

The memory of scar – Stolperstein of Günter Demnig

Nammyoung Hong(dangmu7722@gmail.com)

TU Berlin

Abstract

This paper attempts to analyze the artwork <Stolperstein> of Günter Demnig through Affect-Theory and Lieu de Mémoire of Pierre Nora. The gigantic memorials and museums dedicated to Holocaust victims are found in the centre of the city, Berlin, which aims to reflect on the past and pay respect to the victims. However, the memorials and museums embed deceptive views of merging countless victims into a single group and simplifying the narrative of the victims, which can help to establish a national identity of Germany. Also, through the simplified description of the victims' story, unspecified people who are represented as tourists only logically understand the Holocaust and consume the experiences of museums and memorials as spectacles.

On the other hand, <Stolperstein>s are also dedicated to the victims. Unlike the memorials and museums, however, these are placed on the street mixed up in everyday urban landscapes, which are accordingly not so noticeable as other gigantic memorials. However, there are more than 69,000 <Stolperstein>s across Europe and 1,210 in Berlin. Through personal experience and the Affect-Theory, I would like to explain that the pedestrians could get the shock when they recognize the Stolperstein on the street and that the Holocaust incident can be remembered for a long time because the shock remains as physical pain and scar. In other words, through the experience of the everyday artwork, people can realize that they are ignoring the fact, that the other – in this case, the victims of the Holocaust - were living in this city and with this landscape. At this recognition process, the "affect" is experienced as a trauma.

As a conclusion, I would like to assert that facing the pain of the trauma is the way to escape from the infantile self-narrative and also this can be the impetus for the conversation

in one's heart with the victims of the history, which is the ground of the ethics.

Keywords: *Stolperstein, Affect Theory, lieu de mémoire*