

Gerhard Kampe/Thomas Kampe (Ed.), *beyond forgetting. persecution/exile/memory. transdisciplinarity in design, performance and education*, Göttingen 2021: Cuvillier Verlag, 240 p., 89,90 € (eBook 0,00 €), ISBN: 978-3-7369-7310-7

In their co-edited book, *beyond forgetting*, Gerhard and Thomas Kampe argue that memory is not a completed process and that the worldwide society – in Theodor W. Adorno’s words – still needs an “Education after Auschwitz.” The book brings together different cross-disciplinary, transnational, and educational models focusing on historical and contemporary persecution and exile and culture of remembrance. Instead of an affirmative educational model, the editors advocate a critical-creative pedagogy with a practical orientation, drawing from the concepts of Paulo Freire, Henry A. Giroux and Rhianon Firth (p. 11).

The multi-author first chapter, “Design Within a Societal Context” introduces two outlines of a transdisciplinary model of design theory in a social context. Pelin Celik and Gerhard Kampe first discuss the need for a new definition of a changed and sustainable design theory. While Celik refers to sensitization, critical reflection, and interpretation of resonance spaces (p. 20-21), Gerhard Kampe centers on fluctuating questions about ethics and responsibility. The transdisciplinary project “Beyond Forgetting 1938-2018. Persecution/Exile/Memory,” incorporating artists, designers, students and affected persons, takes into account the changed perspectives on the role of design. Students enrolled in “Integrated Product Design” at Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts and University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Berlin experimentally addressed product development through socially relevant themes. In addition to concept development workshops with artists, performers, stakeholders, supporters, and designers, the final

symposium provided a presentation space to international experts. In the subsequent sections, Stephan von Borstel (p. 40-45), the student-activist collective F.E.E.L. Effect (p. 46-49), Gerhard Kampe (p. 50-71) and Pelin Celik (p. 72-89) discuss the different approaches and findings of the subgroups. Each include ample photographic evidence that offers an inspiring insight into the projects, inviting pedagogical imitation. For example, the sub-project led by Pelin Celik shows a series of postcards that stimulates a change of perspective (p.73) through a fragmented and modern approach to cultural and psychological aspects of remembering “historical and current conditions of war, destruction, escape, pain and survival” (pp. 74). Design researcher Andreas Koop concludes the chapter with an analysis of the visual transformation of design principles and color connotations of the “old” and “new” political right. Although he examines the groupings with a neutral and even ironic distance, sensitizing the reader to the sometimes-banal use of such visualization techniques, an even more critical presentation might have been to focus on the current ‘Alternative für Deutschland’ (AfD) (p. 93).

The second chapter, “Embodying Memory/Hidden Histories” focuses on the memory of the Holocaust through four artistic-practical case studies. Affective body practices are the subject of Richard White, whose work commemorated the Nazi death marches. Strongly linked to the biographical approach of Shoah survivor Esther Brunstein, who in 1945, stricken with typhus, still had to march to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp (p. 99), English and German walkers undertook the practice of “walking-with”. In 2016, Lorna Brunstein’s daughter, Lorna, joined them as they walked the path of Shoah victims, walking not out of force but as an act of free will (p. 102-103). It is impressive how White used visual installation, modern digital tracking, and mapping technology. The project also benefited from the participation of Esther Brunstein, who joined the participants in Bergen-Belsen through livestream. Her presence was even more impactful as she died a year later, just days before the opening of the

associated exhibition (p. 112). White's contribution is particularly valuable as it embraces new forms of remembrance and commemoration as the generation of contemporary witnesses passes—a point emphasized by Reinhold Boschki, a German religious educator. German artist and exhibition scenographer Stephan von Borstel has looked at how the exhibition that opened in 1992 at the memorial site of the former Breitenau concentration camp near Kassel can tell the stories of victims and survivors in a contemporary way, explaining why and what materials were used. He shows how the Nazis transformed a picturesque, Romanesque site into a crime scene (p. 120) and concludes by emphasizing, "For all the weight and oppressive burden of history, I also wanted to release the visitor 'more freely' and 'with more ease'" (p. 126). Thomas Kampe's exploration of archival material of the Jewish choreographer Gertrud Bodenwieser, first European professor of dance and choreography at the Vienna State Academy, and the dancers Melitta Melzer and Emmy Steininger-Taussig, provides insights into the experiences of exile, fear, hiding, and the creation of new identities (p. 128-143). Subsequently, British actor and theater and filmmaker Matthew Emeny presents his street art performance, "The Suitcase Memorial," created together with Josh Whatsize. This suitcase is "decorated with stories, dates, words, and pictures of the Holocaust" (p. 145), and Emeny perceives the project not as a show or performance, but as a disruption that evokes existential questions (p. 146).

Cultural trauma, expulsion, and persecution as reverberations of the Second World War are the themes of the third chapter, "Objects/Media/Trauma." The British multimedia artist Sophie Dixon deals with an equally difficult chapter in the history of Germany as well as today's Czech Republic, namely the forced expulsion of the German-speaking community from the Sudetenland. "Hidden Histories: Giving Presence to the Past" is what she has called her approach, which involves digitizing testimonies, photographs, and documents, as well as restoring what was lost to some extent through video

installations and the use of virtual and mixed reality practices. The focus of her year-long research visit was the village of Srbská, which had the German name Wünschendorf (in English: “wish village”) (p. 152-153). She accompanied a group of former residents who returned to the village annually until 2017 and increasingly observed its decay (p. 154). What is particularly impressive is how she reconstructed objects based on childhood memories and, aware of the fallibility of this approach, stated that the ruins of the village, original artifacts, and digital surrogates coexist in her virtual environment (p. 155-157). “Memory Cartography and the Erasure of Space” is the subject of Iranian-born artist Bahar Majdzadeh, whose homeland had to deal with trauma, political repression, and mass murder following the Iranian Revolution in 1979 until the end of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988 (p. 162). Bahar Majdzadeh vividly demonstrates that through the use of “memory maps”, places that have been destroyed or no longer exist can not only be brought back symbolically but can also reveal the past based on the memories of the former inhabitants (p. 171). The chapter concludes with Brahin Benmoh’s examination of cultural trauma and memory in American(post-)9/11 literature, focusing on Don DeLillo’s novel “Falling Man” (2007). This work receives special appreciation from the Moroccan scholar, as he makes it clear that it has a representative character considering the “dimensions of death, identity crisis and memory of loss” (p. 184).

Finally, a special feature of the volume are the reflections on practice, which the fourth and final chapter “Dialogue & Interaction” contains. In a second contribution, the student activist collective F.E.E.L.-Effect study the conditions of in refugee camps in Greece, Serbia, and (Northern) Macedonia, presenting projects such as “Habibi.Works,” in which the refugees work and eat together, to experience a bit of a “normal everyday life” (p. 190-193). In addition to this perspective of hope, the article does not hesitate to reveal the brutality of the refugee catastrophe with footage from illegal camps called ‘spots’ around Subotica in Serbia and abandoned houses and

barbed wire on the Serbian-Hungarian border (p. 195-197). This is followed by the essay “Punti di Fuga” about the intercultural project of the same name by Stefania Milazzo, which creatively brought German citizens from Tharandt near Dresden into conversation with refugees from the Middle East (p. 198-207). This section is followed by a contribution by the British actor, opera, and theater director, producer, and teacher Stephen Tiller, who

“looks back at 70 years of his life and at the influence of his Jewish heritage, especially of his father, on his own artistic work and creative engagement with the marginalized, excluded, forgotten and silenced” (p. 209).

His essay opens a moving, deeply personal approach to issues such as racial hatred, ethnic cleansing, expulsion, and National Socialism. It represents the strong voice of a multi-talented artist who poetically combines memory of the past and relevance for the present and impressively urges vigilance so that “memory, and histories, should not be erased once more needed” (p. 219). An essay by U.S. filmmaker Yehuda Sharim concludes the chapter and volume by providing insights into his documentary work with refugees. Sharim emphasizes, “I don’t film only when the camera is operating. I’m continually REcording, making images” (p. 223). He repeatedly fulfills this promise through situational access, a beautiful and important approach that has a great symbolic content that blurs boundaries.

In the face of “new” manifestations such as antisemitism, right-wing populism, and right-wing extremism, the publication makes an important artistic-pedagogical contribution to the field of performing arts and “Experimental and Expanded Design by probing embodied practices as socially pertinent process-oriented modalities of problem-solving and education” (p. 10) in the context of memory culture. Through the diverse mix of essays and (student) projects, the book offers insights into visual, performative, conceptual, and interactive design tools in the field of Experimental and Expanded

Design. It also provides approaches for creative engagement in the educational sector of the Culture of Remembrance.

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