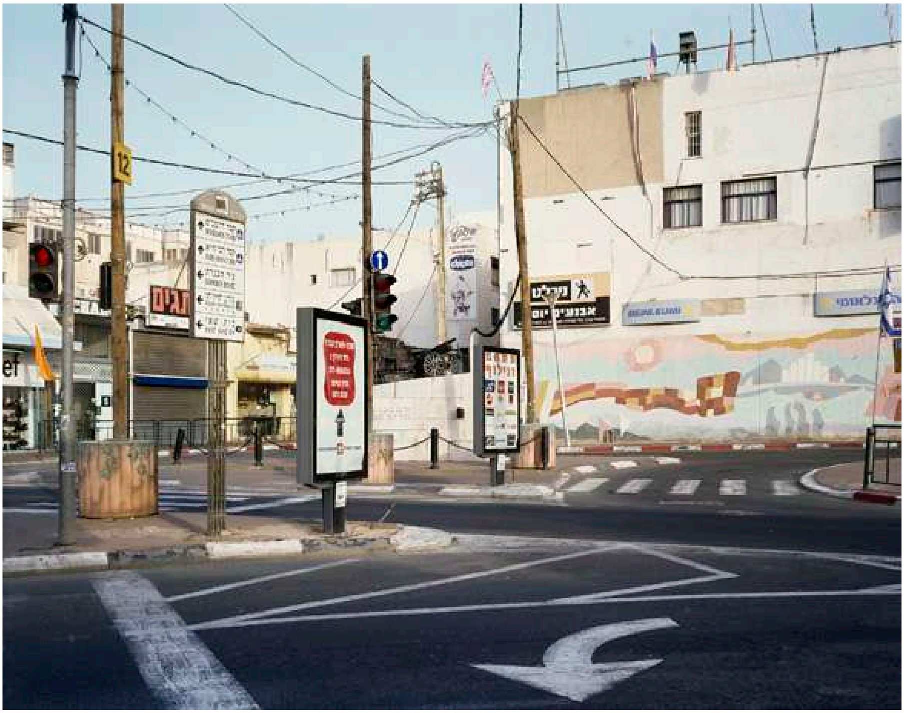

Figure 7: Independence War Monument, City of Tiberias, 2010

Figure 8: Indian Cemetery, Thessaloniki, 2015

Figure 9: Martyrs' Square, Beirut, 2018

Figure 10: Ottoman Fountain, Thessaloniki, 2017

Figure 11: St. Pandeleimon, Minaret, Roman Rotunda, Thessaloniki, 2013

Figure 12: Stanley Quarter, Alexandria, 2011

Figure 13: Wailing Wall, Old City of Jerusalem, 2012

Figure 14: Yedi Kule Prison/Museum, Thessaloniki, 2013

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Book Reviews

The language of Brexit, or why words matter

Dimitrios E. Akrivoulis

Steve Buckledee 2018. *The Language of Brexit: How Britain Talked Its Way Out of the European Union*. London: Bloomsbury, vi+231pp., £60 (HB), ISBN: 978 - 1- 3500-4797-6

Brexit entered the *Oxford English Dictionary* in December 2016, six months after the infamous referendum, in which a marginal majority voted for the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the European Union (EU). The June 2016 referendum was followed by the formal governmental announcement of the country's withdrawal in March 2017, initiating the Brexit process due to conclude no later than January 2020. Admittedly, Brexit debates reinforced the old divide between Eurosceptics and pro-Europeanists, now addressed as *leavers* and *remainers* with both sides spanning the whole of the political spectrum. Most crucially, that was not the first time Brits were asked about their country's connection to the EU. The prelude of this uneasy relation was also marked by a referendum. Two years after the UK entry to the European Economic Community (EEC), its membership was endorsed in the 1975 referendum, promised by the Labour Party's manifesto for the upcoming general election. The country's relation to Europe was thus marked, right from the beginning. by the 'people's voice', a memory that quite predictably resurfaced with the debates on Brexit (i.e. the 2011 cross-party People's Pledge campaign).

Even those least acquainted with British politics are well aware that Euroscepticism has historically been far from a distinctive feature of the Conservative rationale. In the 1970s and 1980s, for example, withdrawal from the EC was mostly advocated by the Left and was even part of the Labour Party's 1983 election manifesto. The beginning of the end of this uneasy relation should be traced back in the early 1990s, when the EU's founding Maastricht Treaty (1992) was *not* put to a referendum in the UK. Eurosceptics in the Conservative Party fiercely opposed to the ratification of the treaty. The rise of right-wing populism and the formation of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) in 1993 capitalised reactions and reinforced Euroscepticism. As Tory unity was put at stake Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron, himself a remainer, eventually opted to invest more in saving his party than guaranteeing his country's future in the EU, by deciding to hold a referendum on continued EU membership.

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This short summary of the UK's relation to the EU (in all its forms) serves neither as an inclusive (pre-)history of Brexit nor as an account of the developments that have led us to the contemporary predicament. It serves here as the background of evaluating the merits and shortcomings of Steve Buckledee's book titled *The Language of Brexit: How Britain Talked Its Way Out of the European Union* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018). As the author admits in his Introduction (p. 3), the book is based on data collected in the first six months of 2016. In that sense, the 'language of Brexit' under scrutiny here is the one articulated during this very period. As critical as this historically specific 'language' may have been —given that both Leave and Remain campaigns reached their climax during the examined period— the book's analysis unavoidably neglects a number of preceding or parallel contexts and discourses. This preliminary remark is important for the analysis that follows the short presentation of the book content and chapters.

Buckledee's main thesis is that the outcome of the Brexit referendum owes much to the successful linguistic strategy and discursive mechanism of the Leave campaign. Put mildly, the outcome of this referendum may be largely explained by the fact that the language of leavers has been more persuasive than that of remainers. The book is divided in two parts. In the first part (Chapters 1-8) the author compares the linguistic strategies followed by both Remain and Leave campaigns, within the context of coordinative constructions, hedging and modality imperatives, inclusive *we* and racism. The second part (Chapters (9-15) compares the Brexit discourse in particular with the ones deployed during the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, and the 1975 referendum on the public endorsement of the UK's membership in the EEC.

In Chapter 1, the author addresses his core thesis and sets sail to substantiate his arguments by first examining how the *BUT* coordinative constructions (Huddlestone 1984; Jeffries 2010) of the Remain discourse (e.g. 'Finite clause critical of EU + BUT + Finite clause presenting Remain as preferred option') —as opposed to the affirmative, clear and monoglossic assertion of the Leave discourse— largely contributed to the persuasiveness of the latter. In a nutshell, Buckledee starts by pointing out the failure of the Remain linguistic strategy to provide a strong and convincing argument *for Remain*, rather than a mere counterargument to Brexit. This thesis is further reinforced in Chapter 2, where the author juxtaposes the frequent use of hedging and modality (Bloor and Bloor 2013; Machin and Mayr 2012; Brown and Levinson 1978; Crystal 1994; Grice 1975; Grundy 2008; Fairclough 2001; 2003) in the Remain camp versus the strident claims and apparent absence of doubt in the Leave camp. Uncertainty about the real consequences of Brexit further limited the persuasiveness of remainers.

Chapter 3 focuses on the ample use of imperatives (Huddlestone 1984; 1988; see also Austin 1962; Searle 1969) in the Leave discourse as a linguistic strategy that strengthened its populist resonance. This resonance was further supported by the linguistic formation of the illusion of a 'classless alliance' through the extensive use of inclusive *we* (Crystal 1994). Chapter 4 examines how this *we* addressed all those 'ignored' and 'marginalized', an imaginary reconstruction of 'the people', against 'the elites' and 'the establishment', although employed by key leavers who most clearly belonged to the latter (i.e. Nigel Farage, Boris Johnson). The extensive use of *we* and *they* reinforced a feeling of both belonging (to the British people) and exclusion (from continental Europe), thus further strengthening solidarity and othering.

Chapters 5 and 6 show how the leavers' linguistic strategy redefined not only the content of 'the people', but also those of 'democracy' and 'freedom', by constructing a clear dichotomy between an undemocratic and un-free EU and a free and democratic Britain. Interestingly enough, this was accomplished through the use of the same symbolic tools and narratives already dominant in the European liberal democratic discourse in the construction of its own identity against the undemocratic and un-free space of the 'old Soviet Union'. The EU was hence depicted as 'the old Soviet Union dressed in Western clothes.' Of course, the fact that the Remain discourse openly admitted the democratic deficit of the EU did not particularly help subvert this narrative.

In Chapter 7 it is suggested that the use of nominalization, presuppositions and adjective compounds (Machin and Mayr 2012; Jeffries 2010) in the Leave campaign allowed for the naturalization of their claims as established facts. Chapter 8 closes the book's first part by showing how the use of emotive language, negative metaphors, derogative terms and classifiers allowed the Leave camp to cover up a clearly racist language while addressing and framing one of the most mobilizing agendas in post-crisis Britain, immigration.

Chapter 9 opens the second part of the book by comparing how the so-called 'Project Fear' functioned in the 2014 Scottish independence referendum and the 2016 Brexit one. First coined in 2014, the term 'Project Fear' has been used in a pejorative sense to equate with scaremongering and pessimism any claim of economic, social and political danger resulting from change to the status quo. According to Buckledee, 'Project Fear' failed to work in the 2016 referendum because the consequences of Brexit were less predictable or apparent, a clear failure of the linguistic strategy opted in the Remain camp.

In Chapter 10, which effectively continues the argument made in Chapter 8, the author returns to his analysis of the emotive language used by leavers to metaphorically connect a resounding and proud voice of the British people to leave a (German-run) EU with the one reached to enter the Second World War (again against Germany). Chapter 11 starts by commenting on remainers' portrayal of leavers as 'Little Englanders' nostalgic of isolationist times well bygone, and on leavers' response that it was the EU that has been self-absorbed and provincial in its policies. This discourse is then used by the author as the platform for comparing the 1975 and 2016 referenda and commenting on the U-turn of some notable British tabloids from a pro-EEC to a pro-Brexit discourse.

By focusing on pro-Brexit tabloid media - *The Sun* in particular - Chapter 12 continues by suggesting that it was those tabloids that set the discussion agenda in the country, rather than the pro-Remain ones. As a result, the overall discourse on Brexit (or not) was fundamentally based less on an informed discussion than on journalistic manipulation; less on facts than on the emotions of a public incapable of assessing the true consequences of Brexit. This becomes even more apparent in Chapter 13, where the author presents this journalistic manipulation by both pro-Brexit and pro-Remain media through lies, exaggerations, personal attacks and similar 'dirty tricks'. Chapter 14 focuses on the predictable media reactions to the unprecedented outcome of the referendum, at least for the Remain camp. Chapter 15 closes the book by noting the influence of Brexit on the post-referendum divided Britain (Goodhart 2017; Runciman 2016), and the continuing role and manipulating power (see Short 1996) of tabloid media in the country, a point further reinforced in the book's epilogue.

Admittedly, there are many aspects relevant to the theme and scope of this book left unexamined. One would expect to read more on what preceded the six-month period examined (always with respect to rhetoric and linguistic strategy). Yet the author has made it clear in his introduction that all data examined were collected during the aforementioned period. Consequently, this book is more on 'the Brexit language' of this short, pre-referendum period. This should have not however limited the breadth and scope of its overall analysis, which could have been significantly enriched by contextualizing the themes examined (Widdowson 2004) in relevant preceding discourses in Britain, and/or by connecting them with parallel relevant ones within and outside the UK (i.e. economic crisis, 'refugee crisis', rise of right-wing populism, neo-nationalism, 'anti-systemic' thought, possible Grexit, Italexit, etc.). Times were still pregnant and the impact of this momentum is left unexamined.

My main problem with the book, however, is that the use of data remains undertheorized. Besides the limited number of linguistics references used (almost all sources are quoted in this review), the author does not address a wider literature that would have allowed him to discuss many aspects of his own themes (e.g. self/other, populism, national pride, exceptionalism etc.) in greater depth and wider scope (i.e. ideology, rhetoric, imagination, discourse analysis, or identity). The author's emphasis on rendering the linguistic perspective accessible to a wider audience, or his attempt to provide an inclusive account of all available data in media and political discourse should not have hampered the critical investigation of that material.

Despite the above, Steve Buckledee's book is notable still for a number of reasons. First, it draws its power from its very focus of inquiry: one of the most divisive moments in the long political history of a Kingdom *United*. Second, it is notable because of its delving into an issue that is painfully topical and still ongoing, its full development and repercussions remaining unclear at the stage of research and writing (and reading). Third, and as a corollary, the fact that the book was released immediately following the beginning of the Brexit negotiations, opens the academic discussion of this process (at all levels) as one heavily reliant on language. Fourth, as already noted above, the author manages to render the linguistic concepts he discusses fully accessible to the reader. His examples are helpful in this respect. Fifth, although the author admittedly situates himself on a particular strand of this discursive battle, his view remains balanced and respectful to both strands. His actual presence abroad (Italy) during the period examined seems to have contributed to a more balanced perspective. Overall, Buckledee's book is recommended because it serves as a convincing reminder that, as in all matters of human affairs, words do matter.

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Dimitrios E. Akrivoulis is Assistant Professor of International Relations, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece.

Email: dakrivoulis@uom.edu.gr

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Performing the self through social media

Caroline Tagg

Mariza Georgalou 2017. *Discourse and Identity on Facebook*. London: Bloomsbury, 313 pp. $135 (HB), ISBN: HB: 978-1-4742-8912-2

> Dear politicians, I'm fed up with your dilemmas! The only dilemma I have in 18 degrees sunshine is: coffee break from work in [the Athenian neighbourhoods of] Exarcheia or Monastriaki?
>
> (posted on Facebook by Helen, 24 February at 14:19)

In *Discourse and Identity on Facebook*, Mariza Georgalou draws powerfully on the voices of her five Greek participants – Helen, Carla, Romanos, Gabriel and Alkis – to make the important argument that, despite the commercial interests that shape the site architecture and constrain user actions, each user's lived experience of Facebook is in part determined by how they perceive the site and choose to exploit it for their own communicative and social ends. As such, the site is shaped as much by users' orientation to external events (such as the unstable political situation in Greece at the time of Georgalou's study) as it is by changes in the site architecture. Georgalou's approach is important in seeing social media primarily as a site for the expression of identity – as she points out, the very creation of a Facebook profile involves identity construction – and as providing a range of semiotic resources on which users can draw in this endeavour, which in turn shape how they convey a sense of self and ultimately who they can be. What emerges most powerfully from the book is thus the value of detailed multimodal semiotic analysis in understanding wider social processes.

Chapter 1 situates the study in a contemporary 'always on' culture in which people move between various digitally mediated and physical spaces in their ordinary daily lives, a phenomenon illustrated by a peek into a day-in-the-life of the author herself. While the author may not be representative of broad swathes of contemporary society, Georgalou is clear throughout the book that she is talking about – and to – a particular segment of society, one that is educated, well-connected and digitally literate. For such users, Facebook provides a rich set of semiotic resources and textual practices which they can exploit to consciously design and con-

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struct particular identities, as well as a space in which identities are performed, 'given off' and negotiated. Underlying this approach is the assumption that discourse constitutes a means – perhaps on Facebook *the* means – of identity construction.

Chapter 2 details Georgalou's understanding of identity not as fixed nor monolithic but as dynamically (re-)mediated through people's discursive practices. This perspective is in line with thinking across language-related fields, including social semiotics and discourse analysis; and one that has proved particularly relevant to the study of identities in virtual environments in which '[a]ll our interactions take place by means of discourse' (p.13). In line with the fact that social network sites typically involve connections between people who already know each other, Georgalou conceptualises identity as discursively co-constructed across the online and offline encounters in which an individual engages, rather than exploring online personae as 'well-established and well-known online identities' in their own right (Varis 2016: 59). This chapter also outlines the 'core experience' of Facebook which, despite ongoing shifts in the site architecture, 'has remained mostly unchanged since its launch' (p.18); although Georgalou's interest is less in the affordances themselves than in how they are taken up.

In Chapter 3, Georgalou lays out the book's methodological approach – a version of discourse-centred online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2008) – and provides an honest frank account of pragmatic decisions and ethical issues, including her personal involvement with participants and their negotiation of pseudonyms – she rejects one participant's preference, *paralias* ['the beach guy'] as not serious enough (p.34). Her ethnography blends bi-weekly online observation of Facebook profiles with interactional analysis and ongoing interviews, conducted variously in face-to-face settings and through email and instant messaging (depending on participants' preferences). As Georgalou herself admits, this is not a 'full ethnography' and potentially not even discourse-centred online ethnography as intended, given the focus on one platform. However, this partial ethnography succeeds in showing the particular role of Facebook in individuals' identity performances, even though their performances elsewhere are not given the same treatment.

In Chapters 4 to 8, Georgalou explores various aspects of identity which emerged as salient from her analysis of the interactional data and/or the interviews: place, time, professional and educational identities, stance and privacy. Taking one participant Alkis as an example, throughout these chapters the reader builds up a strong impression of his projected identity, as co-constructed on Facebook and with Georgalou in interview. Alkis was born in 1981 and at the time of the fieldwork was living in Athens; during this time, he completed his MSc in Science Management while unemployed, and worked variously as a project manager, freelance translator and real estate manager, visiting his Facebook profile every day and posting 2-6 times a week. Throughout his Facebook activity, Alkis draws creatively on the embedding of music and other multimodal, multilingual semiotic resources in creating individual and shared identities within a carefully controlled intimate space.

My interpretation of Georgalou's findings is that Alkis, unlike other participants, sees Facebook primarily as a space for light-hearted banter and bonding, rather than discussing serious or negative issues. He locates himself in the ongoing present and the immediate future, for example, by posting 'long personal emotionally laden wishes' (p. 97) every Christmas and New Year. The unfolding economic crisis in Greece finds its way onto Alkis's Facebook wall, as it does for all participants: but while Helen attends and documents protests and shares political posts, Alkis appears reluctant to engage in talk around the crisis on Facebook: in one lengthy exchange analysed by Georgalou, he repeatedly deflects his friends' negative comments about the political situation, finally suggesting 'If you want to be miserable and cavil do it on my inbox. Not on my wall' (p. 200). Instead of commenting directly on the crisis, he draws on his student identity to express his feelings regarding the situation, particularly regarding being unemployed and needing to make decisions about his future at a time when job opportunities are limited. In doing so, he creates and affiliates to an online community through posts targeted at his fellow students (in one post he labels students struggling with the demands of the MSc in Services Management as 'msmwrecks').

Georgalou shows how, in a space shaped by 'nowness', the past can be an unexpected resource for constructing a coherent identity 'in both personal and collective history' (p. 117) and cultivating and bolstering pre-existing ties. Throughout his posts, nostalgia is performed in response to music, with collective memories of past events prompted by music videos embedded into a post and shared by tagging friends 'in the know'. When Alkis posts a chain message asking friends to reply with one word on how they met, his friends exploit the opportunity to discuss the past at length, drawing on the affordances of chain messaging for their own purposes. As Georgalou concludes, Facebook users create a collective identity not only through the here and now but through remembering and reliving their shared pasts.

One important insight in the book regards the importance of music – specifically music video sharing – to the expression of identity on Facebook. Of the participants, Alkis is most active in posting music videos, and Georgalou shows how his shares contain 'a wealth of stance devices ... to talk about and appreciate the emotional impact of the songs on him' (p. 179). These include appreciate lexis and evaluative adjectives, rhetorical questions and playful mixing of multiple languages: for example, in *tres xesiquotique*, he transliterates the Greek adjective *ksesikotikos* ('uplifting') into French by adding the French suffix –*que* and the French modifier *trés* ('very') (p. 180). As Georgalou points out, as well as taking stances towards music, Facebook users 'can also take stances through music, and particularly through lyrics, to evaluate a certain state of affairs' (p. 191).

Central to the book is the balance between user agency and structure, which surfaces most clearly in Chapter 8 on privacy and identity. On Facebook, privacy is a process by which users control access to their identity by managing information flows to different segments of their audience. Through discussion of her participants' different approaches to maintaining privacy, Georgalou shows how '[p]rivacy is not the same for everyone' (p. 248). While Carla carefully manages distinct segments of her audience by creating two profiles, personal and professional, Alkis is motivated by the danger of strangers coming across his profile ('you don't have to give food for thought to any curious person that ferrets out', p. 229) and the argument that he doesn't need to post information that his Facebook friends already know. As well as tightening his privacy settings, Alkis provides little demographic information in his profile, nor pictures of himself (his profile pictures include a cartoon of an old man burning the midnight oil and a meme alluding to members of Golden Dawn political party): as Georgalou concludes, the expression of identity online is shaped not only by Facebook affordances but by people's own desire to be or not be identified (p. 48). Interestingly, Alkis also sporadically clears his Facebook wall of posts. His actions resonate with my own research into 'context design', whereby Facebook users respond to perceived situational and interactional factors in constructing a context for their online actions which in turn create a particular social space (Tagg et al. 2017). Alkis's ideas about privacy emerged as a result of his experience on the site and his growing frustration with the issue of privacy on Facebook, and his resulting attempts to control his privacy go on to shape his perception and experience of the site: they affect how he comes across to others and the kinds of interactions he can have online.

In Chapter 9, Georgalou summarises the site affordances, semiotic resources and textual practices used on Facebook by these participants to express themselves, highlighting the importance for her participants of creating continuity in identity, whilst also pointing to the disruptive impact that external events – such as the Greek crisis and its ramifications – can have on how users present themselves on the site. This fascinating insight into what Facebook means to these people at this particular time leaves this reader intrigued as to the potential of Georgalou's focus on the networked individual for understanding under-researched demographic groups and for appreciating how identity is constructed across social media platforms.

The book is highly accessible, engaging and clearly written. Key terms in bold italic font are included in a glossary at the end of the book. Each chapter starts with a brief literature review and ends with a couple of largely thought-provoking reflective activities and a discussion of useful resources which goes beyond a mere list. Each analytical chapter also ends with a quick overview of how the author went about the research reported in the chapter, focusing on how the topic emerged as important from her research and on the semiotic resources that formed the basis of her analysis.

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Caroline Tagg is Senior Lecturer in Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies, School of Languages and Applied Linguistics, The Open University, United Kingdom.

Email: caroline.tagg@open.ac.uk

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