

ChTO DeLAT

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FACE TO FACE WITH THE MONUMENT



Is a new monumentality possible today?

What are the forms it could take?

Monumentality is a property of the artistic image, related to the aesthetic category of the sublime. Its content is socially relevant and expressed in the majestic plastic form imbued with heroic and epic themes that affirms positive ideal.

The Great Soviet Encyclopedia

It seems that the concept of monumentality is entirely obsolete now. The history of monuments has fallen into the past. Instead of monuments, we have theme parks: multimedia spectacles that are from time to time commissioned from famous artists and architects in order to commemorate some agreed-upon historical fact.

These spectacles have neither formal innovation, nor do they depict heroes who have accomplished 'great feats,' only innocent victims, reminding us "Never Again..."

There are also multifarious performative anti-monumental practices performed by a number of mostly marginalized groups; they tend to be interventions with already existing monuments (and urban life). Often, they mock them, or question their validity, re-codifying and destroying their image in the urban space and in the common memory of communities.

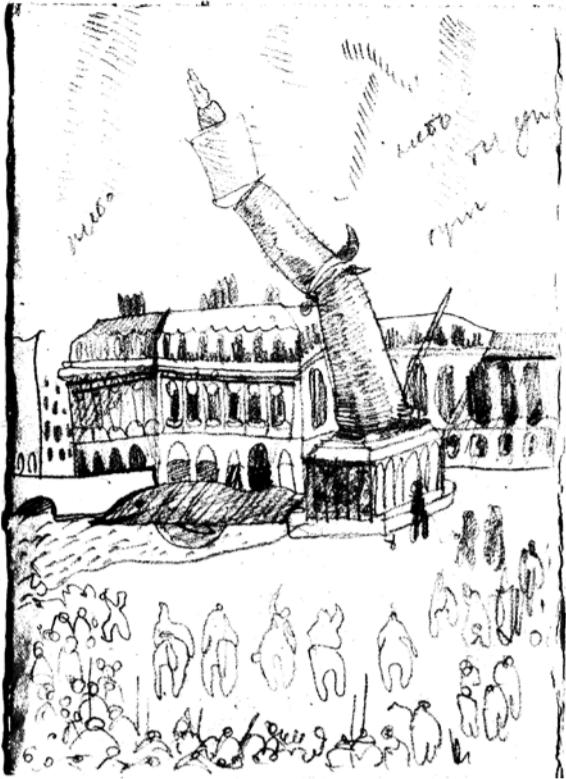
Naturally, the government relapses into archaic habits, casting things in bronze, chiseling them out of marble, and erecting these monsters in the centers of their decaying power.

There's almost no arguing that monumentality in its classic, elevated forms has fled, and today's citizens live surrounded by monumental symbols that have been drained of meaning, obsolete rituals of living memory.

But is this really the case?

And is it important to preserve any part of this most important tradition?

CASE No1 THE VENDOME COLUMN



The culmination of Courbet's political career as a Communard was the destruction of the Vendôme Column, a monument to the military victories of Napoleon Bonaparte made out of the cannons captured at the Battle of Austerlitz (1805), although the painter was not in fact the primary instigator. He had called for the column's dismantling back in 1870, for he said it lacked all artistic merit and served only to perpetuate imperial war and conquest, but the actual decree for its destruction was passed before Courbet was elected to the Commune.

CASE No2 BRONZE SOLDIER, TALLINN, 2007



The conflict that had been simmering beneath the surface of Estonian society suddenly erupted in late April 2007. Amidst growing tensions, the Estonian government relocated the Bronze Soldier from its quite prominent location in the centre of Tallinn to a military cemetery 2.5 km away. It could be, the intention of this act was to make the local Russian community, whose many members are deprived of the opportunity to affect their lives politically, and who almost constitute a separate culture (with the statue of the mourning soldier at its centre), invisible for Estonians. This symbolic act of marginalization carried out by those in power was followed by two nights of rioting in the streets of Tallinn. According to the media, it all ended as a successful police operation, and the government won the media war at the international level as well. The Russian population in Estonia was said to have shown its 'real face' – that is, the defenders of the monument turned out to be mere criminals and nothing more. /Kristina Norman/

Our project, **Face to Face with the Monument**, was inspired by the situation and contexts around Soviet War Memorial on Schwarzenbergplatz in Vienna. We believe that this canonical example of Stalinist monumental art, erected immediately after the end of the war, is still capable of stimulating critical discussion regarding the significance of monument politics and the forms that the commemoration of important historical events can take on today.

It has been 70 years since the victory over Nazism. Much has changed during this time: the USSR had disappeared, there is a new, global world that positions itself outside of all forms of ideology and rejects all historical teleology. Today, discussing progressive social ideals seems at the very least naïve; for a long time, it was taken for granted that all of these ideals had already been realized and that all that was left was to work for perfecting their manifestation. However, everything turned out more complicated: the new situation of the crisis of the free market and the burgeoning clerical and nationalist moods tell us that the long-standing argument between the (allegedly) outmoded silent archaism and verbose contemporariness is not yet resolved: the artist must once again immerse herself in its headwaters in order to respond to the call of her historical moment.

The situation developing around Soviet war monuments has suddenly, unexpectedly for everyone, taken on a new life in the midst of the escalation of the second cold war. The democratic uprising of Ukraine was a clear demonstration that even today, the political discourse is unavoidably intertwined with a whole knot of unresolved historical traumas; the iconoclasm is an inescapable desire for a transfiguration, wherein the argument over who the real hero is can still only be resolved with armed conflict.

From the very beginning, our project has been devoted to the attempt to construct a direct dialogue with the past. Our initial idea was simple: we wanted to erect an installation (like scaffolding, but more complex, a reference to Tatlin's tower) around the Monument to the Soviet Soldier and allow anyone who wishes to climb to the top and be face to face with the statue—a ghost from the past. However, our idea faced serious resistance. This simple and spectacular gesture that could have drawn attention to the Soviet monument and involve it in a public dialogue with the city was rejected by the Russian embassy, which has jurisdiction over the monument, and without the permission of which no public art project can take place in its vicinity. The response of the Russian embassy and the government it represents was understandable: for them, no dialogue—much less a critical one—about the sacred past should exist.

We were forced to regroup, step back and get perspective, which forced us to reevaluate our ideas and outline the tasks of a critical assessment of monumentality anew. This was especially important as our project was now taking place against the backdrop of the dramatic developments in the escalation of the military conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

In this conflict we see how both sides use the events of the distant, ideologized past in order to legitimize their present political positions. We see how deeply they've become entrenched in search for their identities in the context of the tragic conflict between Nazism and Stalinism, unable to turn this experience into a lesson in memory and forgetting that could form the foundation for a joint future.

The blatant non-modernity of this situation is apparent against the background of the main paradigmatic shift in the contemporary politics of memory, which is based on the constant reconsideration of the concept of the victim. The idea of victimhood is a challenge to the archaic opposition of victor/vanquished. The archaic symbol is always a martyr—a hero who sacrifices himself for a great idea. The images of the victims of the Holocaust, the Leningrad Blockade, the Gulag, and the Holodomor have all been commemorated with different practices, which have become new stages in the development of the practices of monumentality.

An enormous and painful discussion on the representation of history (about witnesses and responsibility, an ethic turn in memorial politics, on trauma and the work of mourning, asymmetrical violence, the polyphony of social memory, the universality of the norms and measures of crimes and so on) that began in Europe after the war remains incredibly relevant today, allowing us to resist any forms of archaization of consciousness.

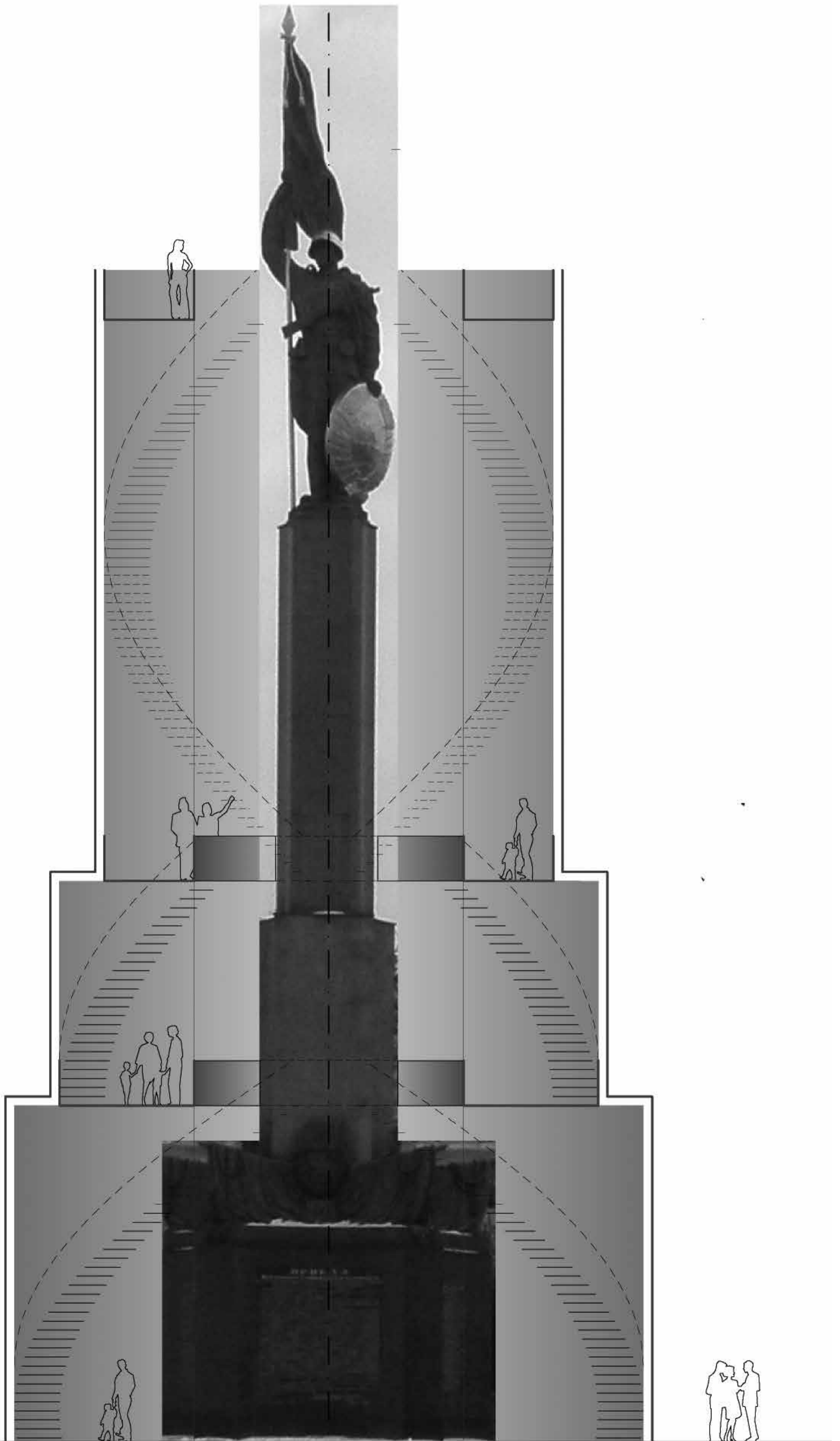
However, in order to overcome making the practices of monumentality banal, we must remember what Benjamin says on judging history:

To articulate what is past does not mean to recognize "how it really was." It means to take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger. For historical materialism it is a question of holding fast to a picture of the past, just as if it had unexpectedly thrust itself, in a moment of danger, on the historical subject. The danger threatens the stock of tradition as much as its recipients. For both it is one and the same: handing itself over as the tool of the ruling classes...The only writer of history with the gift of setting alight the sparks of hope in the past, is the one who is convinced of this: that not even the dead will be safe from the enemy, if he is victorious. And this enemy has not ceased to be victorious.

Today, when the world has approached a new, dangerous boundary, Benjamin's prophecy calls us to create new milestones in the past. If we are truly prepared to remember and fight, first and foremost, we must establish the sense of ourselves in history—and not only in history, but in the history of the struggle.

Only then can we find ourselves on top of the most important task: to 'save the dead'. Only in this case can the piles of rock, marble, steel, the groves of trees (with and without blinking monitors) come to mean something: not only for coming generations, but as an active political force in transforming the world.

For this reason, it is now, in this moment of growing danger, that it is so crucial to consider new forms of monumentality. To remember means to struggle.



CASE №3 SANJA IVEKOVIC
'LADY ROSA OF LUXEMBOURG', 2001



Gëlle Fra is the nickname given to the Monument of Remembrance, a war memorial situated in the heart of Luxembourg City. The memorial was initially meant to commemorate the fallen Luxembourgish soldiers who volunteered in the French army during World War I. However, due to subsequent events it also turned into a memorial against Nazi rule and nowadays commemorates war victims in general.

In 2001, Croatian artist Sanja Ivekovic set up her 'Lady Rosa of Luxembourg' in immediate proximity to the Gëlle Fra, generating a storm of controversy. Whilst the title of the statue alludes to the German philosopher and Marxist theorist Rosa Luxemburg, its form is an exact replica of the Golden Lady, the sole difference being that the former is pregnant. The pregnant form of Lady Rosa refers to the child-bearing role of women as well as to the sexual violence they face. Some people, though, felt that the statue of a second Golden Lady undermined and even distorted the patriotic message of the original Lady. After a series of heated debates Lady Rosa was eventually dismantled from her pedestal. /Sarah Haunert/

CASE №4 THE CNN RATING OF
THE 'UGLIEST' MONUMENTS



The Federation Council proposed to cut off the broadcast of American television network CNN in Russia because of the inclusion of the Brest Fortress monument on its list of the world's 'ugliest' monuments. American journalists did not like the soldier's facial expression.

In response, writer Andrei Astvatsaturov told Firstnews that:

«The terrifying experience of sacrificing yourself for the sake of others simply should not be expressed 'beautifully.' The story of the defenders of the Brest Fortress is this kind of experience.

I am not an art critic, and it should be left up to the experts to decide how aesthetically successful the Courage Monument is. From my perspective, it has everything a work of art should have: grief, power, and the simultaneous tension of all the feelings that oppose 'beautiful form' and remain almost formless.»

2014

Schwabinggrad Ballett

One day Master Wah-Tsi asked a soldier if he considered the border he was guarding to be impenetrable. The soldier took Wah-Tsi by the hand and said: Come, I will show you how I am able to oversee the entire border in four hours. He led him to the thermal imaging devices and low-light cameras; he showed him the dogs and the arsenals and the cash box crammed with money used to pay defectors. Wah-Tsi said to him: Now I see that your border could be impenetrable. But would anyone erect a monument in your honor? The soldier answered: Certainly not for the victims.

Les Statues meurent aussi

Statues can die, too, if they are torn from their symbolic context and placed in museums. When they cease to be media of a symbolic exchange and are turned into surfaces of self-reflection for a society that only sees time as decay and which itself hardly exists anymore. Which is reminded by the images appearing on the surfaces of the statues of old commitments whose function now is nothing more than to control the processes that disappear beneath the surfaces.

The Legacy of Colonialism

La-I-Ha was wont to say: We have a right to be here. We are here to reap the bounty of the sweat of our ancestors.

Arrival, Not the Border

Ba-Ging had heard that Wah-Tsi believed that the problem was not the border but the arrival. She therefore asked him what he thought of the suggestion to inform the unaware among those fleeing of the futility of their hopes before they fled. Wah-Tsi answered: They will think this information is a maneuver.

Irreversibility

History does not follow a plan consisting of individual steps

but is a stochastic matter interspersed with endemic catastrophes. At the end of a story, which is no longer the result of a single impulse but of a static process, lies entropy. Death is irreversible. But not because it follows a destiny. The reason death is irreversible is also not a result of an individual catastrophe. It is irreversible because it consists of not one event but of a very great number of individual events which together produce a static process.

The Dead Work

We vaguely recall: absolute surplus value, reification of living work in the production means, relative surplus value, real subsumption of labor under capital, capital accumulation, etc. Marx called capital "dead work". And oh yes: original accumulation. The mobilization of the exploited factory workers. Forced labor. The necessary spatial expansion of the territory controlled by capital: colonies, plantations, slave ships. Trilateral trade. The babies born on slave ships were thrown overboard. They gather on the ocean floor and work to build the New City.

Goodbye Center

The governor of the metropolis Bu-Han ordered his officers to treat the undesirable arrivals just as politely as the desirable ones. Along with the Welcome Center, which was built in the northern part of the city for those foreigners whose skills were expected to add to the city's prosperity, a Goodbye Center was erected in the southern part of the city to which those persons were sent who were to be deported.

The Dead Recount

"I tarry but to claim your law, not knowing If wrath of mine shall blast your state or spare," the leader of the Chorus of Furies (=Erinyes) tells Apollo in Aeschylus' play. Orestes has murdered his own mother, and the Erinyes seek to avenge this heinous crime; Apollo wants to stop them. After all it was he who encouraged Orestes to kill his mother, Clytemnestra, who had slain her husband, Orestes' father, Agamemnon, after his return home from the Trojan War for having sacrificed their daughter Iphigenia to the goddess Artemis...

The ancient goddesses of revenge and retribution cite the unjustified outrage that cannot be tried and only avenged. The justice of Apollo is an abstract code that can be applied to the

Erich Klein Three Months Instead of a Year

"Don't stay, my love, when Katyusha starts to sing"
Paul Celan, Russian Spring

"Of course I remember Vienna! I captured it after all."
Dmitri Shepilov, Major General of the 4th Guards Army

The monument built to commemorate the 17,000 soldiers of the Red Army (five thousand according to estimates by Austrian military historians) who died in battle to liberate Vienna in April 1945 is an extraordinary constellation from an ideological and (art-)historical perspective. The different names for it alone can be confusing: Liberation Memorial, Heroes' Monument, Victory Monument, Russian Memorial, just to mention a few of the friendlier ones. It is all the more surprising that there is to date no comprehensive documentation of this memorial, which was the first large-scale structure erected in the Second Austrian Republic and whose symbolic meaning, including its prompt unveiling on August 19, 1945, cannot be appreciated enough. Without access to Russian documents, we as interested observers must rely on the accounts of a few Soviet contemporary witnesses, whose oral testimonies probably constitute no more than one of the legends of construction history anyway: Dmitri Trofimovich Shepilov, political commissar of the 4th Guards Army of the 3rd Ukrainian Front; Mikhail Alexandrovich Sheynfeld, fortification engineer and site manager of the memorial; and Mila Intizaryan, widow of Mikhail Avakovich Intizaryan, the sculptor who designed the Red Army soldier.

Dmitri Trofimovich Shepilov claims credit for selecting the site and initiating the renaming of the square from Schwarzenbergplatz to Stalinplatz. There is little to contradict the view that Dmitri Shepilov (1905–1995) was the actual "mastermind" behind the monument complex. Shepilov's biography commands respect: Already a professor of economy, he volunteered in Moscow in 1941 to be sent to the front as a member of the so-called Opolcheniye, the People's Militia. By the end of the war he had worked his way up to the rank of political commissar of an important section of the front. And his skyrocketing career, which had begun during the war, was no less impressive in the years to follow: He became editor-in-chief of the party newspaper "Pravda", co-wrote Stalin's "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR", was even seen as his potential successor for a time, and served briefly as Soviet Foreign Minister. His fall from grace came when Khrushchev thwarted a Stalinist coup: Shepilov had "joined" the group of high party functionaries led by Molotov and Kaganovich. All his life Dmitri Shepilov, who ended the war with the rank of General, thought of himself as especially "art-minded". To him this was confirmed by the fact that he was given the responsibility of choosing the sculptor and the inscriptions for the memorial.

And indeed there are several photos (cf. "Die Russen in Wien – Die Befreiung Österreichs"/The Russians in Vienna – The Liberation of Austria) in which Shepilov can be seen next to Nikanor Zahvataev, commanding officer of the 4th Guards Army, on an inspection tour of locations in Vienna or visiting the construction site of the monument at Schwarzenbergplatz accompanied, among others, by Sergey

Notes on Remembrance Monument of the Unknown Border Guard

individual case; the pre-justice of the Erinyes clings to the specific and concrete crime.

Apollo: the reconstruction of chains of cause and effect to produce a text (family tragedy). Erinyes: the blind pursuit of the traces of the real, of the remains, which are not resolved in the representation (revenge).

Every narration whether it is to be read as “documentary” or as “enacted” provides a surface onto which the protagonists as characters (of the author, of the audience...) can be projected. And like every projection the narration excludes that for which there is no place in either the symbolic or the imaginary realm. The chorus verses sung by the Erinyes are a vertical stake in the surface of the narration, whose one (parafictional) pole is matter and whose other (metafictional) pole is paranoia. The Erinyes, who barely manage to project themselves abruptly and absolutely free from any continuity (not to mention causality) into the media, translate the dead in the strange and violent environment of the messages into an “identity”. The dead make reference to the wretched surface of the narration and beyond that also to every kind of historicity. The dead, who have accepted the idiotic temporality of human speech, seem to be able to use pre-lingual patterns to pierce the representation and bore a channel for themselves. Compressing and plugging up are the only activities they encounter there. They do not accept the chain of narrations. They demand their rights.

On the Victory in the War against the Breaching of the Border

Wah-Tsi says: The ultimate fantasy of the border cops is the machine-gun massacre. But the price for the victory in the war against the breaching of the border would be a slowing down of the circulation of goods.

Wars, Crimes

Here and there something terrible has happened. There is no proof, just rumors, poor information, someone heard something but can't remember exactly what was said. The chain of witnesses is interrupted. And what actually happened here? Was it part of regular combat operations? Did ethnic cleansing take place here behind the front lines? Where was the front anyway? Were executions conducted here?

The inhabitants are suspicious. What do these strangers want? That's just what happens in war, the war was a long time ago, nobody

helped us back then either, now we need the bypass road, we're sick of trucks rumbling through our village, we don't profit from what they're carrying anyway.

There are various versions of what happened there or what the cause was and who was responsible. In the end they come to an agreement, or the strongest political power asserts itself, maybe even against one that is actually much stronger but which has lost interest in this matter. We must not forget the dead, “they shall not have died in vain,” there is a call for proposals, a competition, one artist wins, the local population protests against the planned monument, the selection process is called into question, the artist is outraged, people wonder if the runner up hadn't submitted a much better proposal, the whole thing drags on, but then at some point the monument has been erected after all.

Proof of War

La-I-Ha says: We are not here because a war took place, which incidentally cannot be separated from peace. We are here as proof and witnesses of this war.

Anti-Remembrance

Remembrance has a temporal component because through remembrance the living recall the dead as those who were alive at a former time. In addition, remembrance also has a spatial component: the dead are excluded from the presence of the living and trapped in their remembrance. And every spatial order poses the question as to how its borders are to be guarded. Remembrance is a one-way street, the dead are the objects of remembrance and the living, at best, its subjects.

Unsettled Accounts

Wah-Ben despised Social Democracy for putting the working class on a pedestal as the redeemer of future generations. Not the prospect of liberation but the memory of servitude feeds the hate toward the oppressors, he says, and nurtures the willingness to accept the role of the victim. This memory is what is needed to bring about liberation.

Legend:

La-i-Hah: Lampedusa in Hamburg
Master Wah-Tsi: Vassilis Tsianos
Wah-Ben: Walter Benjamin
Ba-Ging: Schwabinggrad Ballett

Schwabinggrad Ballett & Lampedusa in Hamburg

„WE ARE THE EVIDENCE OF WAR“

The German philosopher Walter Benjamin said: Even the dead will not be safe from the victorious enemy. But in the self-image of the European Union there's no such thing as enemies that have to be defeated. Instead there are only operations based on agreements that need to be executed. That is why in Europe they use the euphemistic term „tragedy“ whenever a refugee-ship in the Mediterranean sinks, leaving dozens, maybe hundreds of dead people. Those dead are made victims of tragic occurrences. They are not acknowledged to be soldiers killed in action during this ongoing war that shields Europe from Africa, hence there is no memorial for them. They are bemoaned but not mourned. But to commemorate means: The living remember the dead as those who they shared the world with in earlier times. That's why this performance of Schwabinggrad Ballett together with members of Lampedusa in Hamburg is based on the idea that Europeans live among the survivors of a perpetual war the continent fights against a great part of the world.

Schwabinggrad Ballett is a collective of art and activism from Hamburg founded at the turn of the millennium to create unexpected situations beyond ritualised protest-formats. It uses direct action, sloganeering, music, dance and discourse, its performances were part of manifestations and protest camps. It has been active in the Right to the City-movement in Hamburg and – among other things - has attacked the German embassy in Athens with a hard boiled egg.

Lampedusa in Hamburg is a self-organised political group of refugees from different African countries. They worked in Libya when the NATO began to escalate the civil war between the rebels and the Gaddafi-government. They were forced to leave, stranded in Lampedusa and lived for 2 years in different Italian refugee camps until they were given EU-papers by the Italian authorities. When they –independently from each other - ended up in Hamburg, they started to meet and organize themselves to demand the right of residence. Their claim „We are here to stay!“ has since become famous throughout Germany and internationally.

The Men Behind the Russian Monument

Mikhalkov (1913–2009), an author of children's books who was awarded the Stalin and Lenin Prizes on several occasions, and El-Registan (1899–1945), an Uzbekistan-born journalist and poet. Together these two authors had written the new lyrics for the Soviet National Anthem, which was published on January 1, 1944. (Mikhalkov also penned the lyrics of the current Russian National Anthem in 2001.) Clearly, it seemed logical to recruit these two men – who had been sent to Vienna as correspondents for the military paper “Stalinsky Sokol” (“Stalin's Falcon”), highly respected authors whom Shepilov had met during the war – to write the inscriptions for the monument. They are jointly responsible for one of the texts on the plinth of the monument as well as the first verse of the National Anthem of the Soviet Union (“Soyuz nerushimy respublik svobodnykh” – “Unbreakable union of free republics”), in addition the plinth also bears a poem by Mikhalkov dedicated to the soldiers of the Guards Army who “came to Vienna all the way from the walls of Stalingrad”. Dmitri Shepilov himself claimed authorship for the inscription on the colonnade – “Eternal glory to the soldiers of the Soviet Army who fell in the battle against the German fascist occupiers for the freedom and independence of the people of Europe”.

All these texts clearly express a motif important in late Stalinist ideology: Russia's greatness through its triumph over Hitler Germany. The narrative of the monument ties actual wartime events – the victory at Stalingrad, the capturing of Vienna – and commemoration of the dead and hero worship in an administrative act (Stalin's orders inscribed on the face of the plinth) together into an apotheosis of Soviet power: “From now on the flag of freedom shall wave over Europe!”

Dmitri Shepilov described the speed with which the “Russian memorial” was built as follows: Planning began in February of 1945 following the victorious Battle of Lake Balaton, ground was broken and the foundation dug soon after fighting had ended in April 1945, the memorial was unveiled on August 19, 1945, attended by representatives of the provisional Austrian government and delegates of the Western Allies. According to Shepilov, they wanted to give the Allies, who had just occupied the agreed upon zones in Vienna in the fall of 1945, an example of Soviet organizational abilities. The memorial, which stands along the border between the Soviet (fourth district) and British (third district) zones and directly in front of the headquarters of the Allied Commission for Austria (today: House of Industry) can be seen as a war memorial in two senses. As one that pays tribute to the soldiers of the Red Army who died in battle and as one that marks the nascent Cold War in Europe between the West and the East.

The site manager Mikhail Alexandrovich Sheynfeld (1915–1999), who recalls the nervousness of the Soviet command on the eve of the unveiling, also concurs, at least to some extent, to this: Something as insignificant as the malfunctioning of the unveiling mechanism probably would have been a disgrace in the eyes of the Western Allies, which was why Sheynfeld had to use a turntable ladder borrowed from the Vienna fire brigade to climb up and check the veil draped over the statue of the Red Army soldier. Mikhail Sheynfeld was born in Kiev in 1915, graduated from the Kiev Construction Institute in 1931, and like Shepilov volunteered on the first day of the Great Patriotic War for duty on the front. As a fortification

engineer he helped build provisional bridges over the Dnieper-Bug Canal. According to Sheynfeld it apparently must have been his improvisation skills and a strong sense of responsibility that in the eyes of the military leaders qualified him for the task of site manager of the memorial in Vienna. He had just completed a smaller monument to honor the Red Army in the Hungarian city of Dunaujváros. In Vienna the large-scale building project was carried out by German prisoners of war, “specialists” from various fields, and local construction companies (which also supplied the building materials) in the span of just three months. Not without pride Sheynfeld exclaimed: “In three months instead of a year!”

The fortification engineer Sheynfeld, who also served in the Soviet Union as a site manager on a number of major projects after the war, claims credit for selecting the site for the memorial at Schwarzenbergplatz; he saw the erection of the colonnade – which was generally quite common in Soviet architecture during the Stalin era – as an attempt to stylistically incorporate the memorial into the existing architectural ensemble. Rather than this often proclaimed principle of “new building” what applies much more to the memorial complex with its colonnade flanked by two groups of soldiers (sculptor unknown), the central statue of the Red Army soldier, the graves of the Red Army soldiers buried there and thus already incorporated into the complex, and the T-34 Soviet tank is what might be called “monument realism”. (After the State Treaty was signed in 1955, the graves and the tank were moved, and the name of the square reverted back from Stalinplatz to Schwarzenbergplatz). Monument realism refers to a style of Soviet hybrid memorial ensembles that combined “real” war relics, like weapons, anti-tank obstacles, entire tanks, or even airplanes, with artistic works: a realist form of overall artwork whose archetype is without question Lenin's Tomb on Red Square. At the base of the plinth the platforms reserved for the sentries or guards of honor make reference to the ritual “performance” of this overall artwork through the annual wreath ceremony or commemorative events that were to be held in Vienna every year in remembrance of the liberation of the city on April 13.

The actual creator of the figure of the “Russian” was the young Moscow-born sculptor Mikhail Avakovich Intizaryan. According to his widow he was in a trench just outside the Third Reich, at the present-day border between Austria and Hungary when they commissioned him to design the monument. For lack of clay, Intizaryan used moistened bread and bacon to model various versions of a Russian soldier, which he mounted on bottles and presented to the war commission. There was hardly anything in his biography up until then that predestined the young sculptor for the prestigious job – unless you counted the fact that he had, as a student, helped assemble Vera Mukhina's monumental statue “Worker and Kolkhoz Woman” for the 1937 World's Fair in Paris. But imagining a monument competition in the trenches definitely has its appeal.

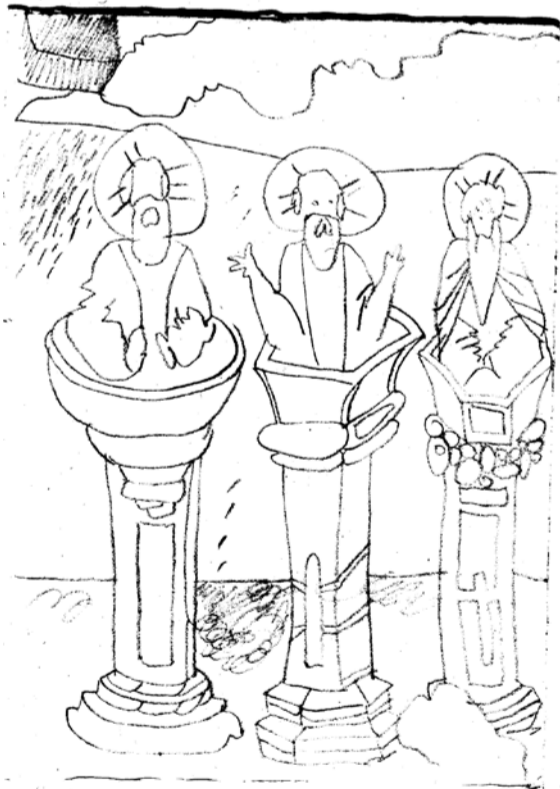
According to Ferdinand Welz (1915–2008), a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts and Viennese sculptor who became famous in the Second Austrian Republic for numerous busts of politicians and coin designs and who helped cast the bronze parts of the project in a foundry in Vienna's third district, Intizaryan was extremely impressed by the memorial that stood in front of the Rossauer Barracks. This Deutschmeister

CASE №5 MONUMENTS COMING TO LIFE. PUSHKIN'S THE BRONZE HORSEMAN



Pushkin wrote *The Bronze Horseman* in 1833. It is one of his deepest, bravest, and best works. With unbelievable strength and courage, the author demonstrates the contradictions of public life laid bare, without attempting to artificially reconcile them in places where they are irreconcilable in reality. In *The Bronze Horseman*, the opposing forces are generalized with the images of Peter the Great (who is then represented as the monument of *The Bronze Horseman* come to life), who stands for the government, against the everyman with his personal, private interests and troubles, who dies, crushed by state power.

CASE №6 A STYLITE



A stylite (from Greek *στυλίτης*, *stylitēs*, «pillar dweller», derived from *σῦλος*, *stylos*, «pillar», *ἀστώνάγιε*) or pillar-saint is a type of Christian ascetic in the early days of the Byzantine Empire who lived on pillars, preaching, fasting and praying. Stylites believed that the mortification of their bodies would help ensure the salvation of their souls. The first stylite was probably Simeon Stylites the Elder who climbed on a pillar in Syria in 423 and remained there until his death 37 years later.

How should we write the history of war memorials?

In a well-known essay on World War I memorials, historian Jay Winter counts among these the British tradition of observing a two-minute silence on November 11th, the social bonds between veterans with disfigured faces, and new communities of people who have lost friends and relatives to war. As Winter reminds us, anything can act as a memorial: a vacant lot, a hospital, a photograph; a political party, a legislative text, a set of everyday practices. Viewed from this angle, a memorial is defined by the author's intention and its acceptance by an audience, in other words, by the emergence of a commemorative community. A space, an object, a practice become a memorial, a *lieu de mémoire*, through the intention that inspired it and through the acceptance of that intention by those who pass by the space, use the object, or engage in the practice. No object is a memorial-in-itself; its commemorative quality is always in the eye of the observer. Hence the observer can also deprive a monument of its commemorative function, turn a memorial into a former memorial, or a site of memory from a common place into an empty space—to be salvaged neither by physical size nor by edifying or menacing inscriptions (“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”). In any case it is very difficult to give a precise definition of what makes a memorial a memorial, and to separate its physical features from its immaterial qualities. The meaning of a memorial is shaped by what happens to it and around it.

Such transformations suggest a novel approach to writing the history of memorials in the narrower and more habitual sense: the structures of stone and bronze—statues, plaques, tombstones, and cenotaphs—that we commonly designate by that term. This approach could be called biographical. Beyond being interested in what a memorial says about past events or about contemporary perspectives on those events, a memorial's biographer also studies all the twists and turns in a memorial's life, from creation to decay or retirement and, often enough, to its withering and death. Despite their monumentality and claim to eternity, monuments are most often manifestations of a generational project. This goes all the more for war memorials, often built on the initiative of survivors. With the passing of that generation, with changes in the political context, interest in its monumental legacy may be eclipsed or at the very least transformed. The most grandiose monuments, those erected decades after the event they commemorate, tend to fade the fastest. One of the world's largest war memorials, the Monument to the Battle of the Nations in Leipzig, built for that battle's 100th anniversary in 1913, turned into an historical curiosity soon after completion.

Monuments to the Soviet Participants of World War II

Contemplating Soviet war memorials, what outside observers often remark upon first and foremost is a kind of stern Socialist Realist monotony, especially obvious in contrast with the aesthetic diversity that characterizes North American and West European memorial mania (in Erika Doss's expression), or even with the sculptural production of the 1920s Soviet avant-garde. Many even assume that the Soviet monuments were created according to a single plan issued by Moscow for all the territories that were under its control by the end of the war, and reinstated when the cult of the Great Patriotic War started in earnest under Brezhnev in the mid-1960s.

In reality, the apparent monumental uniformity of the bronze and stone soldiers always concealed complex local dynamics, the personal and artistic ambitions of their creators, and a multitude of objectives addressed by the memorials. There was no single post-war monumental propaganda plan, and there is no evidence that the Kremlin directed their construction. The main actors in this process (and in the conflicts it sparked) were the military leadership, sculptors, and architects, later joined by the leaders of the satellite states and Soviet republics, local Party officials, and even heads of factories, from large sculpture studios to chemical plants.

memorial, Welz claimed, was the actual model for the Russian memorial and he therefore also thought of himself as the actual creator of the Russian memorial. Mikhail Intizaryan didn't contribute anything else of significance to Soviet art history. The mere fact that the memorial on Schwarzenbergplatz—as the first Soviet World War II memorial to be built and as one sanctioned by high command—possessed a certain model character for all future memorials of its kind, lent its sculptor himself a degree of respect even in the eyes of the great masters of Socialist Realism, for example Lev Kerbel (who sculpted the Marx memorials outside the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and in Chemnitz as well as the last Soviet Lenin statue on October Square in Moscow), or Vladimir Tsigal (who sculpted the monument of Karbyshev, the Soviet General who was murdered at Mauthausen concentration camp).

Though the rest of Intizaryan's career as a sculptor, which mainly focused on the Russian-Armenian friendship, was unspectacular, the inscription he added in the 1970s was, for the history and interpretation of the memorial at Schwarzenbergplatz, all the more enlightening. It stands directly in front of the monument and offers a translation of the memorial's main inscription, which is written in Cyrillic and thus normally incomprehensible to Austrian viewers: “Eternal glory to the soldiers of the Soviet Army who fell in the battle against the German fascist occupiers for the freedom and independence of the people of Europe”. The tilted cube that in a manner of speaking strives for “modernism” fundamentally transforms the memorial with its new and less menacing tone: “Memorial to honor the Soldiers of the Soviet Army who gave their lives to liberate Austria from fascism.” The memorial is historicized to some extent and becomes an object of contemporary history in an outdoor museum in urban space. But, as the sculptor's widow Mila Intizaryan says, her husband had not only been warned before he left for Vienna, but even while working at the construction site he was accompanied by embassy employees who pointed out the “perils” of his task: In Austria there were still plenty of fascists who might at any moment launch an attack on the Liberation Memorial, a warning that Mila Intizaryan assures us her husband chose not to take seriously; he considered it just an excuse to keep an eye on his every move. But at least Intizaryan spent a few nice days in Vienna before his much too early death, she adds. Burglars stole the original plans for the statue in Vienna and the small sculptures he completed later, which had been kept for years in his dacha on the outskirts of Moscow; the original bread models for the Liberation Memorial in Vienna were eaten by the birds.

(Translation: Kimi Lum)

Erich Klein (born 1961) writer and translator, lives in Vienna. Curator of *Literaturveranstaltungen* („Literatur im Herbst“) Editorial member of the journal „Wespennest“. The Author of the books: „Die Russen in Wien – die Befreiung Österreichs“ (1995) The author of „Die Russen in Wien – die Befreiung Österreichs“ (Russians in Vienna – the liberation of Austria) (1995)

Soviet war memorials: a few biographical remarks

The first Soviet war memorials were erected outside of the USSR, in the wake of the advancing and exhausted Red Army. These projects were most often initiated by generals, who saw the monuments as solving two problems at once: the practical concern of burying the remains of tens of thousands of soldiers and the task of symbolically securing the presence of the Red Army in the territories it had captured. As early as 1945, many such monuments appeared in the central squares of German towns from Königsberg to Berlin, in Vienna, and in a number of Polish cities.

Soviet war memorials and cemeteries became perhaps the only ones in the world that not only served commemorative and legitimizing functions, but also geopolitical ones. Unlike, for instance, the cemeteries and memorials created under the jurisdiction of the American Battle Monuments Commission or the Imperial (later Commonwealth) War Graves Commission, many Soviet monuments were addressed less to the families of the fallen (very few of whom had the opportunity to visit the graves of their relatives abroad) than to the local population. This is one of the reasons behind their monumentality, and it is also why they were erected in town centers, replacing or supplementing existing monuments. Thus they effectively reminded residents of the continuing presence of live Soviet soldiers, stationed invisibly in barracks on the outskirts. These monuments, especially if they included armored vehicles, were inevitably seen not only as a reminder of Soviet sacrifices, but also as tools of intimidation.

When, in 1947, a collection of standard designs for tombstones and funerary monuments appeared, they represented a codification of existing practices rather than mandatory instructions. Of course, there were unspoken rules from the very beginning, and in many cases fundamental decisions were evidently approved by Moscow. Thus the inscriptions on monuments were more or less standardized. Usually, they were some variation on “Eternal glory to the heroes who fell in the battle for the freedom and independence of the socialist motherland.” Since captivity was considered shameful, dead Soviet prisoners of war were not singled out for commemoration, even if the monuments were erected over sites where only such prisoners were buried. And yet there were exceptions to every rule: thus a small monument in the back part of the grand Schönholz memorial complex in northern Berlin does mention “Red Army soldiers captured and tortured to death in Fascist concentration camps.”

During that first stage of monument construction, their creators, too, were a very diverse group. While the larger and more symbolically charged memorials were by and large designed by young sculptors and architects from the Russian-speaking parts of the USSR, who were lavishly provided materials and manpower by the military leadership, many other monuments were commissioned by the Soviet authorities (later increasingly supplanted by local communist parties) but built by local sculptors or architects. Examples of this include the monument erected in the Buch district of Berlin, designed by Johann Tenne, and the Liberation Monument in Budapest, both built in 1947.

Regional variations aside, the immediate post-war years did see the emergence of rather narrow aesthetic standards for Soviet war memorials. There were several reasons for this. First of all, even on the periphery of the USSR, there were often sculptors and architects who had been trained and had developed their preferences at the big Stalinist sites of the 1930s, such as the Palace of the Soviets. Secondly, by this time, the production of monuments had evolved from an artisanal task into a large industry. In the USSR, it was increasingly common for monuments to be assembled from readymade parts, planned and manufactured by a relatively small handful of organizations. These included foundries, stone works, and, most importantly, the Grekov Studio of Military Artists, founded in 1934.

In the mid-1960s, as war memorials were becoming ubiquitous across Russia, the geopolitical function of the first wave of monuments was no longer evident to ordinary Soviet citizens, although its effects were never lost on Estonians, Hungarians, Austrians, Germans, Czechs, and Poles. After the Soviet forces had suppressed the uprisings in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and the Prague Spring of 1968, and after martial law was introduced in Poland in 1981, the tanks and bronze soldiers

reminded the majority of locals not of the liberation of their countries by Soviet troops, but of the ever-present threat that these troops posed to them. After 1989, there were many initiatives to take down, relocate, or re-dedicate Soviet monuments. Conversely, some of them became gathering sites for the supporters of the old regimes, but also for those who sincerely feared the rise of revanchism and neo-Nazism. Thus, in January 1990, hundreds of thousands of anti-fascist demonstrators gathered in Treptower Park in response to the appearance of anti-Soviet graffiti at the site.

The Post-Soviet Era

The post-Soviet fate of Red Army monuments in Eastern Europe was not always determined by confrontations between pro- and anti-Soviet forces. Decisions to demolish, relocate, or preserve monuments were often made on the local level and based on practical considerations: insufficient funds for moving monuments (or re-burying remains) or for replacing the old monuments with new ones, the significance of monuments as city landmarks or tourist attractions, and so on. Many monuments were moved to open air museums, such as Budapest’s Memento Park or the Grutas Park sculpture garden in Lithuania, or to cemeteries, especially if they had stood over the remains of Soviet soldiers. Monuments weren’t always relocated in their entirety: in Budapest, the removal of a bronze soldier and a red star transformed the Monument to Liberation into the Liberty Statue. Often, the initiative to refashion a monument aims to draw a distinction between fallen Soviet soldiers and communist ideology. Thus, in 2007, René Pelán, deputy mayor of the Czech city of Brno, took it upon himself to remove a Red Army hammer and sickle from a monument to the soldiers who died during the liberation of the city, arguing that this was a symbol of communism and not of the army, to whom the city remains grateful.

Yet it would be inaccurate to say that the post-Soviet period has seen an all-round “retreat” of memorials to Red Army soldiers. On the contrary, in a number of countries, there has been a wave of construction of new monuments and memorial cemeteries (or reconstruction of old ones), especially since the 2000s. At the same time, many of the monuments that remain from Soviet times have become focal points for new rituals and political and artistic practices which endow them with entirely new meanings.

In Russia, the reasons for the construction of new monuments are reminiscent of the Brezhnev era. The cult of The Great Patriotic War has become the foundation of the sole widely accepted state ideology. People’s attitudes toward the symbols and rituals of that cult follow the standard pattern in such situations, ranging from enthusiasm to the ironic over-identification known as *stiož*, and often enough including both. In any case, there has been much demand for new monuments. Many of these could be qualified as corporatist, dedicated as they are to fallen soldiers who were representatives of a specific profession, workers from a specific factory, graduates of a particular school, and so on. The construction of these monuments is increasingly sponsored by businessmen. Building monuments in time for important historical anniversaries has become a profitable business for manufacturers and patrons alike. The new title of City of Military Glory, introduced in 2006, has had an impact on the memorial construction industry comparable to the Hero City designation from the 1960s.

Yet new memorials and practices are appearing outside of Russia as well. This is primarily due to the fall of the USSR, which led to mass emigration and the transformation of Russian communities in destination countries and former Soviet republics into ethnic and cultural minorities. War monuments and the concomitant Victory Day rituals have increasingly come to be seen as symbols of Soviet identity and nostalgia as well as markers of Russianness, which can mean very different things and is rarely limited to a narrow ethnic interpretation. This totemic relationship to war monuments is characteristic of a significant portion of the Russian-speaking population in former Soviet republics. Thus, while May 9th celebrations around Soviet monuments are often central emotional events in the lives of Russian-



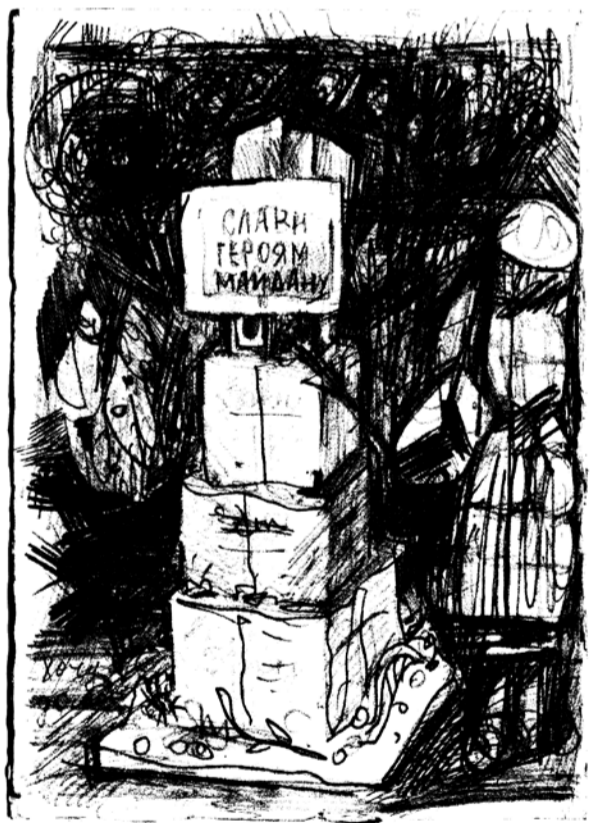
CASE №7 A GRAMSCI MONUMENT
BY THOMAS HIRSCHHORN



Gramsci Monument is the fourth and last in Hirschhorn's series of "monuments" dedicated to major writers and thinkers, which he initiated in 1999 with Spinoza Monument (Amsterdam, the Netherlands), followed by Deleuze Monument (Avignon, France, 2000) and Bataille Monument (Kassel, Germany, 2002). This fourth monument pays tribute to the Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), famous for his volume of Prison Notebooks (1926–1937). Gramsci Monument is based on Hirschhorn's will "to establish a definition of monument, to provoke encounters, to create an event, and to think Gramsci today."

Constructed by residents of Forest Houses, the artwork takes the form of an outdoor structure comprised of numerous pavilions. The pavilions include an exhibition space with historical photographs from the Fondazione Istituto Gramsci in Rome, personal objects that belonged to the philosopher from Casa Museo di Antonio Gramsci in Ghilarza, Italy, and an adjoining library holding 500 books by (and about) Gramsci loaned by the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute in New York. Other pavilions include a stage platform, a workshop area, an Internet corner, a lounge, and the Gramsci Bar—all of which are overseen by local residents.

CASE №8 PEOPLE'S MONUMENTS.
EUROMAIDAN, 2014



The national temporary monument, «Glory to the Heros of Maidan,» which was erected in the location where protesters fought and were killed by government forces.

speaking communities in these countries, they may be virtually meaningless to ethnic majorities and entirely ignored by local non-Russian media.

This significance of the monuments was most obviously illustrated in the conflict around the relocation of the Bronze Soldier from downtown Tallinn to a military cemetery. Interestingly enough, both the Bronze Soldier and the Glory Monument in Kutaisi, blown up on Mikhail Saakashvili's orders, had been the work of local sculptors, yet during both of these conflicts, both supporters of demolition or relocation and Russian officials made it clear that they perceive them as Russian.

Monuments to fallen Soviet soldiers have started to play a similar role in places with large émigré communities from the former USSR, most notably in Germany, where there are many such migrants as well as a large number of Soviet memorials. Moreover, immigration has led to the erection of new monuments in places where Red Army soldiers never even set foot. In 2005, a small monument to the Soviet veterans of World War II was unveiled in West Hollywood, which, after New York City, has the largest concentration of Russian-speaking immigrants in the US. In June 2012, a National Monument Commemorating the Victory of the Red Army over Nazi Germany was dedicated in Netanya, Israel. The monument had been built on the initiative of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, but it was designed by Russian sculptors and was in large part sponsored by wealthy Russian businessmen. Vladimir Putin presided over the dedication ceremony alongside Netanyahu. In both West Hollywood and Netanya, a central element in the composition is the motif of flying cranes, characteristic of Soviet memorial sculpture in the later 1970s and early 80s.

For residents of Germany, the US, and Israel socialized in the Soviet Union or in Soviet families, old and new monuments alike are material manifestations of the value of a Soviet and Russian heroic and quasi-religious discourse about the war. This can be especially comforting in settings when that discourse is never used and indeed unfamiliar and incomprehensible to most other residents. While in the Israeli case the "Soviet" style of the new monument was a result of Russian participation, in East Germany most war monuments and inscriptions were simply never changed. Contrary to West German custom, even Stalin quotes are not usually qualified by explanatory signs, as, in accordance with the Two Plus Four Agreement on the reunification of Germany, all burial sites of Soviet soldiers are protected by the federal government.

Both old and new monuments are becoming objects of discursive and symbolic wars. In May 2011, several days before Victory in Europe Day (May 8th), the memorial inscription on the monument in West Hollywood was altered by an anonymous hand: the dedication, which had read "to the Soviet veterans of the Second World War," was boarded over with a plaque that read, in Russian and ungrammatical English, "Eternal memory and glory to those who defeated the Nazism in the World War II."

Events like those in Brno and West Hollywood prompt an important question: what is the best way to honor the memory of the fallen and surviving Red Army soldiers? Does respect for the dead necessarily entail respect for the style in which they were later commemorated? The Russian authorities tend to react very touchily to any discussion or alteration of existing monuments. This position has the effect of preserving the late Stalinist poetics of memory, considered by many to be an anachronism.

Like all monuments, those dedicated to Soviet soldiers say much more about those who built them than about the historical era they refer to. The monuments in Eastern Europe bear the mark of the postwar geopolitical situation. The monuments in the former USSR inescapably became a manifestation of a generational commemorative project. Reexamination of such projects always leads to rancor. Monuments such as the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin were built with the objective of enshrining the 1960s West German generation's vision of how to "overcome the Nazi past" after members of this generation found themselves in power following German reunification. In Germany, any critique of this discourse—for instance, for reproducing categories of victims created by the Nazis—is met with anxiety. Similarly, in Russia, attitudes to war memorials are articulated in quasi-religious terms: the monuments are sacred and criticizing them is blasphemy. It's not surprising that religious (principally Russian Orthodox) symbolism has more or less openly influenced recent memorial sculpture and architecture. As if to underline the continuity of the post-war generational commemorative project, conservative sculptors dismiss stylistic innovations as inconsistent with veterans' aesthetic preferences. While that argument may be accurate, it begs the question of what should be done once the generation of veterans has passed, and, in the long term, after the demise of the generation that came of age during Brezhnev's cult of the Great Patriotic War.

Contemporary Russia's official policy on war memorials is clearly illustrated by the recently completed Federal Military Memorial Cemetery in the village of Sgonniki, near the Moscow suburb of Mytishchi. Several army generals proposed to establish such a cemetery in the early years of Boris Yeltsin's presidency; at the end of the 1990s, its creation was decided and a location chosen. The cemetery was conceived as the Russian equivalent of Arlington National Cemetery, i.e. as a burial ground for veterans of all military conflicts as well as government officials up to and including the president. For Russia, where there is still a strict hierarchy in the commemoration of wars, with the Great Patriotic War at its pinnacle, the idea itself was novel. However, the reality is sobering. The state-owned Moscow architectural firm Mosproject-4 had won the official competition, but in the event the design was determined by glass painter Sergey Goryaev (1958–2013), who joined the team later thanks to this connections at the Ministry of Defense. As a result, the cemetery was built in the neo-classical style. The entrance is framed by steles representing the different arms of the service. The central avenue is lined with 24 statues of warriors symbolizing various eras of military history, from Slavic knights to contemporary special forces. The cemetery features massive concrete blocks, granite, an eternal flame, the sculpture of a mother with her dead son, and so on. So far, those buried in the cemetery have by and large been participants of the Great Patriotic War: an unidentified soldier whose remains were discovered in the Smolensk Oblast', small arms designer Mikhail Kalashnikov, and Marshal Vasily Petrov, one of the initiators of the cemetery project. Unlike not only Arlington but also almost every other military cemetery in the world, Sgonniki is a secure site controlled by the Ministry of Defense, and only close relatives of those buried there and tour groups are allowed admittance.

In Sgonniki, the Russian authorities in fact voluntarily did that for which they so often criticize the governments of former socialist republics: they created something like a reservation for the memory of veterans and fallen soldiers that is cut off from society by a tall fence and a strict security regime.

The diametric opposite of this approach is found in the work of a number of contemporary artists. This seems to have been pioneered in 1991 by Prague artist David Černý, who painted a monument to Soviet tank crews in Prague (the monument was itself a tank) pink and drew a hand with a raised middle finger on it. His action drew protest from the governments of Russia and Czechoslovakia and led to his arrest. Yet it also sparked a debate about the role of Soviet soldiers in liberating the Czech Republic, and preserved the tank as a recognizable symbol; it was relocated to a military museum south of Prague, and in 2011, it was floated on the Vltava River on a barge in order to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the departure of the Soviet troops. After Černý's action, brightly colored tanks began appearing in unexpected places: for instance, in front of the entrance to the National Museum of the Great Patriotic War in Kiev, at the pedestal of The Motherland Monument. The painted tanks were commissioned by the museum itself and have become a visitor attraction in their own right.

The Monument to the Soviet Army in Sofia has arguably had the most agitated post-retirement life of all. Opened in 1954 in the center of town, it had fallen into disrepair in the post-socialist era. Yet eventually this stylistically rather standard monument—or, more precisely, the high relief decorating it, depicting nine advancing soldiers in various poses—became a constantly changing canvas for political statements by anonymous artists. In 2011, the soldiers were transformed into American superheroes (in protest against consumerism), later, they were adorned with Guy Fawkes masks (in protest against the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement), then Pussy Riot balaclavas. It has been painted pink (in apology for Bulgaria's participation in Prague Spring) and in the colors of the Ukrainian flag.

Similar actions as well as other unorthodox behavior around war memorials have provoked the Russian authorities to issue rote accusations of blasphemy and hooliganism. However, none of these actions are intended to desecrate the memories of fallen soldiers. They may instead be seen as a way to reintroduce traces of a long-gone era into a contemporary context when, if not for such artistic interventions, these traces may otherwise become useless and disappear. Ultimately, the "not-as-directed" use of memorials, the conscious departure from the intentions of their creators, opens the door to a more appropriate, self-aware, living memory, a memory that is relevant to contemporary debates rather than shut off from them by walls and prohibitions, deadened by an excess of bronze, concrete, and monumentality.

Translated by Bela Shayevich

Mischa Gabowitsch is a sociologist and historian. He works at the Einstein Forum in Potsdam, Germany.

Yevgeniy Fiks and Stamatina Gregory

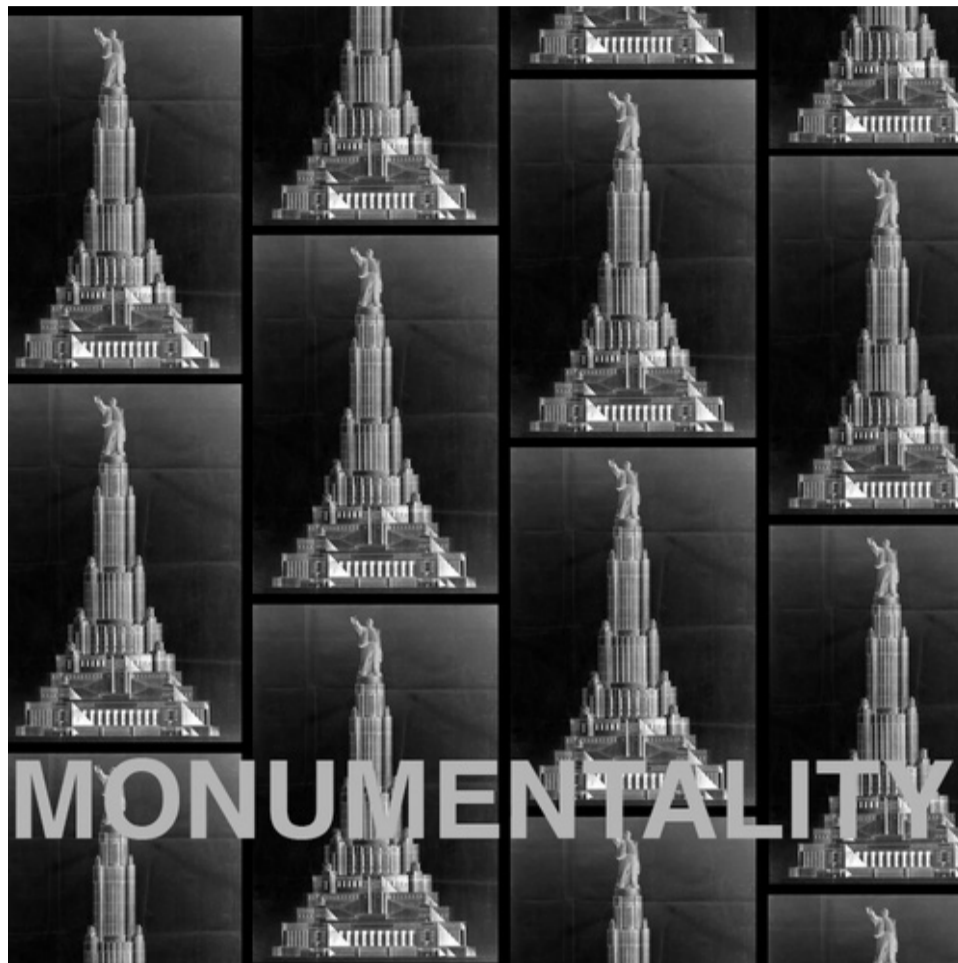
Monument to Cold War Victory

In 2012, the artist Yevgeniy Fiks and I issued a call for proposals for a Monument to Cold War Victory, an open-call competition for a public monument commemorating the outcome of the Cold War. A conceptual project by Fiks, the call addressed a commemorative gap in history. For over two decades, public signifiers of the cold war, such as the Berlin Wall and Soviet monuments, have been framed in terms of destruction or kitsch. A monument created at the moment of its own demolition, the Wall encapsulated the continuing geopolitical imagination of the conflict as linear, binary, and terminal: the culmination of a now-historicized narrative of competing empires. But while the impact of half a century of sustained ideological conflict still reverberates through all forms of public and private experience—from Middle Eastern geographies of containment to the narrative structures of Hollywood—it has yet to be acknowledged through a public and monumental work of art.

Our CFP asked: How might the notion of “victory,” implicit in retroactive commemorations of conflict, be acknowledged or reinterpreted? Can the traditional, formal structure of the monument, and the historical revisionism endemic to that form, be redefined? In a tongue-in-cheek engagement of historical binaries, we convened a jury of three Americans and three Russians (Vito Acconci, Boris Groys, Susan Buck-Morss, Vitaly Komar, Viktor Misiano, and Nato Thompson). We received over 200 submissions in total: through the jury process, we arrived at a shortlist of seventeen artists.

This is an ongoing project: although the call for proposals and jury process was completed in 2013, we continue to work with these seventeen artists, architects, and collectives to create works or representations of these proposals for exhibition. Our hope is that there will be further inquiries into the relationship of these projects to the evolving approaches to commemoration and monumentality in the United States. At the same time, those inquiries might necessarily focus on the form of the proposal-as-exhibition, and therefore be less driven by an analysis of the proposals themselves than by the curatorial conceits of the project as a whole.

One of those conceits was the decision to include the word “victory” in our title and our call for proposals. This was a subject of long and often intense debate between us—a debate in which we would occasionally, and with earnestness, switch sides. Ultimately we settled on it as a call for deeper investigation of the tacit acceptance of neoliberal capitalism as a moral victor in Western society. We also wanted to shift the historical frame of commemoration to include the two plus decades after the end of the Soviet Union (i.e., the space of the realization of “victory”).



The notion of “victory” also has critical philosophical implications. Walter Benjamin famously stated that materialization of memories in form and space is almost inevitably a narrative of those who have succeeded at the expense of those who are vanquished. Monuments narrate a history of the victors, and this narrative plays out not only in the commission and erection of monuments, but over their life cycle, whether indefinite or interrupted. Public monuments are resistant to change: once vetted and built, most monuments cannot be removed or are otherwise resistant to removal, save for instances of capital construction, property destruction, or regime change—the latter particularly evident across the former Soviet Union in recent months.

In our simultaneous call for both a “redefinition” of the monument and for an explicit commemoration of “victory,” we made a conscious attempt to negotiate between the now-ubiquitous, subjectively-driven “countermonument,” and more didactic, authoritarian assertions of ideological positions. And further to those ends, we provided no information on parameters, place or budget—other than the identification of this project as a conceptual one, which would result in an exhibition. This of course violated a cardinal rule of public art making as rooted in responsiveness to site and community, and subjected us to scores of emails demanding even an approximate budget, a projected location, or a gauge of weather conditions. It did, however, allow for many projects that were, from the outset, ultimately unrealizable - either formally, for budget reasons, for reasons of content, or some combination of those.

In looking at the two hundred proposals briefly, and the seventeen more closely, it became clear that the countermonument model (and its translation into forms of direct social engagement) contoured our results. Its formal aspects, if they can be provisionally reduced for brevity—bodily engagement, temporality, viewer-directed experience—tended to be aligned with projects that might plausibly be undertaken as institutionally sanctioned public art projects in the United States. Different to this model were another group of proposals, deeply ironic submissions that seized and exaggerated the most didactic and

authoritarian attributes of archetypal monuments in both the US and the Soviet Union—larger than life scale, figuration, and an accentuation of distance from the viewer. Moreover, they take the metaphorical violence implied by war monuments and make it explicit (and in one case, even literalizing that violence). This break between plausibility and the insistence on conceptual space of the proposal as an aggressive space of critique seems to suggest a deeper relationship between procedure and provocation in the artistic political imaginary.

To point, New York-based artist Dread Scott proposed a larger than life-size statue of Ronald Reagan be made from a weakly radioactive isotope of uranium (essential to nuclear weapons production) and housed in an imposing neoclassical structure. A formal arrangement that formally mirrors the Lincoln Memorial and other iconic US monuments, the proposal imagines the formalized processes of commissioning crowd-pleasing figurative sculpture and the daily flow of tourism into acts of criminality and oblivious self-destruction. In a direct critique of post-Soviet global neoliberalism, the artists Aziz + Cucher proposed an inaccessible monument be built in Central Park, directly across the street from the apartment of Ekaterina Rybolovleva, daughter of Russian oligarch Dmitry Ribolovlev. The monument would be a 1:1 floorplan of the apartment, which was purchased for 88 million dollars (at the time of the proposal the most expensive apartment ever sold in Manhattan); an ironic paean to the stratospherically mobile aspirations of unfettered plutocracy.

The subversive affirmation of these and other works—their overt overidentification with the commemorative sanctification of capitalist ideologies—exists in contrast to projects that approach commemoration as an opportunity to subjectively discover or reconstruct specific histories and subjectivities produced by the conflict. DC-based artist and librarian team Dolsy and Kant Smith proposed a mobile library and cultural center, providing access to declassified documents and staffed by a librarian skilled in Freedom of Information Act requests. Sarah Kanouse and Shiloh Krupar proposed a process-based memorial, assembling people affected by

nuclear militarism to map lesser-known Cold War geographies and document the conflict’s lingering environmental justice, labor, and human rights issues. In these and other proposals, viewers might encounter sets of forgotten personal narratives, legal tools to navigate an increasingly thorny data landscapes, or engage in virtual cruising engendered by the architectures of data intelligence.

These counter-monumental projects assert an indivisibility of representation and action or activism. The countermonument is perhaps the most political form of commemorative public sculpture—that is, if politics is the art of the possible. Within the contexts of “state administration” versus “individual liberty” that characterized the conflict’s propaganda wars, it is worth pointing out that there are particular grand narratives that have endured the conflict to fight on in other prolonged wars, actual and ideological. Obvious examples include the cynical instrumentalization of ideals surrounding feminism, gender and sexual equality as a rationale for military aggression by the US, while those ideals remain insidiously repressed at home. Or, the contemporary efforts by the US government to repackage its atomic landscapes and test-bomb sites throughout the West as tourist showcases of the state’s renewed identity as forerunners of responsible environmentalism. These narratives, if unchallenged, might form a problematic ideological bolster behind the plausibility of these counter-monuments as sanctioned public artworks.

It is also worth rehearsing that the counter-monument itself reflects an absorption of dematerialized art making practices in development since sixties conceptualism, including social practice and labor-based practices—particularly as those practices begin to supplant services traditionally administered by the state or by the kinds of community relations no longer viable in an increasingly corporatized initiatives that supplant local economies. If the tactics of subversive affirmation and irony are inherently self-limiting, are we then resigned to ameliorative processes of engagement? Or might the imaginative space left in the wake of war commemoration provide a productive space for both practical and ideological battle?

Stamatina Gregory is a curator and art historian, and a former Whitney-Lauder Curatorial Fellow at the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania. She is currently Associate Dean of the School of Art at the Cooper Union.

Yevgeniy Fiks was born in Moscow in 1972 and has been living and working in New York since 1994. Fiks has produced many projects on the subject of the Post-Soviet dialog in the West. Graphics: Courtesy of Storefront for Art and Architecture

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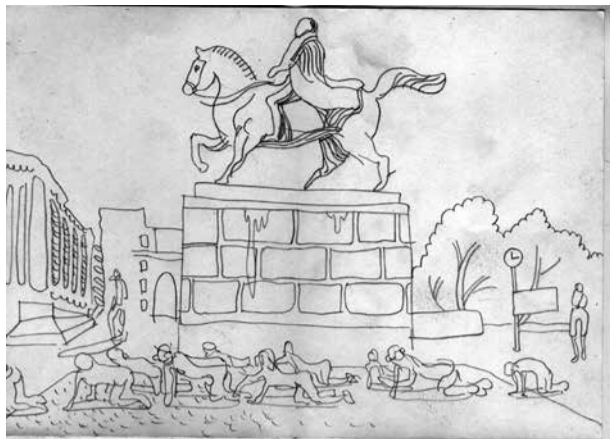
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to live again.

CASE No9 SCULPTURE IN THE EXPANDED FIELD
BUCHAREST, 2011



Dacă voi nu ne vreți, noi vă vrem [If you don't want us, we want you], the work of Alexandra Pirici represents different enactments of living sculptures, confronting public heroic monuments and buildings in Bucharest, such as the controversially rebuilt equestrian statue of Carol I, the monument of the 1989 Revolution or the House of the People.

The artists embody the awkward reflexion of a past that is all too questionable despite its apparent immutability, with well-rooted and imposing effects on the present. In the uneven relationship between their bodies and the stone or the bronze, they manage to cast doubt upon their objects of reference, to reveal them as the real ghosts. /Raluca Voinea/

CASE No10. JOCHEN GERZ THE INVISIBLE MONUMENT, SAARBRÜCKEN, GERMANY 1993



With the help of 61 Jewish communities, a list was compiled of all the Jewish cemeteries that were in use in the country before the Second World War. The names of these 2,146 cemeteries were engraved on an equal number of paving stones, which were removed from the alley crossing the square in front of the Saarbrücken Castle.

Initially, the work was carried out without a commission, in secret and illegally. The stones were removed at night and replaced with engraved ones. All stones were placed with the inscribed side facing the ground and therefore the inscription is invisible. In the course of the project the artwork was approved by Parliament and retrospectively commissioned. Castle Square in front of the Parliament was renamed The Square Of The Invisible Monument (Platz des unsichtbaren Mahnmals)

Suzana Milevska Triumphal Arch:

To build a monument is by definition to attempt to represent the sublime.

Thus to erect a monument is to represent something unrepresentable by marking an event, personality or action. It is something negative, as it is to mark absence, past, death, and above all a certain loss. Any monument thus offers a remembrance of a certain ethical sublime, and at the same time it commemorates the event of death, absence or even evil.

However there are other kinds of monuments that are heavily influenced by the political sublime, since they are meant not to compensate for a certain lack of loss, e.g. for incomplete identities, unknown heroes or for impossible histories but rather to celebrate triumphant, victorious and conquering events and personalities. This text is dedicated to the Government's project "Skopje 2014" that recently turned the capital of Macedonia into a memorial park of false memories, implanted exactly through a series of figurative monuments.¹ "Skopje 2014" resonates as a melancholic compensation for a past that has been or has never been there, and in Derrida's words, as any tomb, "announcing the death of the tyrant."²

Enormous incentives have been given to artists who helped the Government to construct a new imaginary city of "false memorials"³ gathered under the common title "Skopje 2014" as a kind of 3D history textbook or theme park (most of the public sculptures, monuments and buildings). It is the time to reformulate the famous witticisms attributed to Winston Churchill, "The Balkans generates more history than it can locally consume" with "monuments" replacing "history."⁴

The citizens in Macedonia became aware of the scope of the urban project "Skopje 2014" only after it was announced with the state financed promotional video Macedonia Timeless (broadcasted in February 2010 on the local and national TV stations).⁵ In the midst of such adoration for the imagined past there is hardly any space for consideration of the contemporary and present, neither as a relevant topic and content, nor as a medium or form.

The most symptomatic of all monuments and objects built as a part of this mega "theme park" is the Triumphal Arch.⁶ A triumphal arch is a unique monument that is imagined both as a site to memorize a victorious event in the past but also to anticipate and celebrate any future victory. In this respect a triumphal arch is a monument that is supposedly to collapse the time after and before the event that is celebrated. In a way it consists of an open multitude of events which list can be endlessly re-written.

During the last four years contemporary art in Macedonia has been largely overshadowed by the politically driven urban "regeneration" of public spaces largely supported by the Macedonian Ministry of Culture and the government of the Republic of Macedonia and also by a very strict cultural policy that controls the public art and cultural institutions. The national art and cultural policy openly favour the past over the present, the historic over the contemporary, the figurative and monumental over the conceptual and critical, the militant and nationalistic identity politics over multi-cultural and co-existing difference, the conservative and neoliberal over the deliberative and democratic.

Jonathan Brooks Platt

A monument always marks a threshold, at once joining and dividing. If it is a ritualistic idol, it mediates between human and divine and, in ancestor cults, present and past. In the Roman imperial cult, the monumental threshold cuts through the double body of sovereignty. After death and apotheosis, the emperor leaves his statue behind like the exoskeleton of a cicada (to paraphrase Joseph Brodsky)—the hollow index of a divinity since moved on. Alternatively, the imperial monument fills its empty innards with time: the statue's enduring form and sublime stasis suggest a consummate fullness. Immortalized in bronze or marble, each generation recalls the emperor's rule, forever honoring and, if possible, imitating the golden age.

But this hollowness already presages the ambivalence of the modern monument.

With the waning of faith in gods and kings, the monument no longer incarnates an otherworldly perfection but only instructs about the more mundane powers—nation, history, culture—that gather the community together. While an idol breathes its own magic, a modern monument merely reflects the admiring crowd around it.

With the "statuemanía" of the late nineteenth century, when industrial, imperialist powers become increasingly fond of erecting representations of their glory, the hollowness of the public monument turns malignant. The bourgeois cityscape is littered with statues—so many master signifiers of a culture that must constantly return to the void of its origins, binding the urban flow to historical narrative. This empty proliferation naturally evokes repugnance in those with finer tastes (those nostalgic for a more "spiritual" monumentalism). As the canonical art-historical narrative goes, modernist sculpture rips up the pedestal of the public monument, pursuing autonomy and self-referentiality, experimenting with fragmentary forms and heterogeneous materials, becoming siteless and nomadic. What does it seek? The same void, only exposed now rather than veiled and domesticated. Modernist sculpture relentlessly pursues a degree zero of monumentalism—the precise threshold at which its social, structural being is revealed just as it disappears in an evanescent flash.

As Rosalind Krauss puts it, modernist sculpture suspends itself in a no-man's-land between architecture and landscape. Here we again encounter the logic of the threshold. A monument can participate in an architectural edifice, mediating between the building's social function (as, say, a seat of government or an institution of learning) and its authority—what gathers people to it. Or it can define a landscape, quilting order into the bare site (as a park or public square), again gathering the people. As these functions become increasingly strained by automatization, modernist sculpture reduces them to pure negativity in the hopes of effecting a renewal. Sculpture, as Krauss puts it, becomes merely "what is on or in front of a building that is not the building, or what is in the landscape that is not the landscape." But for all these efforts, there is no saving the monument.

The paradoxes of triumph and defeat in the monuments of “Skopje 2014”

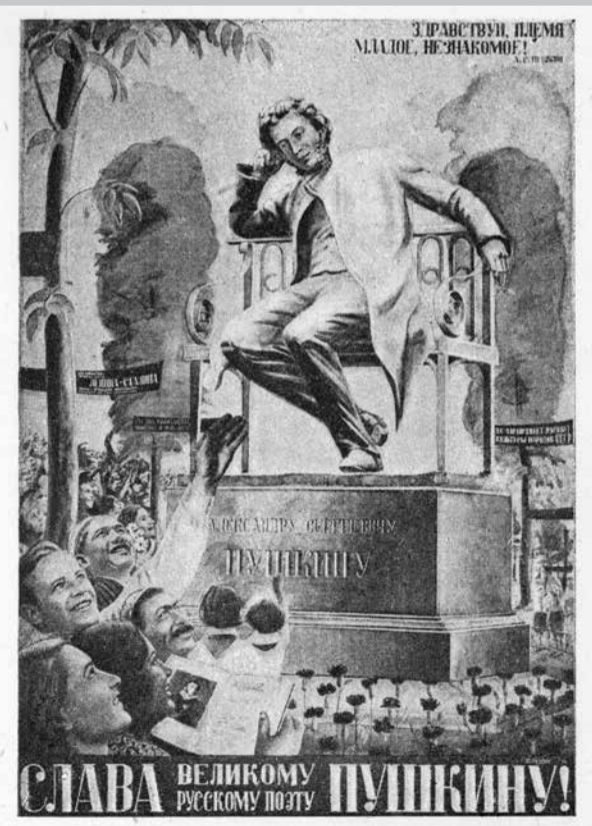
Intended as a remembrance of the collective past which, by the way, never existed (or at least not in this form), “Skopje 2014” has become a synonym for ignorance and disrespect for contemporary art by official culture representatives. From the construction of monuments to historic personalities and events whose relevance and/or meaning are highly problematic from contemporary political perspectives, to references to obsolete aesthetics (antiquity is represented by placing columns even on modernist and brutalist architectural façades, Baroque and neo-classical styles that have been directly prescribed by the open calls for these commissions and even stipulated in the contracts), the government has turned into a kind of chief curator, and not only the cultural policy maker. For example, one of the most obvious historic intervention is the commission of the monument Gemidžii that is dedicated to celebration of the nationalist organization The Boatmen of Thessaloniki or the Assassins of Salonica, an anarchist group active in the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century that was not shy of murders and organized terrorist attacks.⁷



Endnotes

1. There is an entry on Wikipedia about “Skopje 2014” that interprets the project as a “historicist kitsch” but doesn’t mention Hermann Broch’s and Abraham Moles’ concept of “kitsch man” as a way of being rather than kitsch-objects, that could be even more relevant: “Skopje 2014”, Wikipedia, Last Accessed 15 April 2014 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skopje_2014
2. Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (London: Prentice Hall, 1982) p. 4
3. “False memories” are a well-known phenomenon from psycho-pathology and refer to trauma-driven imagined events that show as real in the subject’s memory. “False memorials” are a newly invented practice typical of the nationalist and conservative governments of newly emerged states. They are mostly the result of the ultimate desire of the newly established governments in Eastern and southeastern Europe to distance themselves from the communist but often also from the anti-fascist past.
4. In parallel to the proliferation of monuments a new discourse on monuments (“anti-monuments”, counter-monuments”, “low-budget monuments”, “invisible monuments”, “monument in waiting”, to list only a few newly emerged artistic concepts) also flourished: See: Katarzyna Murwaska-Muthesius, “Oskar Hansen and the Auschwitz “Counter Memorial,” 1958-59, Last Accessed 15 April 2014 <http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/2-articles/311-oskar-hansen-and-the-auschwitz-qcountermemorialq-1958-59>; Svetlana Boym, “Tatlin, or Ruinophilia”, *Cabinet*, Issue 28 Bones Winter 2007/08, Last Accessed 15 April 2014 <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/28/boym2.php>.
5. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iybmt-iLysU>
6. Ironically, among the rare events that have been celebrated under the Triumphal Arch (its official name is “Gate Macedonia”) after its erection in 2011 (by the inexperienced and until “Skopje 2014” completely anonymous sculptor Valentina Stevanovska) were in fact the Macedonian national basketball team 4th place in the European Championship and the protests against high electricity bills initiated by the organisation “Aman” (2012).
7. Additionally the reasons to build a monument to Alexander the Great, conspicuously titled “Warrior on a Horse”, are obviously political (rather than artistic or historical), taking into account the actual raw between Macedonia and Greece over the use of the name “Macedonia”.

Soviet Sculpture in the Expanded Field



Instead, we end up in the “expanded field” of postmodernism with its own proliferation of sites and structures seeking in different ways to actualize the monumental threshold as negativity and paradox. Meanwhile, the public monument continues its ineluctable decline. Most commemorative statues today are little more than expensive kitsch. In their place, a new anti-monumental practice has entrenched itself as the norm—memorializing collective trauma and victimhood. Contemporary

art is itself increasingly monumental in scale, but this trend is less about overcoming the crisis of modernist sculpture and more a sign of the bloated market and the need for populist spectacles to justify it.

Yet, the modernist tradition Krauss describes is not the only one possible, and her choice of the term landscape is less obvious than it seems. Driven by a need to account for the innovative power of Robert Smithson’s earthworks, Krauss effectively defines the evolution of sculpture in terms of a strict nature-culture binary. But doesn’t this characterization of the opposition between the “built” and the “un-built” reek of a reactionary Romantic withdrawal from the plebeian, industrial hordes? Even Benjamin Buchloh’s more conceptual binary between the aesthetic production of reality (architecture, design) and the reality of aesthetic production (contemplated through strategies like the readymade) reduces the history of post-monumental sculpture to an oscillation between engagement and withdrawal.

Ultimately, such accounts paint a specific picture of sovereign power at the monumental threshold—one fully grounded in the discourse of the nation. It is modern, national consciousness that seeks its origins in a wilderness of negativity—a primordial emptiness from which heroes emerge to bring language, community, and history to the people. When the sculptural depiction of such heroes marks the threshold of the “built,” we encounter its positive face, veiling the negativity of origins as a hollowness easily filled by the people (or the bureaucrats in a government building). But when it marks the “un-built,” we face the hollowness of the monument as an echo

of our own lack. The prototypical scene of a statue encountered in nature is that of the lonely elegiac subject wandering amongst the gravestones in a country churchyard. It is a scene saturated with melancholy affect, the contemplation of transience, and the sweet sorrow of solitude. All the monuments located in the central parks of bourgeois capitals speak in similarly dulcet tones of the negative core of national sovereignty. If the architectural monument is a sign of phallic power, the monument in a natural landscape reverberates with the wound of castration.

But there is another negative scene available besides the natural landscape—the public square.

Unlike an architectural monument, marking the threshold between inside and out, statues in public squares mediate between urban movement and the stasis of un-built space extended beneath it. When a crowd ceases its circulation through the city to gather in a public square—for trade, celebration, or political action—it inhabits the void of sovereignty not as an individual place of contemplative withdrawal but as a collective site, always charged with the potential for contestation, conflict, and transgression. The specific conditions of radical revolutionary upheaval within a dynastic-imperial culture meant that sculpture in the Soviet Union always privileged the public square over the landscape. The un-built could not be a place of primordial origins but only one of contestation, already historical. At the same time, the Soviet occupation of public squares with new monuments could not merely perpetuate the statuemanía of the pre-revolutionary years (even if it often seemed only to amplify this statuery excess). It also had to introduce its own modernist rupture, ripping up the pedestals of the public monument in its own way, seizing the place of sovereignty, clearing it, and renegotiating its gaping contours again and again (as long as the revolutionary impulse remained).

This project's overall concept does not bear the signature of one individual artistic or architectural creator or a team, so it feels as if it has emerged from a nightmarish dream of the Prime Minister, who even refers to the project in his speeches as to his "own" project. By dictating the art and visual culture that, unfortunately, may last much longer than any contemporary works of art (these objects are mostly cast in bronze or carved in marble), "Skopje 2014" testifies to the officials' obvious disengagement from any kind of contemporary art. The sculptures of beggars, frivolous women with bare breasts (no women heroes, though, were given monumental representation), bulls, fish, dancers and trees turned into human beings are placed side by side with the militant figures of historic VIPs (mostly riding on horses and holding weapons), the new Triumphal Arch is put in a rivalry with a newly installed merry-go-round right in the centre of Skopje.

As capital investment flows into such problematic projects, art and cultural institutions are deteriorating. The managerial and artistic leadership is entirely overwritten by the ruling party's taste, driven by political interests and ignorance, which ends with admiration for traditional art values while the Museum of Contemporary Art's collection and its building have been neglected for years.⁸ Such a hypocritical situation uncontested by any institutional reactions is stressed by the simultaneous claims of lacking funds (for example when it comes to representation of the country at international contemporary art events

such as the Venice Biennale) that are paralleled by the unconceivable investments in public historic monuments and in new nationalistic museums.⁹

On the other side, almost no local funds are at the disposal of the artists who do not comply with the overruling and overpowering state interests that went so far as to dictate even detailed descriptions of the expected style and appearance of the public works of art and monumental sculptures commissioned via the open calls. Still, individual artists and groups of artists produce modest works and continue their artistic practice, although in the shade of the bronze lions, horses and bulls.

What enters our visual horizon on everyday basis seemed to have been taken as completely irrelevant for the public opinion in Macedonia until some bloggers started reacting against the uncritical use of images in billboard advertising, in magazines, or against the effect of newly built public sculptures and historical monuments and the change in other visual landmarks in Skopje. Several debates about various visual culture phenomena were initiated recently only in the realm of blogosphere and social networks in Macedonia. Thus the virtual space became a rare available space for debating, particularly the project "Skopje 2014."¹⁰



The Extra-Governmental Control Commission Barricade, Moscow, 1998

The "homelessness" of Soviet monuments is thus markedly different from those described by Krauss and Buchloh. The pre-war Soviet statue does not tend towards suspension between architectural function and contemplative withdrawal. Rather, it seeks the point of maximal tension between architectural *construction*—the channeling of constituent power through labor, discipline, and consciousness—and the public square as a site for ongoing *struggle*, resisting the reification of social forces that a traditional monument most naturally promotes. The resulting nomadism is thus not a reductivist narrowing to the degree zero of sculpture. The Soviet monument does inhabit a suspended position of neither/nor, but it arrives there only through the failure of its impossible ambition to produce a monumental image that is *both fixed and moving*, eternal and temporal, stone and flesh, built and un-built.

This tension appears in a wide variety of ways. There is Lenin's 1918 plan for monumental propaganda, in which heroes of the progressive cultural tradition and the revolutionary struggle were erected in ephemeral materials. These statues, which decayed extremely quickly, existed in two hypostases—first, as a theatrical prop for the speeches that accompanied their unveiling and, second, as a makeshift, indexical promise of the glorious city of socialism to come. The ephemeral monument was soon replaced by a virtual one—at once more stable and more easily circulated through reproducible images. Whatever the practical reasons behind the phenomenon—scarcity of materials, bureaucratic indecision, impossible expectations—the incredible proliferation of models and designs for unrealized Soviet monuments, which were nevertheless prominently displayed in exhibitions and the press, points to a reluctance to allow sculptural production to settle into actual form. The most significant example of this tendency is of course the Palace of Soviets with its 100-meter statue of Lenin—depicted again and again in the press, films, even maps, not to mention postage stamps and

chocolate wrappers, yet in fact never rising out of the foundation pit. The permanent virtuality of the palace's giant Lenin offered a subtle complement to the permanent ephemerality of the leader's corpse, forever perched on the threshold of decomposition in the Mausoleum.

Other monuments depicted subjects heroically striding or poised for a burst of destructive motion, as in Ivan Shadr's *The Cobblestone is a Weapon of the Proletariat*. A wild discourse of verisimilitude also points in this direction, as sculptors studied anatomical dynamics—down to the last sinew—even if these preparatory stages would be "clothed" in the final product (as in Sergei Merkulov's Lenin for the Palace of Soviets, which he first sculpted in the nude). Finally, there is the great love of direct interactions with statuary. These range from ekphrastic descriptions of statues "as if alive" to photographic scenes and montages of dialogue with the statue—as in various images from the 1937 Pushkin jubilee (figs. 1). In the Moscow Metro station at Revolution Square, travelers have rubbed the bronze caryatids and telamones for luck since the station opened in 1938, giving them a gilted polish. The favorite objects of this relational aesthetic attention are the animals and young children in the ensembles (pitying the innocents who should not suffer monumental stasis) and the weapons some of the revolutionaries hold (keeping them warm and ready just in case).

In each of these examples, the monument is charged with a tension that casts its fixity into doubt. At the same time, the ideal of monumental permanence is not rejected. Rather, it is either complicated with the admixture of fleshy dynamism or deferred as a future promise. In this way, the Soviet monument is constantly building and un-building itself, striving to inhabit both the sphere of architectural construction and of violent demolition, struggling on the public square. But instead of achieving this impossible hybrid, it ends up suspended as neither one, nor the other.

When Soviet unofficial artists and their post-Soviet successors "expand the field" of this relationship to explore other possibilities (in the midst of the official culture's utter automatization and, eventually, ruination), the resulting forms again have very little in common with Krauss' postmodernist typology. The Russian actionist tradition often engages the monumentalist legacy, using the body of the artist as a kind of living sculpture (often on Red Square where the site of contestation and the citadel of power are in closest proximity). "Vandalistic" appropriations of existing statues for actions are also a mainstay—waking the Soviet monument from its slumber to live and speak again in new ways. The Extra-Governmental Control Commission's *Barricade*, an ephemeral monument to the 1968 student revolution, reworks the principle of the public square, using a pile of art objects to block urban movement. The Voina group's phallic bridge is a monumental kinetic sculpture, at once marking an architectural site (the secret police headquarters) and again stopping traffic with its sexual address to vertical power. Recently the activist Ilya Budraitskis organized a series of lectures at the site of an obelisk in Moscow, which features the names of various philosopher-forbears of October. The obelisk is slated for replacement with an earlier monument to the Romanovs it supplanted in 1918. This gathering around the ghost of a monument, literalizing its goals of revolutionary enlightenment, again inhabited the paradoxical space between construction and demolition.

Whatever the actual political efficacy of such practices, there is something in them that can be seized upon and taken forward. The global neoliberal revolution of the 1980s outsourced its popular uprisings to the public squares of the Second World. Walls fell, statues tumbled, a lone student blocked a column of tanks. For all the euphoria of these moments, they ultimately served the expansion of predatory capitalism at the expense of the social contract and popular sovereignty across the world. The ambivalence of such emancipatory idol-toppling has become even clearer in more recent years, from the staged celebrations in Baghdad to the assaults on Lenin's image in Ukraine. What the post-Soviet actionist tradition suggests, however, is that the public square has not yet been wholly colonized by capital, nor released from the revolutionary socialist tradition—including all its failures, compromises, and cruel abuses. The question is why such practices must necessarily address an embodied authoritarianism in politics that cynically disavow their participation in the neoliberal order. It would be interesting to reverse the flow of symbolic power and take the expanded field of Soviet sculpture—with all its tensions between construction and struggle, creation and destruction, static form and living flux—to the squares and edifices of America and Western Europe.

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In my view these reactions created an evident leap in the awareness of the local communities and individuals about the importance of the omnipresence of art and non-art images in the visual field not only because of their direct influence on the everyday perception, but also because of their long term influence over different realms: cultural, social, political and economic. The role that played the new social media and networks such as Facebook, Twitter and other personal and collective blogs was to help the organisation of public outbursts of articulated protests against political power because these spaces turned to be the only free spaces from the urban plans of the main country architect and urban planner – the prime minister.

Actually this text was highly influenced by the event now known as ‘The First Architectural Insurgence’ that took place on 28 March 2009 on the main city square in Skopje and was a protest against the announced building of a new Orthodox church in the main Skopje square that many saw as a probe event for “Skopje 2014”.¹¹ The blogs, portal forums and Facebook events and social network(er)s in Macedonia in a way took over the available virtual space and became the most prominent visual critics. Particularly relevant was the blog contestation of the 66 m high metal cross that in the midst of interethnic conflicts in 2001/2002 (much earlier than the beginning of “Skopje 2014” project) had started to be erected on Vodno hill in Skopje. The cross that is enlightened by electricity provoked many bloggers to discuss topics such as poverty and the power of visual signs and symbols, abuse of religious beliefs with background in political advertising, inter-religious conflicts, etc.¹²

Comparisons with examples from Hollywood films (for example, particularly radical was the very superficial comparison with KKK “burning cross”) often ended with contradictory discussions and arguments with effects that sounded similar to the actual hate speech effects against which the whole debate actually started at first place.¹³

A debate very similarly led as the one about the Vodno cross, with lot of attacks on the religious revival and power of neo-Christians, was taking place also about the building of the church on the main square. The populist moves of the ruling conservative party VMRO presumably in order to ensure elective body with announcing the building of the church on the main square could not but spark another blogging fire. Such debates in blogosphere confirm that the agonistic democracy can sprout in unexpected media and spaces and is not reserved only for high political elites’ discussions. Chantal Mouffe already wrote about the impossibility to reach a rational consensus in public sphere: according to her this is exactly what deliberative democracy fails to recognise which one could name a visual agonistic public sphere.¹⁴

If one takes into account that the deliberative conception of democracy implies that decisions should be collective and should emerge from “arrangements of binding collective choices that establish conditions of free public reasoning among equals who are governed by the decisions”¹⁵ it is obvious that public contestation voices in Macedonia are still not treated as “equal” in decision-making processes. However, if one agrees that a perspective like “agonistic pluralism” differs from deliberative democracy model since it “reveals the impossibility of establishing a consensus without exclusion” and “warns us against the illusion that a fully achieved democracy could ever be instantiated,”¹⁶ than it is obvious that blogging and the social networks in Macedonia opened the first public space of dissent and democratic contestation that is vital for agonistic pluralistic democracy that unfortunately is still far from any triumph.

Suzana Milevska is appointed the first Endowed Professor for Central and South Eastern Art Histories at the Academy of Fine Art in Vienna (2013-2015)

Endnotes

8. Suzana Milevska, “The Internalisation of the Discourse of Institutional Critique and the ‘Unhappy Consciousness’”, in: *Evaluating and Formative Goals of Art Criticism in Recent (De)territorialized Contexts*, AICA press. The International Press of the Association of the Art Critics, 2009, pp. 2–6, www.aica-int.org/IMG/pdf/SKOPJecomplet.pdf

9. It is believed that the approximate budget of “Skopje 2014” exceeded 500 million euros (that far exceeded the first official estimated amount of 80.000 EUR), but as the project’s budget is not transparent, and as it is impossible to gain access to the public records relating to the project, the exact amount is difficult to confirm officially.

10. The texts addressing the project in critical mode span from theoretical and analytical approach towards the identitarian politics (eg: Jasna Koteska, “Troubles with History: Skopje 2014”, *Artmargins Online*, last accessed 2 September 2012, <http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/2-articles/655-troubles-with-history-skopje-2014>) to critiques of the non-transparent use of public funds, the lack of democratic deliberation and no consultancy with the professional bodies such as the Association of Architects of Macedonia.

11. The main arguments against building of the church and the protests pre-dated the announcement of Skopje 2014 project and their dates were mainly announced via the frequently used social media by some of the students and the main organisers and supporters of the protests.

12. Antiblog “10 pricini da se otstrani krstot na Vodno”, 10 December 2006, last accessed 11 April <<http://antipunkt.blogspot.com/2006/12/10.html>>; Vuna “Raspnati pod krstot” 15 April 2006, last accessed 10 April 2008 <<http://vuna.blog.com.mk/node/16265>>.

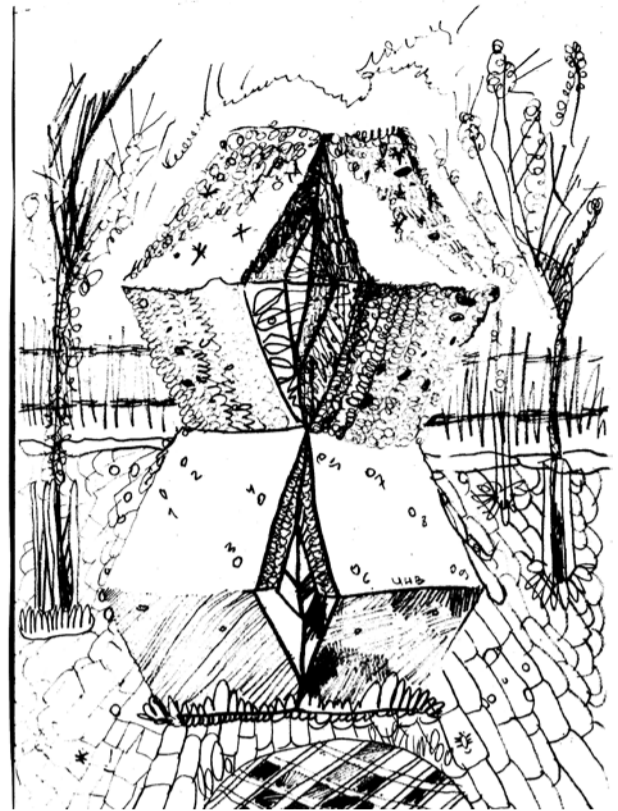
13. The workshop Pluralism of unstable identities - Panel discussion on blogging as an alternative of the official cultural politics was one of the first public workshops/debates on blogging in real space that was organised with participation of two bloggers; Žarko Trajanoski (Zombifikacija) and Nikola Andonovski (Schizochronia). “Translating the Self: Cultural Identities and Differences”, International Conference on Postcolonial Concepts in Cultural Policy, 26-27 January 2007, National and University Library, organised by the Visual and Cultural Research Centre, Curator; Dr. Suzana Milevska. See the post: Schizochronia “Translating the Self”, 26 Januari 2007, last accessed 10 April 2008 <<http://schizochronia.blog.com.mk/node/65458>>.

14. =Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (New York: Verso, 2000) 104.

15. =Joshua Cohen, “Democracy and Liberty”, in J. Elster (ed.) *Deliberative Democracy* (Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press, 1988) 186 (qtd. in Mouffe 87)

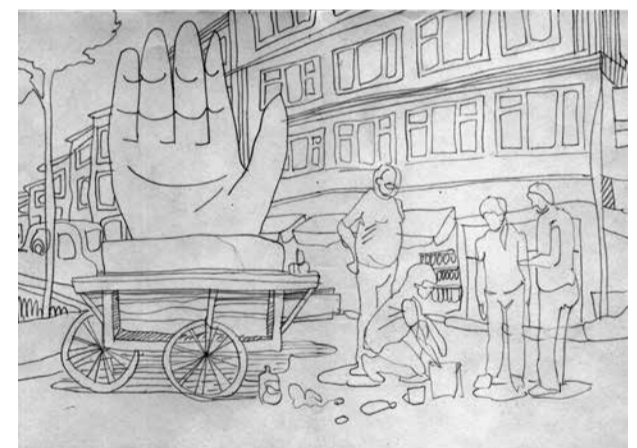
16. Mouffe *The Democratic Paradox*, 104.

CASE №11. MONUMENT TO REBELLION



While living in Detroit, Aeron Bergman and Alejandra Salinas, discovered an intriguing story about one of the city’s public monument. Residents see the abstract sculpture as a commemoration of a violent massacre, the Detroit Rebellion of 1967 - a key moment in the history of the civil rights movement. In their research (2007-2013) the artists learned that in fact the sculpture has nothing to do with the Rebellion; instead it was commissioned by the city in the 1970s for the public park rather to cover up, smooth over, and erase memory of the tragedy. In a simple and poignant way, a sad e-mail from Jack W.Ward – the sculptor who made this work tells the story of a rupture between form and meaning, of a political phantasy of an “empty vessel” of modernist appearance, ready to embrace any content. Text: Bergen Assembly, 2013/

CASE №12. PROJECT «HELPING HANDS»



Wouter Osterholt and Elke Uitentuis walk around Istanbul all day with their junk cart with a copy of sculptor Mehmet Aksoy’s long-debated sculpture, the “Monument to Humanity,” placed on top of it and ask people whether they could make a plaster cast mold of their hands. Aksoy’s sculpture was built in the eastern province of Kars and dedicated to Turkish-Armenian friendship. Yet, during January’s visit to the area, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan pointed to the 35-meter-tall “Monument to Humanity,” called it “freakish” and demanded its removal. Kars’ municipal assembly promptly passed a motion to tear down the monument, saying it had been illegally erected in a protected area.

Pandora's Box of Monuments Reopened

A Discussion on Monument Politics in Vienna

The Plattform Geschichtspolitik has been working since 2009 to promote a more widespread discussion about history politics at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, and beyond. In the course of its activities it has also carried out various critical interventions into its architectural and spatial history-political manifestations. For this discussion Florian Wenninger, contemporary historian, and Luisa Ziaja, art historian, were invited along with Eduard Freudmann and Tatiana Kai-Browne (activists from Plattform Geschichtspolitik) to share their views and personal experience about current monument politics in Vienna. Facilitated by Sophie Schasiepen.

SO: Tatiana and Edi, last summer you along with Chris Gangl reconfigured the Weinheber monument on the square outside the Academy of Fine Arts, and in this way called for an end to the hush-up over Josef Weinheber's (1892–1945) key role in Nazism's cultural policy, his anti-Semitism, and the fact that his still celebrated lyrical work is inextricably tied to his political convictions. The very nature of your intervention – exposing the grotesquely massive foundation upon which the monument's pedestal stands – simultaneously reveals the nation's history of defending this monument in post-Nazi Austria. The foundation fortifying the monument was added quite recently in 1991 in response to a series of anti-fascist interventions. What kind of reactions to your intervention did you anticipate?

EF: We had various expectations which can roughly be grouped into four perspectives: first, people we expected support from, then a wider critical audience, third, the politicians in office and authorities in charge, and fourth, those citizens who would fight to preserve the monument in its existing form. The reactions of the politicians were what came closest to surprising me. The intervention had taken place without a permit. We had informed the media and issued a formal claim of responsibility, but our intervention was pretty much ignored the entire weekend following our intervention on Friday. On Monday after our reconfiguration of the monument the municipal parks and garden division moved in and reversed our excavation work. At the same time news of our intervention had spread via the news agency to the local and national media. Interested journalists addressed the councilor in charge, who had to take an immediate stand on the issue. Amazingly, he showed his support and announced that he would have let the intervention remain if his parks and garden division colleagues hadn't beat him to the punch.

TK: Another positive surprise was the media adopting our terminology. Up until then Weinheber had been referred to in mild and innocuous terms, for example as a poet with strong traditional ties to his native land. After our intervention almost all the newspapers spoke of him as a Nazi poet.

SO: You called your intervention an artistic happening and a landscape-architectural measure. Could you explain these terms more specifically?

TK: The rather harmless description "landscape-architectural measure" arose out of our desire to address a wider audience. For us this was a strategic decision: We wanted our intervention to have a long-term impact and not just one that briefly attracted attention but would be forgotten soon after. At the same time we also used terms such as "iconoclasm". In other words we tried to go with a twofold rhetoric, a middle-of-the-road and a more radical. To us it is important to note that in general a mere contextualization of the monument, putting up a plaque for example, definitely isn't enough. Instead what is needed is an artistic reconfiguration – that is, provided monuments are to be taken seriously as aesthetic forms in the first place.

SO: Florian, in a completely different situation you were also confronted with how radical or how in conformity with party political lines you were going to present the results of a project. From 2011 to 2013 you worked with a historical commission investigating street names in Vienna. After narrowing down the original list, you conducted thorough research on 400 historical figures whose names were given to streets and parks in Vienna. According to the final report, the commission examined the extent to which they "have taken actions which based on today's standards and democratic values would require an in-depth inquiry and investigation prior to being granted the honor of having a street or park named after them." Can you give us some insight into the negotiations leading up to and following the presentation of your results?

FW: I need to give you a little background information: There was one key debate on the issue of renaming streets that had long since influenced how these matters were dealt with: the Karl-Lueger-Ring. The discussions go all the way back to the 1950s. This street at the center of the city had been named in July of 1934, in other words during a time when Austria was ruled by a fascist regime, and Karl Lueger was one of the main pillars of the Christian Social government then in power. The Karl-Lueger-Ring, therefore, did not just commemorate an anti-Semite but at the same time – because of the events leading up to its naming – it was also anti-democratic and anti-republic symbol. What was formerly called Ring des 12. November, named after the day the First Republic of Austria was proclaimed (November 12, 1918) was changed: The section along the university became Karl-Lueger-Ring and the section along the parliament building was named after the second most important leader of the Christian Social Party, the former Federal Chancellor Ignaz Seipel. After 1945 the names did present a problem, but the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition government eventually agreed upon a compromise. The Karl-Lueger-Ring section was left unchanged, and in return the Seipel Ring segment was renamed after the Social Democrat Karl Renner. The issue, however, remained a primary point of contention for decades. Under the rule of the Social Democrats (SPÖ) from the 1970s on, the debate resurfaced

Martin Krenn

From Symbolic Politics to Participatory Practice to Real Political Manifestation

Art today assumes an especially important role in the processing of history. Contemporary artistic history projects can bridge the gap between communicating history and commemorating its events. Moreover, they can also reflect as to when, how, and why a society attempts to come to terms with its history. Contemporary art has broken free of its traditional role of describing and depicting. No longer does it merely represent historical events and persons, but intervenes in representation methods, sparks debates about commemoration, and calls historical symbols into question. To this end art has over the course of the past few decades developed specific interventional and participatory methods, which are often critical of institutions.

The main focus of my artistic work is on the historical lapses and blank spots of the official versions of history. Using artistic happenings and interventions I reveal the correlation between these blank spots and anti-Semitism, racism, and the inadequate accounting for the Nazi past. Most of my projects are developed within collectives and in cooperation with historians. I take a twofold approach in my work: I try to make the historical event or phenomenon visible; at the same time my projects also examine the ideological role the phenomenon of not-remembering plays in the official depiction of history.

This essay examines the relationship between so-called history politics and art and in the process explores in particular the possibilities of intervention. As a concrete example of this I will be discussing the project "The Redesigning of the Lueger Monument", which I developed and carried out with students at the University of

Applied Arts in Vienna over the course of several semesters.

Preliminary note: three aspects which, in connection with artistic interventions, are related to "history politics".

In the following section I want to take a closer look at three aspects that play a particular role in my projects. I am especially interested in places of memory, the distinction between a social, cultural, and national memory, and the significance of monuments as manifestations of official history politics.

Places of memory

If one speaks of places of memory, one must also mention the French historian Pierre Nora and his definition of *Lieux de Mémoire*. His definition of a place of memory is based on the assumption that the collective memory of a social group – including that of an entire nation – will crystallize at certain places. According to Pierre Nora such places of memory are not restricted to geographical locations. Everything that generates a specific symbolic meaning and as such fulfills an identity – creating function for a given social group and its history can be subsumed under "lieu de mémoire" – in other words also an event, an institution, a book, or a work of art. Nora points out the ongoing unraveling of the national memory in France during the course of the twentieth century. The function of national places of memory, he notes, has shifted. While in the past it served to generate the collective memory, now this identity-creating function is taking the backseat. Furthermore, Nora contends that today's society is going through a transition phase and that the relationship to the past, which constitutes the identification of a nation, a group, or a person, is increasingly losing importance. (cf. Nora 1998) In a globalized world, places of memory would then be mere artificial placeholders for the lost collective memory.

Monuments and statues that depict nationally important historic events and persons and which are intended to generate collective memory would then be relicts robbed of their original meaning, inconspicuous parts of the urban landscape. What we indeed observe, especially in the cities, is a growing indifference in respect to the reception of the numerous monuments. This, however, is only true until something unexpected happens to them: If, for example, someone knocks the nose off of a statue or pours paint over a monument, the unfamiliar appearance also changes how the monument is perceived. To a certain extent the original function of the monument returns, it is reactivated. The disruption of something familiar makes us rediscover it and wonder what it is actually about: Who is depicted by this equestrian statue? Which historic event is behind this monument? Who commissioned it in the first place? It might shift an already almost forgotten object in the urban landscape to the center of public debate. The monument becomes the symbol of a second phase of the generation of collective historical identity.

The social, cultural, and national memory

The cultural scientist and literary scholar Aleida Assmann has compared and contrasted various forms of memory. She differentiates between the social, the national, and the cultural memory depending on how long it has existed, how emotionally charged it is, and to which extent it has been institutionalized.

Assmann's model for explaining social memory can be summarized as follows: The memory and the historical consciousness of each individual is shaped by accounts of occurrences and events from the past, for example by stories told by one's grandparents or encounters with other people who lived through those times. What is primarily stored in the social memory is knowledge that has been passed on



the Redesigning of the Lueger Monument

orally. As long as an individual or a group continues to communicate his, her, or its experiences, the social memory of the individual/the group shall be preserved, but it will be lost as soon as the people carrying this memory inside of them die. (cf. Berndt 2012)

The national memory, in contrast, endures much longer. Its purpose is to build a national consciousness and it is shaped through the repetition of certain historical narratives at regular intervals. National history is based primarily on myths and is, like the social memory, emotionally charged. Aleida Assmann points out that the national memory is passed on as long as it continues to represent the image that the collective has of itself. The third type of memory distinguished by Assmann is the cultural memory. It is stored in books, music, or films. It can be found, collected and documented in libraries, museums, and archives. As opposed to the national memory, the cultural memory is much more complex and only partially known to the general public. Unlike the national memory, the cultural memory is subject to constant change. According to Assmann each generation defines its approach to history anew. The shift in perspective taken by the 1968 generation in respect to German history “has corrected some narrow interpretations of the official image of history, for instance the exclusion of the Jewish victims from German commemoration practice.” (cf. Berndt 2012)

Monuments as manifestations of official history politics

Monuments are first and foremost symbols of the national and cultural memory. Neither they themselves nor what they stand for undergo change, generally speaking, not even when they cease to correspond to the official historiography.

On the problem of dealing with monuments following a change in

the political system Aleida Assmann writes:

The new system replaces the old across the board. However, the problem with this total exchange lies in the cleansing and straightening of the false past which also erases traces of historical memory. (Assmann 2011: 61)

The complete substitution and replacement of symbols is not common and only occurs in exceptional circumstances. Normally, the old monuments and statues are left untouched since, firstly, it is very difficult and expensive to destroy them and, secondly, because the inhabitants have grown accustomed to them and see them as an integral part of their surroundings. “*In addition to the alternatives of affirmation and negation, erecting and demolishing monuments, [Assmann points out a third way:] appropriation through historicization. Most monuments from earlier epochs do not have to be torn from their pedestals because they are subject to a creeping historicization. They can be allowed to stay because they are no longer seen as having the primary function of communicating messages.*” (Assmann 2011: 62)

Symbolic politics: the Lueger monument as an inconspicuous conveyor of an anti-Semitic message

Anti-Semitism as a conglomerate of various influences that converged in the Christian Social Party eventually led to Lueger’s election as Mayor of Vienna from 1897 to 1910. During his term of office Vienna earned the unfavorable reputation for being the first European metropolis ruled by an anti-Semite. Lueger has been frequently and notoriously cited as having said: “*I determine who is a Jew.*” If one compares Lueger’s rhetoric with speeches by other Austrian politicians during the First and Second Republics,

one recognizes patterns of debate that continue to shape political discourse in Austria to this day.

To commemorate Lueger a monument was erected on Stubenring; it was the winning design submitted in a competition by Josef Müller years earlier in 1912. In 1922, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Lueger’s election as Mayor of Vienna by the Christian Social fraction of the municipal council, the shelved project was re-initiated. In September 1926 the newly designed square and the monument were presented to the public. (Arbeitskreis zur Umgestaltung des Lueger Denkmals, 2009) (1)

In conjunction with my lecture series “Interventions” at the Institute of Art Sciences and Art Education / Department of Art and Communication Practices at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna, a seminar group investigated artistic approaches to issues in history politics. Our objective was to develop a group intervention, and we ultimately chose to do a project involving the monument of the former mayor of Vienna, Dr. Karl Lueger. For us he didn’t so much symbolize the father figure of modern Vienna as a politician who had made anti-Semitism popular in Vienna before the Nazi era, and whom, moreover, Adolf Hitler did not merely by chance refer to in Mein Kampf as his great role model.

Participatory practice: a call to transform the Lueger monument from a commemorative into a cautionary monument

As a continuation of the idea of the Social Sculpture and as an art project conceived as both cooperative and participatory, the seminar group founded “the Pressure Group to Transform the Lueger Monument into a Monument against Anti-Semitism and Racism in Austria”. Under the auspices of the University of Applied Arts an

repeatedly but never showed any consequences. From the year 2000 on, when the SPÖ was still in charge in Vienna but its archenemies the ÖVP and FPÖ formed a coalition government on the federal level, the SJ Vienna (the youth organization affiliated with the SPÖ) started submitting annual petitions for a name change at the party conventions. Thereby they managed to gradually turn this into a question of political identity within the party. Finally, in 2009 the vote was very close. 2010 was an election year, and in order to demonstrate unity, the SPÖ tried to settle certain controversial issues ahead of time – this included the Lueger Ring case. The SJ and the party leadership agreed to turn the matter over to an external commission. To this day I do not know how it was decided that not just Karl-Lueger-Ring was to be investigated but the entire city. Ironically, the commission never investigated the actual case in question. Karl-Lueger-Ring was renamed Universitätsring before we even submitted our final report. Since a number of other highly controversial cases had meanwhile arisen, the idea was probably to take the bite out of the affair by conceding a prominent case, along the lines of: “The troublemakers got their way, but that’s enough. Where would we end up if we had to rename everything?”

EF: Sure, but that’s Pandora’s Box, right? That’s even how it is referred to, especially by people whose job it is to keep the lid on it. Everyone who deals with these kinds of controversial manifestations in public space knows that there are many of them out there and that they can be quite explosive. Your report provides for the first time concrete information on questionable street names, and that is so important! A similar investigation of memorial plaques and monuments has been announced; I wonder if that will work out and if so, what kind of things will come up.

FW: Sometimes I ask myself if by now perhaps even the political decision makers in Austria have begun to realize that it can pay off to open Pandora’s Box just a wee bit to leave a few symbolic markers.

EF: But politicians never take any proactive steps. Every concession has to be fought for by dedicated groups and individuals in exhausting, self-sacrificing battles that drag on for years. It seems to me that Austria has yet to realize that working through its Nazi past can be a political and touristic asset. The Germans, who have worked their way up to being world champions in commemorating, are way ahead of us. The fact that there is no Holocaust museum in Vienna is symptomatic of this.

LZ: I agree that the shift is rather gradual, but a shift is definitely taking place. Whereas the 1980s with the Waldheim affair constituted a very important step in commemoration politics because a turning away from the victim theory finally started to gain acceptance, the 2000s under Federal Chancellor Schüssel marked a backlash though. In 2005 of all times, Austria’s big anniversary year, its so-called “Gedankenjahr”, Austria went back to this victim narrative, with a degree of nonchalance even. In an interview with the NZZ Schüssel stated: “I will never allow Austria to not be seen as a victim.” For Austria, 2005 was an anniversary year in many ways – 60 years of liberation from the Nazis, 50 years since the signing of the State Treaty and the pulling out of Allied occupation forces, the 10-year anniversary of its accession to the EU – and at the official commemoration ceremonies the “liberation” from the Allies was given much more attention than the liberation of the concentration camps. The nation preferred to send a replica of the historic balcony of the Belvedere Palace mounted on a crane on tour across the country from which schoolchildren could shout the historic proclamation “Austria is free!” These visual manifestations presented in the series of events entitled “25 Peaces” seemed to me to be characteristic of the overall ideological stance. At the same time a number of self-organized groups protested against this form of commemoration. The years between 2000 and 2005 thus signified a major break. And although since 2007 the official history-political stance has once again distanced itself from the victim theory, there is no real momentum for a self-critical working through of the history of this country.

SO: In 2005 you were involved in various projects. Can you tell us a bit more about the “Monument for the Defeat”, which you erected with Martin Krenn, Charlotte Martinz-Turek, and Nora Sternfeld?

LZ: Yes, that was a very temporary project: It lasted just one day, April 8, 2005, and was situated in Ostarrichi Park, across from the regional courthouse. In terms of form we erected it as a pedestal

without the monument – a basic structure with which we pondered the question as to what kind of visual manifestation should commemoration should take on? The empty pedestal was covered with historical information on the period 1945–1947. Our point was that these years were the only ones in which denazification trials had taken place at the so-called Volksgericht Tribunals. By 1947 the stance toward so-called “offenders” had already changed. A good 20% of the population fell into the category “party members and applicants”, which amounted to some one million citizens. Not knowing how to deal with this, the authorities just dropped it. That was something that is no longer remembered, today hardly anyone has heard of the Volksgericht Tribunals. And although our intervention did receive some media coverage, public attention was minimal.

SO: What was the gist of the public discussions at the time, especially in response to the visual manifestations of the ideological backlash “25 Peaces”?

LZ: I would say that these events were very visible, but at the same time the focus and the particular form of war commemoration rubbed a lot of people the wrong way. Some studies even concluded that they were not well received by “young people”, the actual target group. I would say there was a fairly broad consensus against the official events.

FW: I would even go so far as to say that they triggered something positive and lasting: It was surprising how many people were ticked off by the fact that the liberation didn’t play a big role in the official commemoration events but a “Help, the Russians are coming” narrative did.

LZ: In the meantime much has changed though. If we look at current examples of monument politics in Vienna, there is the Deserters’ Memorial, for which supporters fought for decades, or the protracted albeit positive decision to permit the staging of temporary art projects commemorating homosexual and transgender victims of the Nazi regime at Morzinplatz. Another question that arises is whether a stone monument represents a contemporary, relevant form of commemoration? Which forms can we develop that the generations of today and tomorrow can relate to?

FW: I am working on a monument dedicated to the men and women who tried to fight the installation of the Austrofascist regime in February of 1934 through forcible resistance. Here, too, I wonder how such an event can be meaningfully depicted in public space, in a form that also facilitates contact, one that communicates. Especially since in this case the communicative memory is no longer operational: The period during which one didn’t talk about these things simply lasted so long that the generation that experienced these things firsthand has all but died out.

LZ: One essential element is creating so-called contact zones, bringing it into the present. The specific visual or formal-aesthetic characteristics of the intervention must be adapted to fit the given situation.

EF: We can think up the most ideal forms of memorials and interventions on public monuments, but the political willingness to implement them is limited and with this the interest in taking any chances in regard to aesthetic questions.

TK: I would not narrow the discussion down to the discrepancy between utopia and feasibility. Sometimes it seems necessary to place a stone marker somewhere. To claim that something is permanent, is not constantly subject to debate and not so flexible that it can be reversed any time. It’s not about claiming neutrality or objectivity that will last forever. On the contrary, the point is to take a stand.

LZ: Yes, I understand that. What is definitely important is for monuments to have an anti-redeeming effect, that they do not permit identification between aggressor and victim and function less in an emotional than in a reflexive way. What monuments can achieve is to provide markings in the urban space. They establish a kind of matrix in which things worthy of remembering are preserved. I consider materiality to be an important dimension. Maybe we actually don’t have too many of these manifestations, but not enough, as they at the end of the day change our spaces, reveal the historical layers of the place, make discourses visible.



The cleaning of Lueger-Denkmal,
Fotoagentur Willinger, 1935

international open call was launched in 2009/2010, inviting people to submit proposals for redesigning the monument.

The announcement of the open call itself led to widespread discussion; articles in more than 50 national and international newspapers (from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* to the *Swiss Tagesanzeiger* to the *Jewish Daily Forward* in New York) and coverage by countless TV and radio stations catapulted the project into the public limelight. As a result more than 220 project proposals from artists from Austria and many other countries were submitted.

After long deliberation an international panel of experts (2) ultimately selected the proposal by Klemens Wihlidal on April 30, 2010, and submitted it as a political demand to the municipal administration. The winning project calls for a real intervention

into the appearance of the strongly symbolic commemoration site: The statue and part of the base are to be tilted 3.5 degrees to the right.

The proposal was chosen because it reflected the city of Vienna’s irresoluteness in dealing with Karl Lueger and revealed the current state of the discussion. By disrupting the vertical character of the monument, the intervention seeks to challenge the myth of Lueger as the father figure of Vienna. The precarious angle of the monument makes reference to Vienna’s problematic way of dealing with its anti-Semitic past.

From this point on, the Pressure Group and a prominently manned support committee pushed for implementation. The proposal was submitted to the city of Vienna at City Hall and was simultaneously

presented to the public. Mayor Häupl declared, however, that the most he could imagine would be to put up a small plaque (which, by the way, still hasn’t been done). Originally, the Vienna Municipal Office of Culture publically gave its approval of the redesigning of the monument, but negotiations came to nothing after the proposal was rejected by the Office of Monument Protection.

The Vienna municipal election in 2010 produced a coalition of the Green Party, which during the election campaign had spoken out for a redesigning of the monument, and the Social Democratic Party. Initially, however, the new cabinet undertook nothing. In order to push the discourse along, the “Handbook for a Redesign of the Lueger Monument” was published in 2011. Along with guest comments, which put the project in a historical and art-theoretical context, it contains all of the submitted proposals. The book can be downloaded from the comprehensive project website luegerplatz.com, where it is also possible to view all 220 submissions.

Real political manifestation: the renaming of Lueger-Ring to Universitätsring

Despite the widespread media coverage about Lueger’s anti-Semitic past that was triggered by our project, the monument is still intact to this day. Elsewhere, however, action had to be taken, and one of our main demands was met: On April 19, 2012, a section of Vienna’s historic boulevard, Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring, was renamed. It was no coincidence that Universitätsring (University Ring) was chosen, after all the University of Vienna had put up long enough with an address containing the name of an anti-Semite.

In conclusion, we can say that even though the redesigning of the monument still hasn’t been implemented, we have managed to help actively shape history politics by means of art and to expand the current debate on commemoration. Furthermore, we have achieved our aim of actively shaping media discourse about public space. Our project, which operates at the interface between art education, history, activism, and artistic practice, reveals how art in the public sphere can prevail through commitment and activism, but it also indicates where its limitations are.

This conversation was conducted in Vienna in late March and was shortened and edited by Sophie Schasiepen and approved by the participants.

Eduard Freudmann is an artist who is currently working on struggles for memory in the context of family, countercultures, and society at large.

Tatiana Kai-Brown researches and works on postcolonial and postnazistic structures in Vienna, Austria, as well as their intersections and the possibilities of intervention.

Florian Wenninger is a historian, coordinates a research project on the policy of repression in Austrofachism 1933–1938, and beyond that also does research on the political cultural history of the Second Republic.

Luisa Ziaja is an art historian and a curator at 21er Haus Vienna; in her independent curatorial projects and writing she has focused on the intersections of contemporary art, politics of history, exhibition theory, and practice informed by current socio-political questions.

Sophie Schasiepen is on the editorial staff at Bildpunkt, the newspaper published by IG Bildende Kunst Österreich, and MALMOE (www.malmoe.org); she was one of the many helpers in “Weinhebers Aushebung”, the intervention to “get to the bottom of” Weinheber.

CASE №13. FAKE MONUMENTS



On October 13, 2013, 26-year-old Bohdan Szumczuk, a student of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, installed a sculpture next to the local monument to the legendary T-34 tank. Szumczuk's sculpture depicted a Soviet soldier raping a pregnant Polish woman with his gun placed to her head.

«My piece is about the Soviet army, just like the T-34 tank that it stands next to. I decided that my sculpture would complement the tank perfectly.»

CASE №14. INTERACTIONS WITH MONUMENTS



The photograph depicts the artist Anatoly Osmolovsky on top of the giant monument to Vladimir Mayakovsky in Moscow. Mayakovsky is a symbolic figure of the early 20th century Russian avant-garde. At the end of his life, he expressed an allegiance to the ruling administration, but also committed suicide. In erecting a monument to the Futurist poet, the Soviet state canonized him as a hero of the Revolution, and in this posthumous legitimation of the avant-garde, rendered him toothless, filing him away in a historical archive. Osmolovsky called his performance «Netsezudik Travels to the Land of the Brobdingnag,» after the land of the legendary giant's in Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels. The artist performs his ascent as Netsezudik, a character of his own invention whose name, in a made-up language, means «the extraneous one.» /Konstantin Bokhorov/

Footnote

1. Source: <http://luegerplatz.com>. The Pressure Group 'Arbeitskreis zur Umgestaltung des Lueger-Denkmal in ein Mahnmal gegen Antisemitismus und Rassismus' consists of the following persons: Ruben Demus, Lukas Frankenberger, Jakob Glasner, Jasmina Hirschl, Veronika Kocher, Alexander Korab, Martin Krenn, Lilly Panholzer, Georg Wolf

2. Members of the jury: Aleida Assmann, cultural scientist and literary scholar, professor at the University of Konstanz; Gerald Bast, Rector of the University of Applied Arts, Vienna; Eva Blimlinger, historian; Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek, head curator at the Jewish Museum Vienna; Johanna Kandl, artist, professor at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna; Lisl Ponger, artist; Doron Rabinovici, writer, essayist, and historian; and the Pressure Group (one vote)

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Translation/Übersetzung: Kimi Lum

Since 1995, Martin Krenn has been realising art projects at the interface between art and activism.

In addition to exhibiting and lecturing internationally, Krenn teaches Interventionist Art at the University of Applied Arts Vienna (Dept. of Art and Communication Practices - KKP). Since 2012, Krenn has been receiving the Vice-Chancellor's Research Scholarship at the University of Ulster.

His current video work 'Feld-Herren revisited' is based on his lecture at the MAK (Museum for Applied Arts), Vienna and it discusses the historical roots of participatory and propagandist art using the example of the work of the Russian futurist writer Sergei Tretyakov and the film director Sergei Eisenstein.

www.martinkrenn.net

**VIDEO-PROGRAM
AT FESTWOCHEN-ZENTRUM**

The Ghosts of the Monument
Viktor Gjika, Esat Ibro, David Maljkovic, Yael Bartana, Kaya Behkalam, Chto Delat, Walter Steinacher, Kristina Norman, Stefanos Tsivopoulos

PUBLIC TALKS

Erich Klein
Oliver Marchart
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Suzana Milevska
**The paradoxes of triumph and
defeat in the monuments of
"Skopje 2014"**
A Discussion on Monument
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LEARNING MURAL

**What's wrong with you stupid?
Or how to explain basics to a Nazi**
Nikolay Oleynikov / Chto Delat

MONUMENT

Our Soldier
Aliona Petite
Chto Delat

**PERFORMING
THE MONUMENTAL**

We are the Evidence of War
Schwabinggrad Ballett and
Lampedusa in Hamburg
sleepy hollows_rollende köpfe
bankleer
Exercises in Political Choral
Luigi Coppola
Ants at the Crossroads
Ines Doujak, John Barker

SOUND GUIDED TOUR

**Looking for an Unknown
Soldier (Frau Elsa and
Monument)**
Tsaplya Olga Egorova
Chto Delat

OPEN DANCE WORKSHOP

**The Dancing Communities
– Flying Monuments**
Nina Gasteva / Chto Delat

ost klub LIVE CONCERTS

This issue is published in the framework of Chto Delat's project **FACE TO FACE** with the **MONUMENT** at **Wiener Festwochen / Into the City 2014**

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Architectural sketches: **ARGE Koeb & Pollak I Schmoeger Architecture**

Translation (Monument cases): **Erich Klein, Kimi Lum, Evelyn Schlag**

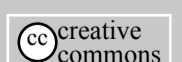
The Poster of Alfredo Jaar is based on poem of Anna Ahmatova „Requiem“

Into the City is curated by
Birgit Lurz and Wolfgang Schlag



Wiener Festwochen

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Chto Delat (What is to be done?) is a collective that was founded in 2003 in St. Petersburg, and counts artists, critics, philosophers, and writers from St. Petersburg and Moscow among its members.

The collective came about following the urgency of merging political theory, art, and activism. Its activity includes art projects, educational seminars, public campaigns, and ranges from video and theater plays, to radio programs and murals.