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Title of project: PROPOSAL FOR MONUMENT AGAINST  
ANTI-SEMITISM AND RACISM  
-TRANSFORMING THE KARL LUEGER STATUE

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## PROPOSAL FOR MONUMENT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM AND RACISM IN AUSTRIA - TRANSFORMING THE KARL LUEGER STATUE

According to L. Mumford, monument gives a false sense of continuity, a deceptive assurance of life. Instead of change and biological regeneration, monument stays static, mummifying history and its politically questionable ideals. The permanence of stone or brick enables monument to subjugate time, which in fact results in the subjugation of the present. In the background of monumentalisation one can identify the human drive to deny the biological processes of dying, decay, oblivion. Such monuments often reflect totalitarian regimes that they were made in. It is this perception of the traditional monument as a totalitarian manifesto that prompts us to reassess all our beliefs, yearnings and ideas. Therefore, it must be continuously questioned, examined and disputed so that the next generations could avoid repeating fatal mistakes of history.

In tackling the problem of the monument built for former mayor of Vienna, Karl Lueger, the work takes a problem-oriented approach. Processual in nature, the work is an intervention on the existing monument (with a permit from The Conservation Institute) through planting ivy (Latin name *HELIX HEDERA*).

The intention is to plant ivy seeds alongside the pedestal of the monument, which would require preliminary digging of concrete and asphalt. The work presupposes a minimal initial intervention and minimal execution expenses. Planted in specified places and in time, the ivy will start to actively transform the monument. Within a year the plant reaches the height of approximately one meter. In a few years and with occasional maintenance, the whole monument becomes wrapped in ivy. In a strictly defined, monument-in-park context, there appears an element of unpredictability, a deviation from typical horticultural operations as a place for challenge.

Finally, by growing, ivy develops an independent structure which causes atrophy to the monument and a metamorphosis of its form. Only its contours remain visible. On a semantic level, ivy conquers the territory of negative memory/emotion and, in the words of Hildegard von Bingen, 'it takes over the disease from the patient'. Over decades, or even centuries, with the destructive strength of its roots, ivy destroys the monument's substance - the petrified idea. Through the progress of growth, ivy becomes in itself a creative act.

There is no monument whose nature is untouchable. The nature of a monument depends primarily on the perception of the public which agrees to accept the illusions imposed by a regime. Once a society decides to demystify ideals which have been imposed by regime, monuments become vulnerable and by that a blank space to which new meaning can be assigned.

1 Mumford, Lewis, *The culture of cities*, Harcourt, Brace, 1938.







HELIX HEDERA



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PDF file

1. Submission form
2. Proposal, text
3. Visualization I
4. Visualization II
5. Visualization III