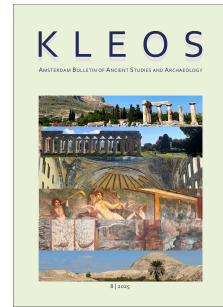




KLEOS

AMSTERDAM BULLETIN OF ANCIENT STUDIES AND ARCHAEOLOGY



Issue 8, 2025

CONTACT

bulletin.kleos@gmail.com

www.kleos-bulletin.nl

INFORMATION ON PUBLICATION

Full Title: Canvases of Change: Protest Graffiti on Colonial Statues and WWII Memorials. The dilemma of preserving the original or transformed hard memory

Author: Vera Bouterse

Published: Kleos - Amsterdam Bulletin of Ancient Studies and Archaeology/Issue 8/October 2025

Pages: 54-76

ISSN: 2468-1555

Link to these articles: www.Kleos-bulletin.nl

RECOMMENDED CITATION:

V. Bouterse, 2025: Canvases of Change: Protest Graffiti on Colonial Statues and WWII Memorials. The dilemma of preserving the original or transformed hard memory, *Kleos - Amsterdam Bulletin of Ancient Studies and Archaeology* 8, 54-76.

KLEOS - AMSTERDAM BULLETIN OF ANCIENT STUDIES AND ARCHAEOLOGY

is a peer-reviewed, open access academic online journal, launched in 2014, which publishes current research and review articles by graduate and PhD students, as well as starting independent researchers, from the fields of archaeology and ancient studies (i.e. classics and ancient History). Kleos also provides reviews of recent books, conferences and exhibitions. The journal mainly aspires to serve as a platform for starting academic careers, and help students and starting researchers to share their research, gain experience in publishing, and improve their scientific skills. At the same time the journal aims to provide an overview of the research being conducted within the fields of archaeology, ancient history and classics, and support the interdisciplinary dialogue between these adjacent academic disciplines.

SUBMISSIONS

The editors invite submissions of original research on any topic related to ancient history, classics and archaeology. Information on the editorial policy, the submission process, as well as guidelines for authors and other matters that concern potential contributors, is to be found on our website. For further information, authors and readers are referred to:

www.kleos-bulletin.nl

vu-nl.academia.edu/KLEOSBulletin

DISCLAIMER

The editors cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this publication. The opinions expressed in the articles and reviews published in Kleos are those of the authors and not of the editors, nor of the Amsterdam Centre for Ancient Studies and Archaeology (ACASA). The publication of advertisements in Kleos or on the website does not constitute any endorsement by the editors of the products or institutions advertised.

COPYRIGHT AND PHOTOCOPYING

Authorisation to photocopy items for academic, educational and personal use is granted. Check for information about the terms and conditions of use: www.kleos-bulletin.nl

Canvases of Change: Protest Graffiti on Colonial Statues and WWII Memorials

The dilemma of preserving the original or transformed hard memory

Vera Bouterse

ABSTRACT

This article examines the debate surrounding the treatment of protest graffiti on historical monuments. Two opposing sides are examined by critically reviewing the validity of their arguments, which propose that either removing or preserving graffiti would allow for a more diverse and inclusive memorial landscape. Through the identification of protest graffiti as a memory event, the extent to which removing or preserving graffiti affects inclusivity and diversity will be examined using the concepts of hard and soft memory. Case studies concerning Black Lives Matter and pro-Palestinian protests will be used to illustrate the difficulty in following just one of these views, since both include and exclude certain groups at the same time. In the discussion and conclusion, suggestions will be made regarding the complexities of creating an inclusive memorial landscape, as well as the responsibilities of academics and, primarily, authorities to employ a more nuanced perspective. This includes using the discontent expressed through graffiti as a starting point for dialogue with inhabitants and encouraging their participation in the decision-making process.

INTRODUCTION

Officials often place historical monuments, statues, and memorials to inscribe (collective) memories into the public space, attempting to represent or create a communal identity. While these structures are often set in stone, the memories which they represent are not. Not everyone will identify with the displayed memories and may even express counter-memories. These counter-memories can increase or be highlighted due to current socio-political events and discourses, like the Black Lives Matter movement or the conflict between Israel and Hamas. If certain public structures do not align with the current memories of (parts of) society, to what extent should these monuments be conserved? This article will explore this question in the context of

Vera Bouterse is a Research Master's student in Archaeology and Heritage at the University of Amsterdam. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Ancient Studies at the same university, graduating cum laude. Her research focuses on memory studies, with particular attention to monuments, materiality, and Dutch Second World War remembrance. In addition, she conducts provenance research into archaeological collections.

► [Profile page](#)

protest graffiti on monuments and examine the validity of the two opposing sides in this debate. One side argues for the need to conserve the original historical structure, whilst the other aims to preserve the added graffiti as a new memory.¹ Both sides argue for a more diverse and inclusive memorial landscape, but have opposing ideas on how to attain that. This article adds to the existing debate by proposing a third, more nuanced view—one that acknowledges the diverse and fluid perspectives on protest graffiti and aims to comprehend these through dialogue on a case-by-case basis.

This article will initially describe the perception of graffiti in general and the concepts of hard and soft memory, as well as memory events, which will aid in the understanding of the varying perceptions regarding the preservation of protest graffiti. Subsequently, the two opposing views concerning the preservation of graffiti are elaborated upon, after which case studies on Black Lives Matter and pro-Palestinian protests are explored to see the extent to which removing or preserving graffiti forms a diverse memorial landscape. Finally, the discussion and conclusion will state some remarks on the complexities of creating an inclusive memorial landscape and what the responsibilities of academics and, primarily, authorities should be in contributing to a diverse and fluid landscape.

INSCRIBING NEW MEMORIES OR CONSERVING THE OLD

As previously mentioned, there are two opposing views regarding the preservation of protest graffiti on monuments. First, to understand these views, a more general existing perception of graffiti will be described and how its reputation may (partly) hinder the reception of protest graffiti. Second, the concepts of memory event, and of hard and soft memory are explored, which are relevant in understanding the connection between protest graffiti and the dynamics of memory. Finally, the two opposing views will be elaborated upon in connection with these outlined concepts.

GRAFFITI'S REPUTATION

Graffiti, as the placement of texts or images on public surfaces, has existed for thousands of years. The modern form of graffiti, such as the placement of an artist's signature or tag, increased from the 1960s/1970s onwards in New York, after which it spread internationally.² This practice became associated mainly with

¹ Pozo-Antonio et al. 2016; Ricci et al. 2020; Van Hunen 2004 argue for the need to conserve the original historical structure, in contrast to Đukić 2020; Merrill 2011; Zieleniec 2016.

² E.g. Andron 2024, 59; Ladrado 15th of May 2018.

youth, vandalism, and anti-social behaviour that was considered deviant from civilised norms and expected conduct. Eventually, this perception led to criminalisation of these acts.³ Graffiti was—and some forms, such as tags, often still are—thought to create an unsafe environment and attract or signify other criminal behaviour as well.⁴ By framing the act as criminal, moral panic is created among the public, serving to justify the removal of the graffiti and the punishment of the artist.⁵ Authorities can perceive illegally placed graffiti as a loss of control over urban spaces, which they then try to reassert by, for example, cleaning the graffiti or stimulating regulated ‘nice’ street art to promote the city’s image.⁶ Graffiti, mainly in the more positive denomination of street art or mural paintings, has seemingly become more accepted, although the legality of these paintings and their perception as being aesthetically pleasing have been important factors in gaining this acceptance.⁷ In the Netherlands, a project that is supported by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed) has been designating graffiti as cultural heritage.⁸ The same institution, however, also describes the need to prevent historical monuments and statues from becoming the podium for graffiti, an act they consider illegal on these types of public structures.⁹ This contrast reflects the arguments of both Karen Jewell, who states that social acceptance of graffiti depends on its content, medium, and location, and of Sabina Andron, who argues that a creative output is more easily welcomed than one with a destructive or anti-social intention.¹⁰ Apparently, historical monuments and statues, at least for Dutch authorities, are not considered a desirable location, and paint is not seen as a welcomed medium, as it is perceived as destructive to these culturally valuable objects. This makes it harder for protesters who target these kinds of structures to gain acceptance of their graffiti messages, though disapproval may also stem from the message itself, as demonstrated in the case studies discussed later. While all graffiti can be seen as political in that they defy the control of the ‘appropriate and accepted’ use of space, the content of protest graffiti, specifically, is a form of political discourse through which marginalised groups can make

3 Andron 2024, 72, 141-142; Jewell 2022; Ross 2016, 1.

4 Andron 2024, 144-145; Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed n.d.-b.; Willems 22nd of May 2025

5 Andron 2024, 72-75, 144-145.

6 Andron 2024, 72; Dijksterhuis 26th of June 2025; Willems 22nd of May 2025.

7 Andron 2024, 80; Dijksterhuis 26th of June 2025; Omroep West 28th of May 2025; Willems 22nd of May 2025.

8 Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed n.d.-a.

9 Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed n.d.-b.

10 Jewell 2022; Andron 2024, 80, 143.

their (often controversial) opinions and discontent heard publicly.¹¹

When considering the negative reputation that illegal and non-aesthetically oriented graffiti have had throughout time, the question arises as to what extent this perception can impact the reception and acceptance of the political content expressed by protest graffiti. Furthermore, does the danger of 'uglifying' the city, and more specifically monuments, justify a stricter control over the presentation of the public space by authorities than by the general population?

MEMORY EVENTS, HARD AND SOFT MEMORY

Etkind describes two forms of memory: soft and hard memory.¹² Soft memories can take the form of, among others, texts, public opinions and historical debates. Hard memories are the anchoring of soft memories in the form of physical structures, such as monuments, memorials, and museums. These two forms of memory must interact with each other to remain significant. In this interaction, cultural memory is shaped. Hard memory is needed as a physical focal point for soft memories, enabling the materialisation of a collective identity, remembrance of the past, and preventing the fading of these memories with future generations. Soft memory, on the other hand, causes the continuing significance of these hard memories due to the integration of these represented memories into public discourse and texts. However, soft memory does not always follow the hard memory it represents. While hard memories seem to illustrate a singular view of the past, soft memories allow for plural interpretations of how the past should be remembered. This can lead to an imbalance between the two forms of memory, potentially resulting in memory events. These memory events are performative moments through which shifts can emerge in how the past is remembered. These shifts only occur if this new form of remembrance is believed to be truthful, original, and central to the collective identity by the community whose past it concerns. Memory events can be performances in the sphere of hard memory, such as the erection or dismantling of, or vandalism towards, statues and monuments. These memory events can also occur in soft memory, such as through a historical debate or specific archival findings, causing a change in perspectives of the past. Memory events can thus be products of changes in hard and soft memory, but also agents in furthering these transformations. Since these memory events operate in the interaction between hard and soft memory and influence it in return, these moments

¹¹ Zhang and Chan 2021, 521.

¹² Etkind 2013.

are crucial in the dynamic development of cultural memory.¹³ Returning to the topic of protest graffiti, we can understand it as a form of memory event as well—one that alters the hard memory of a monument. Protest graffiti emerges from a perceived imbalance between hard and soft memory and is intended to alter cultural memory. The extent to which people accept this new form of remembrance differs.

DEBATE ON THE CONSERVATION OF GRAFFITI ON MONUMENTS

First, Pozo-Antonio et al., Ricci et al., and Van Hunen focus mainly on how to clean graffiti on monuments in a way that conserves the integrity of the structure's materials.¹⁴ The preservation of graffiti is not considered in these articles, as it is viewed as a threat to the historical and aesthetic value of monuments.¹⁵ The authors are concerned with preserving the originally presented hard memory. Ricci et al. even argue that conservation of the original hard memory is the key to retrieving inclusivity and diversity. However, the authors do not discuss this statement in depth.¹⁶ They may refer to the fact that graffiti not only results in financial costs, as argued by Qwatekana and Zondi, but can also mean the loss of the cultural heritage and social values which the original structures represent.¹⁷ This loss can lead to the exclusion of certain groups and their memories.

The abovementioned authors arguing for the removal of graffiti do not address the motivations behind the graffitiing of historical monuments and statues. These motivations are considered by Đukić, Merrill, and Zieleniec, who see the positive value of graffiti and (in)directly discuss the need to preserve graffiti on monuments.¹⁸ Zieleniec says that leaving monuments in their original context does not guarantee inclusivity, but rather creating a democratic space in which people can add their own thoughts does.¹⁹ Hard memory in public space is often controlled by authorities who make the decisions on its visual aesthetic organisation, such as which monuments are placed and where. Furthermore, authorities to some extent regulate how people are supposed to behave around such spaces through regulation, surveillance, and policing.²⁰ These monuments form a memorial landscape in which certain collective memories and identities are

¹³ Etkind 2013, 177-179, 182, 194.

¹⁴ Pozo-Antonio et al. 2016; Ricci et al. 2020; Van Hunen 2004.

¹⁵ Pozo-Antonio et al. 2016, 1; Van Hunen 2004, 1.

¹⁶ Ricci et al. 2020, 1-2.

¹⁷ Qwatekana/Zondi 2021, 190.

¹⁸ Đukić 2020; Merrill 2011; Zieleniec 2016.

¹⁹ Zieleniec 2016, 10-11, 13-14.

²⁰ Đukić 2020, 124; Zieleniec 2016, 6.

presented, while others are excluded. By leaving monuments in the public space without additional texts or counter-monuments, the impression is given that those memories are still a part of the collective identity, even if they are contested in soft memory.²¹ This representation of hard memory in the public space may not always align with the narratives, or soft memories, of (parts of) society. Therefore, certain groups may not be able to identify with the collective narrative which is told, and thus feel unacknowledged. This imbalance between hard and soft memory can lead to memory events, such as the targeting of monuments with graffiti to express certain narratives in hard memory as well.²² This act can be seen as countering the previously mentioned control of authorities on hard memory by adapting the visual aesthetic space and opposing the way people are expected to behave at such monuments.²³ Following Lefebvre's thoughts on inhabitants having the right to participate in the shaping and appropriation of urban spaces, Zieleniec sees the use of graffiti as inhabitants' "right to write the city".²⁴ In contrast to removing statues or monuments, this 'writing the city' is a way to inscribe their own memories over older ones instead of only removing the latter. Merrill argues that graffiti should be acknowledged as one of the site's many culturally significant layers.²⁵ These changes are necessary to maintain the significance of the represented hard memory for society, as views of history and how it is represented as heritage are constantly evolving.²⁶ As previously discussed, memory events operate in the interaction between hard and soft memory, so changes in one of the two can result in changes in the other as well. Originating from dynamics in soft memory, the adaptation of hard memory through graffiti can cause further developments in both forms of memory and perhaps even cultural memory overall. It can, for example, lead to the decision of dismantling statues or spark more public debates. Since many monuments or statues can become normalised, unnoticed 'furniture' of an urban landscape for many passersby, the transformation of these structures' hard memory through graffiti can make the familiar unfamiliar. This unfamiliarity can draw the attention of passersby to the unexpected changes made to the monument or statue and thus ensure that the message is received more consciously and memorably. The visible and unexpected graffiti invite the passersby to reflect on their message and enter

21 Abrassart 2022, 57; Qwatekana/Zondi 2021, 195.

22 Abrassart 2022, 57.

23 Đukić 2020, 125-126.

24 Lefebvre 1991, 422; Lefebvre 1996, 158, 174; Zieleniec 2016, 13-14.

25 Merrill 2011, 69.

26 Holtorf 2018, 643-644; Merrill 2011, 71.

the public debate.²⁷ So, the changing of hard memory by adding new layers of graffiti is not only done to express discontent, but also to encourage further reflection in public debates and transform cultural memory.²⁸ The success of the latter depends on the community's acceptance of these changes as truthful, original, and central to their communal identity.

SITES OF CONTESTATION: EXAMINING GRAFFITI ON COLONIAL AND WORLD WAR II MONUMENTS

Some case studies will now be discussed to contextualise the potential reasons and events leading up to protesters graffitiing these structures. While there are also some cases in which monuments without an apparent connection to the graffitied message are targeted to express discontent, this article will focus on the ones that seem to have a direct or semi-direct relationship with the content of the graffiti.²⁹ This will allow the disjuncture to be examined between the originally represented content and the new message people add onto it or transform it into. It is important to acknowledge that the assumptions made in this article about the motivations of protesters and the meaning of their graffiti are based on media reports and this author's interpretation of the content on the monuments. Conversations with protesters would provide a clearer and more accurate understanding of why they targeted monuments and what they intended to express through the graffiti, but that is beyond the scope of this article.

COLONIAL CASES

Large amounts of statues representing the 'heroes' of the colonial era adorn the urban landscape in many countries: people who were once celebrated for their contribution to the wealth and supremacy of Western countries, which they achieved through violent conquests abroad. Nowadays, their legacy is being questioned more and more, altering the narratives and soft memories about them.³⁰ This change, however, is not yet always visible in the public space, or hard memory, where they are still well-represented, in contrast to the lack of visibility given to

²⁷ Bentley 2021, 213-214; Zieleniec 2016, 11.

²⁸ Zieleniec 2016, 11.

²⁹ For example, the targeting of the statue of Gandhi and a boy with rabbits by pro-Palestinian protesters, NOS Nieuws/NH Nieuws 4th of August 2024.

³⁰ As seen with the examples of King Leopold II, mentioned by Boffey, 23rd of November 2019, and the Canadian figures John A. Macdonald and Edward Cornwallis, referenced by McHutchion 2022, 71-72.

victims of the colonial era.³¹ As many societies become increasingly multicultural, people of different colours or ethnicities may be confronted with a certain identity and view of the past expressed in this hard memory which excludes their voices.³² Especially after the death of George Floyd and the massive global Black Lives Matter protests that followed, this feeling of exclusion led to the targeting of many statues or monuments which protesters felt promoted a colonial or racist view of the past.³³

In Belgium, for example, many statues commemorating King Leopold II have been graffitied on. One statue in Brussels has been marked several times with, among others, “assassin”, “Black Lives Matter”, and “no justice, no peace”. Furthermore, Leopold’s hands were painted red, possibly referring to the blood on his hands due to his role in the perpetuation of colonialism in the Congo.³⁴ The paint was removed by authorities, after which another message was written: “Stop cleaning, start reflecting”. Protesters did not feel heard and acknowledged, as the hard memory depictions of Leopold II remained unchanged in many cases, thereby excluding the protesters’ voices. His violent, colonial legacy and the continuation of racism are not fully recognised in soft memory either.³⁵ Twenty thousand four hundred people signed a petition claiming that the monarch could not be held responsible for what others did under his rule, therefore wishing the statues of him to remain in place.³⁶ He was also described as a hero for Belgium by Foreign Minister Louis Michel in 2010, and a celebration for him was initially planned in 2015.³⁷ This positive perspective was in contrast to that of Belgian-Congolese Joëlle Sambi Nzeba, who felt disassociated from this Belgian identity and missed an acknowledgement of her version of history.³⁸

Graffitiing statues of the former king, like the one in Brussels, not only caused changes in the hard memory of Leopold II, but also stimulated broader reflection and discourse in society at the level of soft memory. First of all, discourse on how Leopold should be remembered increased, resulting in a report stating the need to

³¹ Van Roosmalen 13th of February 2023. As for example in Belgium, Van Rensbergen, 29th of June 2024, mentions that there are no monuments representing the victims of colonialisation.

³² Abrassart et al. 2022, 8-10, 57, 59; Rannard/Webster 13th of June 2020.

³³ Abrassart et al. 2022, 100, 145; KNAW 2023, 19, 82, 99.

³⁴ Spinks 10th of June 2020.

³⁵ Abrassart et al. 2022, 8.

³⁶ Galindo 22nd of June 2020.

³⁷ Abrassart et al. 2022, 100; Rannard/Webster 13th of June 2020. Abrassart et al. 2022, 100 mention that protests, during which the statue of King Leopold II in Brussels among others was defaced with red paint, caused the cancellation of this celebration.

³⁸ Rannard/Webster 13th of June 2020.

preserve the graffiti as illustrations of “decolonial contestation”.³⁹ Graffiti was furthermore used to encourage reflection on current discourses and events. Statues can be seen as symbols of current political and social struggles and, therefore, used as platforms to express opinions about these issues. A statue of King Leopold II in Ghent was covered in red paint, and a cloth marking the words “I can’t breathe” was placed around its head, quoting the last words of George Floyd in 2020. This statue, which the protesters deemed to have racist and colonial associations, became a symbol illustrating continuing structural racism, to which King Leopold II in their eyes contributed.⁴⁰

WORLD WAR II OR HOLOCAUST MONUMENTS

Another pattern of monuments and statues being targeted is related to World War II (WWII) and/or the Holocaust. These monuments have been targeted for a long time, such as by graffitiing antisemitic symbols on them.⁴¹ After the attack of Hamas against Israel on the 7th of October 2023, and the following war, multiple monuments have been targeted by pro-Palestinian protesters. The monuments seem to function as podiums to express discontent against the current actions of the Israeli State, which pro-Palestinian protesters condemn as a genocide against the Palestinians.⁴² While other types of monuments have been targeted as well, like a statue of Gandhi or of an unknown boy, Holocaust and WWII monuments seem to either be targeted the most or reported on most frequently by the media.⁴³ The exact reasoning for using these specific monuments is unclear, and this may vary from case to case. Three possible reasons are elaborated upon in this section, which argues that the associations these monuments have with Jewish people, genocide in general, or the Holocaust specifically, may be causes.

The association between Jewish people, often commemorated at Holocaust and WWII monuments, and the Israeli State may be one motivation. Jewish people as a whole have experienced blame for the actions of the Israeli government: at a Holocaust memorial in Berlin, named Block of Women, the phrases “Jews are

39 Abrassart et al. 2022, 214.

40 Chini 3rd of June 2020.

41 There is an example reported in the New York Times at 1987 of an undefined Holocaust monument which was defaced with swastikas, New York Times 2nd of June 1987. Another example is of 2009, when a Holocaust memorial at Drancy, France, was defaced with swastikas, Davies 12th of April 2009. Lastly, a Holocaust memorial in Philadelphia was targeted with a swastika symbol in 2024, Freeman 15th of January 2024. These few examples illustrate the lengthy targeting of, among others, Holocaust and World War II monuments with antisemitic symbols.

42 NOS Nieuws 11th of January 2024.

43 NOS Nieuws/NH Nieuws 4th of August 2024.

committing genocide”, “Free Palestine”, and a Palestinian flag were painted (see figures 1 and 2), the first statement clearly associating the actions of Israel with Jewish people in general.⁴⁴ Moreover, a statue of Anne Frank in Amsterdam was defaced twice, with the word “Gaza” written on the pedestal, and her hands painted red, probably indicating blood.⁴⁵ The transformation of this statue’s hard memory sparked considerable debate in soft memory as well, not only regarding this action but also the war between Israel and Hamas in general. Several organisations shared their views on the defacement via social media, it was reported on by news outlets, and many commented on these news articles and social media posts.⁴⁶ Here, it seems that while there are people who seem to (partly) agree with this action, many are condemning the use of Anne Frank’s memory for pro-Palestinian protest and see it as antisemitic.⁴⁷ Although the graffiti may have been meant to condemn Israel’s actions or demonstrate against the suffering in Gaza, for many, it seemed to express that Jewish people in general, with whom Anne Frank can be associated, have blood on their hands.⁴⁸ This caused strong reactions, such as the comment of one person who felt personally attacked as a Jew.⁴⁹ These graffiti transform the narrative that represents Jewish people as victims of the Holocaust into one that depicts them as perpetrators, and are, therefore, seen as disrespecting Anne Frank’s memory and that of other Jewish victims.⁵⁰ After the graffitiing of this statue for a second time, a camera was placed by the police to prevent the recurrence of such an incident.⁵¹

Secondly, there are also graffiti on monuments that do not specifically refer to Jewish people, but only refer to the wish to free Gaza and Palestine in their content.⁵² These monuments may be used as symbols of genocide, onto which protesters wish to add their perspectives of the attack on Gaza as another genocide. The chief executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust in England, Olivia Marks-Woldman, stated: “One thing we hear quite often is people saying the war in Gaza is another genocide, it’s just like the Holocaust”.⁵³ This does not automatically mean that the graffiti

44 Hajdenberg 2024.

45 NOS Nieuws/NH Nieuws 4th of August 2024.

46 World Jewish Congress 9th of July 2024; European Jewish Congress 6th of August 2024.

47 NU.nl 4th of August 2024; HLN 4th of August 2024.

48 NOS Nieuws/NH Nieuws 4th of August 2024.

49 At the post of World Jewish Congress 9th of July 2024 one person wrote as a comment: “Its not about Israelis. Its about us, Jews. Again.”

50 Starr. 10th of July 2024.

51 Redactie Trouw 9th of August 2024.

52 Jordan 9th of August 2024; Starr 13th of April 2024.

53 Tapper 27th of April 2024.



Figure 1.
*Graffiti on the Block of Women memorial in Berlin
 (after Sapir, 28th of August 2024)*



Figure 2.
*Graffiti on the Block of Women memorial in Berlin
 (after Sapir, 28th of August 2024)*

dismiss the memories of the Jewish people, but that they intend to have the Gaza-genocide expressed in hard memory as well. During a protest at Auschwitz, pro-Palestinian protesters claimed to be bowing down for the Holocaust victims as well as wanting to express their hope for an end to the genocide in Gaza.⁵⁴ So, while some pro-Palestinian protesters may have inscribed their memories over the Jewish genocide, the graffitied message can also be meant as acknowledging an additional memory next to the original one.

Another possibility is the use of Holocaust monuments to

⁵⁴ Oliver 6th of May 2024. Also, at a pro-Palestinian protest during the opening of the Dutch Holocaust Museum on the 10th of March 2024, the organising group Erev Rave claimed to be honouring the memory of Holocaust victims, but needing to protest against what was happening in Gaza as well, Van Campenhout/Van de Wouw/Verweij 10th of March 2024.

counter current pro-Israeli memory politics. Some Israeli state officials, as well as pro-Israeli institutions and public figures, have merged Holocaust memory with the attack by Hamas.⁵⁵ The employment of this memory can help the government represent current events as a Holocaust continuation of which Jewish people in their eyes continue to be the victims, and to legitimise their counterattack on Gaza.⁵⁶ While there is no direct evidence that this use of Holocaust memory has motivated protesters to graffiti Holocaust monuments, there are pro-Palestinian individuals and groups protesting against this employment of the Holocaust in soft memory by Israel.⁵⁷ In this case, protesters would not per se explicitly attack past memories, but current Holocaust-associations.

DISCUSSING DEFACEMENT

GRAFFITIAS A MEMORY EVENT: EXCLUSION PAIRED WITH INCLUSION

Two distinct types of monuments have been explored: colonial statues and monuments commemorating the Holocaust or World War II. Both types of monuments have been targeted by protest graffiti, which can be classified as memory events, attempting to evoke changes in both hard and soft memory.

Protesters attempted to transform or add memories to the originally presented hard memory. They have, for example, changed King Leopold II from a 'hero' into an 'assassin', or Jewish people from 'victims' to 'perpetrators'. Furthermore, new memories which were more identifiable for the protesters were added over or alongside the original memories. Examples of this are the phrases "Black Lives Matter" and "Gaza". These changes in hard memory also intend to stimulate further reflection in soft memory, and ultimately, in cultural memory as a whole. In the case of one King Leopold II statue, the phrase "stop cleaning, start reflecting" made this very explicit. The protests against Leopold II eventually led to public debates and the drafting of a report with the advice to preserve the graffiti.⁵⁸ The changes in hard and soft memories of the monarch also transformed his representation in cultural memory. Aside from countering the historical narratives and values which monuments represent, protesters may also draw attention to current events, like racism against black people or the

⁵⁵ Bartov et al. 20th of November 2023; Klein 5th of October 2024; Novis-Deutsch/Adams 2024, 87; Segal 2024, 62-63.

⁵⁶ Bartov et al. 20th of November 2023; Klein 5th of October 2024; Segal 2024, 64.

⁵⁷ An 87-year-old Holocaust survivor argued that the Holocaust should not be used as cover by Israel, Tapper 27th of April 2024, and some Dutch institutions critiqued Israeli president Herzog for using the Holocaust to legitimize a genocide in Gaza, Het Parool 9th of March 2024.

⁵⁸ Abrassart et al. 2022, 214.

genocide in Gaza. Colonial and Holocaust or WWII monuments seem to be most commonly employed due to their historical associations, such as colonialism, racism, the Jewish people, the Holocaust, or genocide, which (in)directly refer to current events.

By graffitiing monuments, the social and historical values and memories attached to the physical structures are affected as well. This can be considered a positive development because these new layers added onto them can cause black or pro-Palestinian inhabitants to feel more represented in the public space, aid reflection in public debates, and stimulate changes in cultural memory. In this way, a more democratic and dynamic space can be created, which transforms alongside changes of soft memory in society instead of presenting a seemingly fixed collective identity and cultural memory. If we solely focused on conserving the original structures and cleaning the graffiti, the memorial landscape would only be inclusive for the memories already represented, but exclusive for the ones graffitied onto monuments and removed afterwards. By only focusing on keeping certain visual aesthetics and policing unwanted behaviour, through the punishment of 'vandals' or the placing of cameras, as was the case for the Anne Frank statue, the opportunity for public engagement is ignored.⁵⁹

On the other hand, while preserving the new layers can aid the diversification of the memorial landscape for black and pro-Palestinian groups, it can dismiss and exclude the memories and perspectives of groups who feel more affiliated with the original memory showcased. As mentioned before, to have memory events that successfully transform cultural memory, they must comply with the three factors of truthfulness, originality, and being central to a community's identity.⁶⁰ While the perspectives are new to the initial memories, and can therefore be deemed original, they are not accepted as truthful or central to a collective identity by all. In the case of the colonial statues, there are still people who appreciate the historical value of the monuments and do not want them to be vandalised. Also, some people do not acknowledge the role of King Leopold II as a perpetrator and celebrate a positive image of him as part of the Belgian identity, not the graffitied negative one. While his violent and colonial legacy is attested in soft memory, and the need to transform the hard memory of him is therefore understandable, the perspectives of people who see him as a hero will be excluded.⁶¹ In the case of the Holocaust and WWII monuments, online comments and posts

⁵⁹ Lawson-Tancred 13th of July 2022.

⁶⁰ Etkind 2013, 179.

⁶¹ Rannard/Webster 13th of June 2020.

about the graffiti on the Anne Frank statue exemplify the fear that graffiti will change the memory of her and other victims and increase antisemitism. Many did not accept the portrayal of Jewish people as perpetrators, and this new memory, which they consider antisemitic, as central to a collective identity. These cases demonstrate the inaccuracy of the argument that preserving graffiti will create a more diverse memorial landscape. The addition of new memories also accompanies the (un)intended exclusion or change of older memories, which is why we should speak of a transformed memorial landscape instead of a more diverse one.

USING DIALOGUE TO EXPLORE MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

Since municipalities are the ones in control of the visual aesthetics of public places and the accepted behaviour in them, they are the ones responsible for deciding what should happen with the monuments and protest graffiti. However, this decision should not rely on a single, uniform solution imposed solely by the authorities on all case studies. As also argued by Abrassart et al., decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis and through a dialogue where inhabitants are included in the decision-making process, preferably, if existing, with people supporting and opposing the preservation of the graffiti. A dialogue is required to avoid focusing solely on how to handle the hard memory, but also to understand how the structures (mis-)match with the soft memory of varying groups. A case-by-case approach within such a dialogue can be better equipped to support the varying wishes that may exist between each case study, and allows authorities to monitor the constantly evolving perceptions citizens hold regarding how the past should be represented, as well as how public space should be used and shaped. This approach can also help to understand the underlying motivations and discontent which led to the targeting of a specific monument.

When thinking about the format of such a dialogue, this research has highlighted three important topics that should be addressed. First, what should be done with (the graffiti on) the monument itself? Second, how does this specific case relate to the broader memorial landscape and the extent to which people feel represented in hard memory? Third, what current social issues and forms of discontent are reflected through the protest graffiti, and how might these issues and discontent be addressed? Referring to the first question and based on Jewell and Andron, the level of acceptance of graffiti on a specific monument can be understood by surveying the perceptions of the graffiti's location, medium,

content, and intention among the various participants.⁶² These aspects help to understand if the targeted monument is deemed a proper location for these messages, or if it is regarded as an inappropriate location, as is often felt in the case of Holocaust or World War II monuments. Furthermore, it can clarify if paint is seen as the right medium or if this is seen as aesthetically unpleasing or too damaging for the historical structure. Moreover, it can be examined to what extent the content of a message is deemed original, truthful, and central to the collective's identity.⁶³ Thus, examining whether the new content of the hard memory corresponds with the soft memory of the varying participants is important. If the message is not perceived as central to the collective's identity by the majority, the dialogue should explore why it is excluded and whether it should be more deliberately incorporated. Finally, the dialogue can make participants aware of the intention behind the graffiti, which may challenge the automatic reputation of graffiti as anti-social and criminal. When aware of the intention, participants might be able to make a more carefully considered judgement on whether the graffiti is deemed a justified act or rather considered anti-social and vandalistic.

If it is decided that the message should remain, but must be expressed through a different medium or at a different location, several alternatives are possible. Rigney describes the concepts of removal, reframing, and re-signifying.⁶⁴ The removal of a statue or monument is an option, but she states that this complicates efforts to address the problematic history and current societal problems attached to it. Re-framing—replacing a monument in a different context, such as a museum—can have a more educational function. Still, the monument does lose its value as a place of protest and awareness for random passersby. Finally, re-signifying means that a new (or additional) meaning is among others given through the placement of a plaque, a counter monument in close proximity to the original, or via graffiti. In Flanders, Belgium, almost all statues of King Leopold II have received a plaque to provide extra context.⁶⁵ A plaque can be a way to keep the monument visually the same, but add new historical perspectives. Still, the question remains if it always accurately represents the views of groups who do not feel identifiable with the older memory. In the case of the Leopold statues in Flanders, the views of affiliated Congolese people were almost entirely disregarded

62 Jewell 2022; Andron 2024, 80, 143.

63 Etkind 2013, 179.

64 Rigney 2023, 24-26.

65 Abrassart et al. 2022, 39.

when writing the texts.⁶⁶ While a plaque can be a good way of adding additional context, it is often again a seemingly fixed and one-sided narrative added by officials. Graffiti, on the other hand, can be added by anyone at any time and may be more flexible to changing dynamics in the memories of society. A Leopold statue in Ghent was initially left alone after a plaque with additional historical context was added. Nevertheless, after the death of George Floyd, protesters used this statue to express their opinions on current racism.⁶⁷ A plaque may therefore not always be enough to go along with all perspectives and rapid dynamics in society. Graffiti, furthermore, have a more pronounced 'shock effect' due to their abnormality and visibility on a monument, which likely attracts more attention than a traditional plaque and highlights a problematic history or political discontent that might otherwise go unnoticed by passersby.⁶⁸

Prerequisites for such a dialogue should be a willingness to listen to all the different perspectives, excepting perspectives, or graffitied messages, which are meant to be discriminatory. In some cases, a message can be felt as hurtful to a group, as illustrated by the Anne Frank statue example—something which should be taken into account during the decision-making process. A dialogue can then clarify the exact reasoning behind the targeting of a monument, and the extent to which these reasons are indeed discriminatory in nature.

Aside from discussing the specific case study, the dialogue should be seen as an opportunity to understand if the varying soft memories of the participants match with the memorial landscape in general and if inhabitants feel represented and welcome in the hard memory of public places. Finally, as demonstrated, protest graffiti is often not solely directed at the monuments themselves, but also expresses broader social discontent about issues that protesters may feel are unacknowledged by society.⁶⁹ Abrassart et al. drafted a report on how to proceed with colonial statues in Belgium and argue that the decolonisation of the public space should be paired with education about the problematic history behind it and support for current social problems that are tied to it.⁷⁰ A dialogue can thus also help in understanding the current issues in society and how this discontent can be addressed.

66 Ibid., 39

67 In the case of this statue in Ghent, the message on the plaque is the following: "The city council regrets the many Congolese victims who died during the Free State" (Chini 3rd of June 2020). While the Congolese victims are mentioned, no explicit reference is made to the colonial legacy of King Leopold II.

68 Rigney 2023, 24-26.

69 Zhang and Chan 2021, 521.

70 Abrassart et al. 2022, 210, 216-220.

Acknowledging their disaffection may in turn also lead to a decrease in protest graffiti.

CONCLUSION

Regarding the question of what to do with protest graffiti on historical monuments, two opposing sides were explored, specifically the validity of the argument that either removing or preserving graffiti would lead to a more diverse and inclusive memorial landscape.

This research has pointed out that both sides are too optimistic in stating that either conserving the original structure or preserving the graffiti creates a more diverse and inclusive memorial landscape. By not allowing any graffiti and simply deeming it vandalistic behaviour, a fixed landscape is created that does not allow for changes to hard memory and the resulting reflection in soft memory. This approach does not align with the ever-changing nature of memory and excludes alternative voices of groups who do not yet feel represented. Nevertheless, preserving all graffiti as new layers may result in the exclusion of previously represented voices. This is especially tricky when new voices are felt to be antisemitic, like the generalisation of Jews as perpetrators of genocide, or to diminish the memory of Holocaust victims like Anne Frank.

Memory events, such as graffitiing monuments, are caused by an imbalance between how the past is remembered in soft and hard memory. However, this imbalance may not be visible for some individuals at first, but will be created once the hard memory is affected by protesters. These individuals, for whom the hard memory is negatively reframed, will therefore not accept memory events as truthful and central to the community's identity. There will thus always be an imbalance between soft and hard memory for some, leading to memory events such as protest graffiti. Cultural memory is inherently dynamic, fluid, and diverse, so there will always be opposing views on what our society should forget and what should be remembered. It is therefore difficult to make choices on how to manage graffiti on monuments, since in both cases—preserving or removing it—an imbalance is created, and people's memories are excluded. This article has demonstrated that both sides, as illustrated at the beginning, neglect to consider the exclusion that coincides with their "inclusive memorial landscape". Academics should avoid promoting one side of the discussion on how to handle protest graffiti without considering the opinions of and impact it has on the people whose memories are excluded by these choices. It will likely be impossible to achieve a perfect inclusive memorial landscape for all, but in our aim to make it as inclusive as possible,

we should at least also consider the complexities paired with this. For those who have the authority to establish and manage hard memory, a constant dilemma persists regarding how to address these diverse perspectives. Although not everyone can be fully accommodated, a dialogue for each case separately with a diversity of stakeholders acknowledges that there are multiple, ever-changing perspectives, and helps to monitor these. Furthermore, a dialogue may increase understanding between the different groups, hand over some control to the inhabitants in the decision-making process, and help to gain a broader understanding of the (dis)content people have within public spaces or society. Academics have a responsibility to critically monitor the extent to which this happens, since consultation with the stakeholders whose memories are concerned is not always included, as is evident in the example of the plaques mentioned previously.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrassart, G., et al., 2022: Voor de dekolonisering van de openbare ruimte in het Brussels hoofdstedelijk gewest: Een reflectiekader en aanbevelingen, *Urban.brussels* (report).
- Andron, S., 2024: *Urban Surfaces, Graffiti, and the Right to the City*, Routledge.
- Bartov, O., et al., 20th of November 2023: An Open Letter on the Misuse of Holocaust Memory, *The New York Review*. <https://www.nybooks.com/online/2023/11/20/an-open-letter-on-the-misuse-of-holocaust-memory/>, accessed on 25/10/2024.
- Bentley, M., 2021: Architecture as memorialization: "Using" buildings to remember the Shoah, in J. Micieli-Voutsinas and A.M. Person, *Affective Architectures. More-than-representational geographies of heritage*, Routledge, 204-219.
- Boffey, D., 23rd of November 2019: Belgium begins to face brutal colonial legacy of Leopold II, *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/23/belgium-begins-to-face-brutal-colonial-legacy-of-leopold-ii>, accessed on 13/02/2025.
- Chini, M., 3rd of June 2020: 'I can't breathe': Leopold II statue defaced in Ghent, *The Brussels Times*. <https://www.brusselstimes.com/115013/i-cant-breathe-leopold-ii-statue-defaced-in-ghent>, accessed on 10/10/2024.
- Davies, L., 12th of April 2009: Holocaust memorial in France defaced with swastikas, *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/apr/12/holocaust-memorial-france-vandalism-swastikas>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Dijksterhuis, E., 26th of June 2025: Graffiti wordt in Amsterdam steeds minder gezien als vandalisme – dat is goed én slecht nieuws voor de kunstenaars, *Het Parool*. <https://www.parool.nl/kunst-media/graffiti-wordt-in-amsterdam-steeds-minder-gezien-als-vandalisme-dat-is-goed-en-slecht-nieuws-voor-de-kunstenaars~b26208c4/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>, accessed on 17/07/2025.
- Đukić, N., July 2020: Graffiti and urban identity. Negative perception of graffiti as an indicator of urban identity crisis, in A. Pajvančić –Cizelj (ed.), *Post-socialist transformation of the city*, 123 –135 (conference proceedings).
- Etkind, A., 2013: *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied*, Stanford.
- European Jewish Congress, 6th of August 2024. <https://x.com/eurojewcong/status/1820583754538057923>, accessed on 25/10/2024 (X post).
- Freeman, D., 15th of January 2024: A Holocaust memorial in

- Philadelphia was defaced with a swastika image, *CNN*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/01/14/us/philadelphia-holocaust-memorial-defaced/index.html>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Galindo, G., 22nd of June 2020: Leopold II statue defaced again after clean-up, *The Brussels Times*. <https://www.brusselstimes.com/117936/leopold-ii-statue-defaced-again-after-clean-up-trone-stop-cleaning>, accessed on 10/10/2024.
- Hajdenberg, J., 30th of August 2024: Berlin Holocaust memorial vandalized with antisemitic pro-Palestinian graffiti, *The Times of Israel*. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/berlin-holocaust-memorial-vandalized-with-antisemitic-pro-palestinian-graffiti/>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Het Parool, 9th of March 2024: Erev Rav doet aangifte tegen Herzog, vraagt ICC om zijn arrestatie. <https://www.parool.nl/nederland/teruglezen-opening-nationaal-holocaustmuseum-rutte-sprak-met-president-israel-over-humanitaire-situatie-gaza-13-arrestaties-bij-demonstraties~b1d6c9cc/>, accessed on 25/10/2024 (liveblog).
- HLN, 4th of August 2024. "Free Gaza": beeld Anne Frank in Amsterdam beklad (exact 80 jaar na deportatie Joods meisje)', *Het Laatste Nieuws*. Retrieved on the 26th of October, 2024 from <https://www.hln.be/buitenland/free-gaza-beeld-anne-frank-in-amsterdam-beklad-exact-80-jaar-na-deportatie-joods-meisje~a31b99fdc/>.
- Holtorf, C., 2018: Embracing change: how cultural resilience is increased through cultural heritage, *World Archaeology* 50(4), 639-650.
- Jewell, K.S., 2022: Graffiti and Censorship, *EBSCO*. <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/visual-arts/graffiti-and-censorship>, accessed on 17/07/2025.
- Jordan, E., 9th of August 2024: Nottingham Holocaust memorial sculpture defaced, *The JC*. <https://www.thejc.com/community/free-palestine-scratched-on-holocaust-memorial-sculpture-at-nottinghamshire-park-dyag8xv7>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Klein, N., 5th of October 2024: How Israel has made trauma a weapon of war, *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2024/oct/05/israel-gaza-october-7-memorials>, accessed on 25/10/2024.
- KNAW, 2023: *Wankele sokkels. Omstreden monumenten in de openbare ruimte*, Amsterdam, Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen.
- Ladrado, P., 15th of May 2018: Brief history of graffiti and street art, *Medium*. <https://medium.com/%4oportialadrado/brief-history-of-graffiti-and-street-art-3eae048eb6a8>, accessed on 17/07/2025.

- Lawson-Tancred, J. 13th of July 2022: Vandals Who Target Public Monuments in the U.K. Now Face Drastically Harsher Fines and Prison Sentences Under a New Law, *Artnet*. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/harsher-penalties-damaged-memorials-uk-2146204>, accessed on 25/10/2024.
- Lefebvre, H. 1991 [1974]: *The production of space* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.), Oxford.
- Lefebvre, H. (1996 [1968]): *Writings on cities* (E. Kofman/E. Lebas, Trans.), Cambridge.
- McHutchion, B., 2022: Colonial statues as memorial contact zones: Macdonald, Cornwallis and statue removal in Canada, *Sculpture Journal* 31(1), 55-74.
- Merrill, S.O.C., 2011: Graffiti at Heritage Places: Vandalism as Cultural Significance or Conservation Sacrilege?, *Time and Mind: The Journal of Archaeology, Consciousness and Culture* 4(1), 59-76.
- New York Times, 2nd of June 1987: Holocaust monument defaced by swastikas. <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/holocaust-monument-defaced-swastikas/docview/110759020/se-2>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- NOS Nieuws/NH Nieuws, 4th of August 2024: Beeld Anne Frank en andere monumenten in Amsterdam beklad met 'Free Gaza'. <https://nos.nl/artikel/2531752-beeld-anne-frank-en-andere-monumenten-in-amsterdam-beklad-met-free-gaza>, accessed on 24/10/2024.
- NOS Nieuws, 11th of January 2024: Emoties lopen op bij voor- en tegenstanders van genocideklacht tegen Israël. <https://nos.nl/collectie/13959/artikel/2504514-emoties-lopen-op-bij-voor-en-tegenstanders-van-genocideklacht-tegen-israel>, accessed on 24/10/2024.
- Novis-Deutsch, N./T., Adams, 2024: Holocaust Memory Transformations in Contemporary Contexts: An Introduction, *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 38(2), 87-92.
- NU.nl, 4th of August 2024: Beeld Anne Frank in Amsterdam weer beklad als protest tegen inval in Gaza. <https://www.nu.nl/binnenland/6323331/beeld-anne-frank-in-amsterdam-weer-beklad-als-protest-tegen-inval-in-gaza.html#nujij>, accessed on 25/10/2024.
- Oliver, C., 6th of May 2024: Pro-Palestine demonstrators disrupt Auschwitz remembrance march with 'Stop Genocide' protest, *LBC News*. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/pro-palestine-demonstrators-disrupt-auschwitz-remembrance-march/>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Omroep West., 28th of May 2025: Den Haag moet echt meer gaan doen tegen graffiti. <https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4942672/den-haag-moet-echt-meer-gaan-doen-tegen-graffiti>,

- accessed on 19/07/2025.
- Pozo-Antonio, J.S./T. Rivas/M.P. Fiorucci/A.J. López/A. Rami, 2016: Effectiveness and harmfulness evaluation of graffiti cleaning by mechanical, chemical and laser procedures on granite, *Microchemical Journal* 125, 1-9.
- Qwatekana, Z. /N. Zondi, 2021: Vandalism of Monuments and Neglect: A Concern for Heritage Tourism, *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology* 30(1), 187-206.
- Rannard, G./E. Webster, 13th of June 2020: Leopold II: Belgium 'wakes up' to its bloody colonial past, *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53017188>, accessed on 10/10/2024.
- Redactie Trouw, 9th of August 2024: Na bekladdingen plaatst Amsterdamse politie camera bij Anne Frank-beeld. <https://www.trouw.nl/binnenland/na-bekladdingen-plaatst-amsterdamse-politie-camera-bij-anne-frank-beeld~bfd5b65c/?referrer=https://www.google.nl/>, accessed on 05/12/2024.
- Ricci, C./F. Gambino/M. Nervo/A. Piccirillo/A. Scarcella/F. Zenucchini/J.S. Pozo-Antonio, 2020: Developing New Cleaning Strategies of Cultural Heritage Stones: Are Synergistic Combinations of a Low-Toxic Solvent Ternary Mixtures Followed by Laser the Solution?, *Coatings* 10(5), 466.
- Rigney, A., 2023: Decommissioning Monuments, Mobilizing Materialities, in Y. Gutman/J. Wüstenberg (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Memory Activism*, Routledge, 21-27.
- Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed., n.d.-a: Dutch Graffiti Library – van anonieme straatcultuur naar cultureel erfgoed. <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/onderwerpen/erfgoedparticipatie-faro/faro-in-de-praktijk/dutch-graffiti-library>, accessed on 19/07/2025.
- Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed., n.d.-b: Graffiti op monumenten en buitenbeelden. <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/onderwerpen/veilig-erfgoed/veiligheidszorg/diefstal--vandalisme/graffiti>, accessed on 19/07/2025.
- Ross, J.I., 2016: Introduction. Sorting it all out, in J.I. Ross (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art*, Routledge, 1-10.
- Segal, S., 2024: Settler Antisemitism, Israeli Mass Violence, and the Crisis of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, *Journal of Palestine Studies* 53(2), 50-73.
- Spinks, J., 10th of June 2020: 'Assassin': another Leopold II statue vandalized, *The Brussels Times*. <https://www.brusselstimes.com/116172/assassin-another-leopold-ii-statue-vandalised>, accessed on 10/10/2024.
- Starr, M., 10th of July 2024: Anne Frank statue in Amsterdam defaced with 'Gaza' graffiti, mayor calls for public's assistance,

- The Jerusalem Post*. https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-809670#google_vignette, accessed on 24/10/2024.
- Starr, M., 13th of April 2024: Moldovan Holocaust memorial vandalized with 'free Palestine' graffiti, *The Jerusalem Post*. <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-796817>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Tapper, J., 27th of April 2024: London Gaza protest: has row over 'openly Jewish' remark changed the march's mood?, *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/apr/27/london-gaza-protest-openly-jewish-march-holocaust-survivors-palestine-demonstration>, accessed on 12/10/2024.
- Van Campenhout, C./P. Van de Wouw/H. Verweij, 10th of March 2024: Israel's Herzog pleads for peace at Amsterdam Holocaust museum amid protest, *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/israels-herzog-opens-holocaust-museum-amsterdam-amid-protest-2024-03-10/>, accessed on 25/10/2024.
- Van Hunen, M., 2004: Graffiti op monumenten, *Gids Techniek 39* (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed).
- Van Rensbergen, A., 29th of June 2024: Historicus Idesbald Goddeeris over dekolonisatie in België. 'De slachtoffers van het Belgisch kolonialisme maken ook deel uit van onze geschiedenis', *MO**. <https://www.mo.be/interview/historicus-idesbald-goddeeris-de-slachtoffers-van-het-belgisch-kolonialisme-maken-ook-deel-uit-van-onze-geschiedenis>, accessed on 13/02/2025.
- Van Roosmalen, P., 13th of February 2023: Herkennen en erkennen. Bevindingen en aanbevelingen voor de dekolonisatie van de gebouwde omgeving, *Archined*. <https://www.archined.nl/2023/02/herkennen-en-erkennen-bevindingen-en-aanbevelingen-voor-de-dekolonisatie-van-de-gebouwde-omgeving/>, accessed on 13/02/2025.
- Willems, G., 22nd of May 2025: Het beste middel tegen lelijke graffiti? Mooie graffiti!, *De Gelderlander*. <https://www.gelderlander.nl/nijmegen/het-beste-middel-tegen-lelijke-graffiti-mooie-graffiti-aob7a198/>, accessed on 19/07/2025.
- World Jewish Congress, 9th of July 2024. <https://www.instagram.com/worldjewishcongress/p/C9N1wKQAnhH/>, accessed on 25/10/2024.
- Zhang, H./ B.C. Chan, 2021: Protest graffiti, social movements and changing participation frameworks, *Journal of Language and Politics* 20(4), 515-538.
- Zieleniec, A., 2016: The right to write the city: Lefebvre and graffiti, *Environnement Urbain* 10, 1-20.