global dis :connect

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Silence as archive: what women's letters to missing WWII relatives reveal about dis:connection and memory?

The problem

After the Second World War, women wrote to humanitarian institutions, including the Red Cross, in search of missing relatives. Their letters express hope and uncertainty, but often received no answer. The absence of information created a further rupture: between the expectation of communication and silence, and between personal experiences of loss and the bureaucratic forms through which these experiences entered the archive.

Core interest

The project centres on women's letters written in attempts to restore connections disrupted by war. These letters document acts of searching, naming and remembering, while also revealing the emotional and temporal experience of waiting. They bring missing relatives back into view and preserve personal experiences that could not be resolved through communication.

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Dis:connectivity emerges in the tension between writing and silence. The act of writing creates a connection by naming the missing and keeping them present in memory. Yet the absence of a response turns these letters into documents of waiting. Between the appeal and the silence that follows, dis:connectivity becomes a space in which hope encounters the limits of communication and memory preserves what communication cannot restore.

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