

## Summary

### Jacek Laube - **Anarchival Amnesia Syndrome: An Autoethnographic Journey Through the Archives of the Polish People's Republic's Security Service**

This doctoral dissertation is a written commentary on an artistic-research project that originated from a confrontation with the archive of a totalitarian power—in this case, the photographic collections created by the Security Service of the Polish People's Republic (PRL). The dissertation poses questions about the condition of a researcher interacting with oppressive material and investigates the possibility of creating a personal counter-archive as a form of working through a traumatic experience.

In the first part of the work, I present the context and methodology of the project. I describe my earlier experiences with a family archive, which served as preparation for the confrontation with a state archive. I then present the theoretical toolkit used to navigate this difficult terrain, referencing the thought of Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Carolyn Steedman, and others. I also introduce key artistic methods, such as the gesture of redrawing and working with Blue Boxes, which became tools for both research and artistic expression.

The main body of the work is an autoethnographic analysis of a journey through seven research "circles," which provided the dramaturgical axis for the entire project. I describe the process in which an initial, analytical self-confidence eroded, leading to a methodological and psychological breakdown. The central point of this analysis is the formulation and description of an original theoretical construct: **Anarchival Amnesia Syndrome (AAS)**. It is a condition, diagnosed by the researcher, in which the archive, instead of preserving memory, actively generates chaos and forgetting. In this section, I detail the subsequent stages of transformation—from analytical deconstruction, through a performative breakdown (documented as the **Wall of Paranoia**), the ritualistic **Gesture of Burning**, to the **Gesture of Redrawing** as an attempt at ethical reconstruction, and finally the **Birth of the Counter-Archive** in the Seventh Circle.

The result of this process is a multimedia art installation, whose components—the **Wall of Diagrams**, **Blue Boxes**, **Interaction Table**, **Researcher's Journals**, the **film essay**, and the final **Catalog Library**—are described in detail as material evidence of the project's successive phases. Special attention is given to the theoretical grounding of AAS in the thought of Jacques Derrida, linking my diagnosis to his concept of the „anarchivic drive“.

In the conclusion, I summarize the entire journey, proposing a hybrid methodology for working with difficult archives, one that combines critical theoretical analysis, embodied experience, and artistic creation. The final part, the *Addendum*, contains a self-reflection on the project and its reception. An integral part of the dissertation is the annex, which contains the full text of the **Researcher's Journals** for the first three cycles, constituting an autonomous artistic-literary work. As a whole, the dissertation offers an in-depth reflection on the affective and psychological costs of confronting an archive of power.

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