

The lost ideology-Socialist Monuments in Bosnia¹

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1 ABSTRACT

Memory, individual or collective, is not only closely related to socio-political phenomena, but also to socio-cultural such as architecture and art. As trans-generational witnesses to historical turmoil, still stand the monuments and memorials to the NOB (national liberation struggle). In former Yugoslavia between 1950's and early 1980's many monuments and memorial complexes were built to commemorate the great heroic battles against fascists or massacres over Yugoslavian innocent population. Several of them are on the territory of today's Bosnia-Herzegovina. These memorials were designed with great passion and respect to the fallen victims by the most prominent Yugoslavian architects and sculptors. Each of these monuments is a unique sculptural masterpiece, with its size, form and volume on the border of becoming architecture. As a pride of the social heritage, generations of children, students and proletariat, until 1990's would visit and pay their respect to the fallen victims of the past in hope for better future.

All the ideals these monuments used to stand for are forgotten and those remarkable structures now represent unpleasant cultural and architectural heritage with which the post war society is trying to establish relationship. Unfortunately very often these monuments are left to decay. After dissolution of Yugoslavia and aggression against Bosnia 1992-1995 Partisans' battles were forgotten. Memorials and monuments for recent victims had to be built. In this paper we want to focus on how today's society deals with inherited socialist monuments and what kind of memorials have been built in the last 15 years for the victims of the 1992-95 liberation war in Bosnia.

2 FORMING OF YUGOSLAVIA

Originating from Pan Slavism ideologies, Yugoslavia was ultimately the idea of a single state for all South Slavic people that emerged in the late 17th and gained prominence in the 19th century during the Illyrian Movement. The name was coined from the Slavic words "jug" (south) and "slaveni" (Slavs). Initially formed after the World War I in 1918 as a Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians the state was renamed Yugoslavia in 1929.² The same year King Aleksandar banned national and political parties and overtook the executive power in the country. Unfortunately his political attitude wasn't appreciated neither from the West, mainly Italy and Germany, nor from the East where Stalin was absolute ruler and was looking to Europe with more active international policies. During Aleksandars' dictatorship all non Serbs were alienated from the idea of unity as he has banned flags and historic ornaments of all Yugoslav nations as well as any communist activity.

After the assassination of the King in Marseille during an official visit in 1934 his cousin, Prince Pavle took regency, but only for few years as he signed the fascist treaty in 1941 hoping to keep Yugoslavia out of the war. This wasn't supported by the people and his government and the coup was organised. Despite turmoils within the country Hitler decided to attack Yugoslavia on 6th April 1941 by bombarding its capital, Belgrade.

This attack symbolises the start of the World War II in Yugoslavia and with it a birth of new ideology. The Axis Powers occupied Yugoslavia and divided it to different military formations. German troops occupied Bosnia as well as parts of Slovenia and Serbia and as a reaction to this the resistance movement was created

¹ Bosnia refers to the geographical term; it means the whole territory of modern Bosnia-Herzegovina. Malcolm, N., (2002).

² Kingdom SHS established on 01.12.1918 was a first realization of the idea of South Slavs state. It contained Serbia, Montenegro, parts of Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Vojvodina.

by the Communist Party. On the top of Yugoslav resistance forces were communist led Partisans with Josip Broz Tito.

Since 1941 communists were strengthening their power in the Balkan, especially in Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece. The Partisans developed a guerrilla war that quickly grew into the largest resistance army in occupied Europe, and carried out their warfare with great success. They were organizing resistance movements to destroy fascist influence, but their final goal was socialist revolution. By 1941 many people in Yugoslavia joined the Partisans in their national liberation struggle. Majority of significant battles during the WWII in former Yugoslavia took place on the territory of today's Bosnia such as battles on Neretva and Sutjeska. In 1942 the Anti Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ)³ was established with its headquarters in Bihać, Bosnia. The Partisans were able to liberate Serbia in 1944 and the rest of Yugoslavia on 1945, with the limited engagement of the Red Army forces. Marshall Josip Broz Tito was recognized as the national hero and was elected by a referendum to be a leader and a prime minister of the new Yugoslavia, a communist state where all the nations and nationalities have equal rights.

During the World War II years (1941-1945) Yugoslavia lost 1.704.000 people to death or displacement. This was 11% of the population before the war, mortality that was second largest after that in Poland.⁴

3 FORMING OF YUGOSLAVIAN IDEOLOGY

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia existed from 1943 to 1991 when it was dissolved by Yugoslav wars. This federation state consisted out of six socialist republics and two autonomous provinces and was built on the achievements of the national liberation struggle.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the six socialist republics in former Yugoslavia. The country had influences of the communist ideologies coming from USSR. Although Yugoslavia never was a part of the eastern communist bloc⁵ and Tito tried to follow an independent, liberal-minded and anti-Stalinist policy, the truth is that 'Tito's policies were closely modeled on those of Stalin'.⁶ The influences from the eastern bloc were still strong which was not only visible in policy making, but also in other forms of everyday life like in art and architecture.

The ideology of Tito's Yugoslavia was based on the idea of Brotherhood and Unity where all nations within the state, including national minorities, had same rights and obligation to support each other. A part of this ideology was also the official politics of memory that was systematically and continuously built for 45 years by the Communist Party. The goal of this politics was to remind people in Yugoslavia of antifascist struggle conducted by the Partisans as a united struggle of all its nations and to create a new political order in the spirit of socialism. The ruling Communist Party was using different methods to implement the politics of memory and to strengthen and promote narrative about the war and the NOB⁷. Through the commemorations on places where new monuments and memorials were built, through establishment of museums, but also through school education, literature, film and music the myth of Yugoslavian state and its common identity was created.⁸

To be able to conduct such an enormous project, just after the liberation, the government brought out laws about protection of historic monuments and formed special institutions that will be responsible for it.⁹ These representative public objects that were financially supported by the government served to create new identity of the modern socialist society in Titoist Yugoslavia.

During the Socialist Yugoslavia, modernization was represented as everyday collective achievement that had as a goal to show workers unity and advancement and was representing the ability of people to self-government. The lives of Yugoslavians were marked with vast projects in all fields of society, ranging from

³ Antifasističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije AVNOJ was established by the representatives of all nations in Yugoslavia on 27.11.1942. One year later this Council was proclaimed as a highest representative body of all Yugoslav nations. The Council named Yugoslavia as democratic federation and forbid the return of the King into the country. First Yugoslav government was formed in 1945 and the state was recognized by all antifascists' coalitions.

⁴ http://www.mongabay.com/history/yugoslavia/yugoslavia-the_resistance_movement.html on the 03.03.2012

⁵ Tito opposed Stalin's regime in 1948 and the country continued under so called Titoism (a form of Marxism, against capitalism and Stalinism).

⁶ Malcolm, N., (2002).

⁷ Narodnooslobodilačka borba (NOB), National Liberation Struggle. In further text NOB refers to the National Liberation Struggle

⁸ Karačić, D., (will be published in 2012).

⁹ Bešlagić, Š., (1957), pp.5-16.

industrial projects to big urban developments. Today this same utopia is very often viewed as negative and the era it belongs to as sinful and detrimental period that the former Yugoslav nations went through. Important part of these projects is that they belonged to the era of urban modernization as well as the part of glorifying the past. Architecture in Yugoslavia was mainly oriented towards industry as this was seen as reinforcement for the times to come. It had an optimistic approach in this pragmatic view as it (architecture) was in the service of people.

3.1 The idea behind the NOB Monuments

Monuments and memorials of NOB in former Yugoslavia were built from 1950's until early 1980's and in Bosnia alone they number in thousands. Under the monuments were considered not only the celebrated large freestanding structures, but also small plaques, busts of national heroes, old buildings of importance where comrades lived or from which they planned their strategies, hospitals, birth houses of national heroes etc. Majority of them were free standing sculptures in the main park of every town, not rarely designed by prominent Yugoslav artist and architects.

In the memory and honour to those who gave their lives in fight against the occupier the new Yugoslavia build places of special significance. These sculptures for the fallen victims more often than not bordered on architecture with their size, volume and composition.

According to visual artist Tanja Deman, whose works include manipulated visions of NOB monuments, they represent 'articulated structures and authentic experiments that have strong psychological influence on the surrounding in which they are existing.'¹⁰

The Socialist period in Yugoslavia (1945-1991) had unusually open approach to abstract types of monument such as these. The building of such monumental urban interventions in the name of fallen victims of the WW II (places of remembrance and worship) were almost experimental, as nothing similar has been done before and the experience shows that nothing similar has been done since. Unlike with other types of influences that came from the eastern neighbours, these monumental structures have been quite the opposite of the ideas of socio-realism that dominated in other socialist countries. At the time of their erection they were an interpretation of the heroic past and a promise of the better future to come, as their morphology and design suggests. With their abstract geometric shapes, like huge scale micro flakes of flowers or small mechanical parts of the machines, very often they had futuristic look. Another interesting aspect was that these monuments didn't represent great leaders of the nations like examples of Stalin in USSR, and they were deprived of any communist symbolism such as stars, sickle and hammer or even strong female and male workers with their heads up height looking towards the future. These monuments are the icons of the celebration and are independent to other influences from Europe in the same era. Not any other communist country was as open to the idea of abstract memorial sculptures as was Yugoslavia. These stunningly beautiful sculptures in landscape were made out of indestructible materials such as reinforced concrete, steel and granite and not many people beyond the borders of Yugoslavia new of their existence and unfortunately not many people in the territories of ex-Yugoslavian republics still want to know about them. Despite their hard build these witnesses to the forgotten philosophy have been left to ruin.

Only 30 years ago these monuments, that were supposed to remember the victims eternally, have been places where millions of people would gather to honour and respect, perform and exchange ideas and stories. Yet only ten years later their appeal has dissolved. As Willem Jan Neutelings tells "They have become submerged in a new age, rendered unintelligible to the current generation. Their symbolism has been lost in translation as the visual language has changed, their signals muffled by a shifted worldview. The monuments have been the objects of blind fury and now, of indifference. What remains is pure sculpture in a desolate landscape. Modern architectural heritage that became a problem in the post socialism times in former Yugoslavian republics."¹¹

4 NOB MONUMENTS: CASE STUDIES

The monuments and memorials we would like to present in this paper are those that carry most importance in terms of their locality, scale, materiality, symbolism etc.

Within examples given in this paper there are two different approaches. One of the approaches is creating monuments as landscape interventions that resemble elements of cityscape and the other approach is creating

¹⁰ Petra Tomljanović, Arhitektura socijalizma kao vizija modernog emancipiranog društva, <http://pogledaj.to> on 21.12.2011

¹¹ Willem Jan Neutelings, Spomenik-The monuments of Former Yugoslavia, <http://www.meta-magazine.com> on 03.03.2012

freestanding monumental structures in the context of untouched nature, very often at the exact places of battles.

4.1 Memorial Park Vraca, Sarajevo

The location of the Memorial Park Vraca (Fig. 1) is in the homonymous part of Sarajevo, located on the slopes of mount Trebević. This Memorial is situated in outskirts of living zone of the city, on the slopes, far from the centre and allows dominating view from the site as well as the possibility of visual communication of the monument from other parts of town. From the each side the complex is framed with roads and covers the area of six hectares.



Fig. 1: Memorial Park Vraca, Sarajevo.

At the end of the 19th century Austro-Hungarians build a fortress on the slopes of Mt. Trebević on the south side of the town, and call it VRATCA which in Bosnian means “small door” that was the south side entrance into the city. During the WWII this site, as many others in and around the town was an unfortunate witness to the mass killings of civilians as well as soldiers. Some 1.300 Sarajevans were taken without trial to death or into the concentration camps only during the period between May 1942 and December of the same year.

“The names of 9.091 victims of fascist terror were on the walls of the fortress atrium. Adding to this the names of the victims of the Nazi and fascist bombing of the city in 1941 gives a total of almost 12.000 – almost every seventh inhabitant of Sarajevo at the time.”¹²

The site became the official execution ground where civilians of Sarajevo were killed as well as the main burial ground for all of those who died of torture in the city jails. After the WWII the fortress stayed abandoned but remained synonym for the resistance and the struggle of the citizens during the Nazi occupation. The fortress was given a new life in the form of the museum and the Memorial Park Vraca was built on the same site. Construction of the Memorial Park started just a month before Tito’s death in April 1980. It was completed and opened on 25th November 1981 on the day of National Day of Bosnia-Herzegovina in honour of the first ZAVNOBiH¹³ meeting in 1943.¹⁴

The Memorial Park Vraca has cultural, historical, artistic, architectural, and landscape value. The architectural values are reflected both in individual monuments and in the overall treatment of the complex. The skills of the designer Vladimir Dobrović, the sculptor, Alija Kućukalić, and the landscape designer Aleksandar Maltarić, combined to achieve a harmonious composition of plant species, running water and stone, ornaments, landscape and townscape. At the same time it is a documentary centre and a

¹² Commission to preserve National Monuments; (Committee for the construction of the Memorial Park, various authors, 1985)

¹³ Zemaljsko antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Bosne i Hercegovine (ZAVNOBIH), State Antifascist Council of National Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the highest organ of state anti-fascist movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Second World War, formed on 25th November 1943.

¹⁴ Robert J. Donia, (2006), pp. 240.

memorial to the victims of fascist terror and to Yugoslav Army troops who, with the assistance of the people of Sarajevo, liberated the city on 6th April 1945.

The Memorial Park complex consists of the following components:

1. Entrance plateau
2. Execution site
3. Sculpture – memorial to women combatants
4. Belvedere
5. Eternal flame with fountain
6. Ceremonial plateau
7. Memorial to the city's combatants killed in action
8. Memorial to national heroes, with mausoleum
9. Memorial to combatants of the resistance movement in the city, with Tito's tribute to the combatants in occupied cities
10. Atrium – memorial to the victims of fascism, with a message from Tito
11. Exhibits in the fort – “Testimony to the battle for Sarajevo“
12. Memorial to troops of the National Liberation Army who took part in the operation to liberate Sarajevo.

Because of its outstanding strategic position, the Memorial Park Vraca was one of several locations during the 1992-1995 aggression where heavy artillery and snipers were positioned. For that reason the whole complex was totally devastated and the remains were further damaged due to neglect.

4.2 Partisans Memorial Cemetery, Mostar

Partisans Memorial Cemetery in Mostar (Fig. 2) designed by one of the most famous Yugoslav architects Bogdan Bogdanović is another example of intervention in the natural landscape to create distinguish architectural work full of symbolism and memories. About its beauty witnesses also Josip Broz Tito in one of his speeches at the commemoration in Mostar in 1969.

“In various countries that I have visited I saw many monuments at which I have laid the wreaths. Yet such a beautiful and such a magnificent monument as it is this one here, I have never seen elsewhere. This is truly a masterpiece of our architecture, of our artists.”¹⁵



Fig. 2: Partisans Memorial Cemetery, Mostar.

¹⁵ Mutevelić, I., (1980).

The site itself is located on the north slope of the artificially created hillock planted in 1960s with the view towards the city. With donations of citizens of Mostar and volunteering work by its youth it was possible to erect this ca. eight hectares big complex of stone and green.

Just before the WWII Mostar had population of 18.000 and every third citizen was actively involved in National Liberation War. After the war great number of memorials was erected but in 1959 on the initiative by Džemal Bijedić, the major of Mostar, the design project for the Partisans Memorial Cemetery was given to prominent name in Yugoslav architecture, Bogdan Bogdanović. The suggestion was accepted and the official start of works began in December 1960. The Memorial was formally opened by Marshall Tito on 25th September 1965 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of liberation of city of Mostar from fascism.¹⁶ In the 1992 the Memorial was badly damaged by war activity. After the war the biggest problem was the neglect of the already destroyed Memorial Cemetery, but despite the human and natural factors the memorial has not lost its physical completeness. In 2004 a special committee was formed to reconstruct and preserve the Partisans Memorial Cemetery. On the 9th May 2005 part-restored memorial was formally opened.¹⁷

The Partisans' Memorial Cemetery contains all the features of a complex architectural, aesthetic and landscape design. It is a unique monument in the urban scale of Mostar, and as such has particular environmental value. The unity of the nature with the architecture (connection between the water, greenery and the architectural expression) create undisputed qualities. In the words of the architect himself "using the universal symbols of the elements of the sun, planets and moon, the monument becomes close to everyone, and succeeds in imposing itself as an authentic element of space."¹⁸ The forms that have been used were 'borrowed' from the architectural essence of the region. Roof cladding of the houses in Mostar used for cladding the walls of Memorial, the use of the pebble from the river to pave the paths, the greenery mixing with architectural and urban elements give the complex vivacious qualities. The entire necropolis is composed as a fortress that is accessed via separate ramps. The designer might have conceptualized it in a form of a city with streets, passageways, houses, terraces and squares creating an impression of a "negative of the real, living city".¹⁹ There is no use of sacral iconography or the symbols of socialism that at the time were omnipresent. The whole Memorial complex is deprived of crosses, star and crescent, hammer and sickle, representation of human figure, fighters etc.

The memorial complex of Partisans Memorial Cemetery in Mostar consists of an entrance section, a central area of amorphous shape with running water and paths, a section with a circular fountain with still water, and a central, raised area with terraces and access ramp. Throughout entire area of the complex dominate amorphous, organic forms of walled structures interwoven with greenery and water as the primary element of design. Gently curving forms lead the visitor to the central area with its burial places. The central element on the seventh, topmost terrace is a fountain from which the view spreads on the entire complex and the surrounding city. The Partisans Memorial Cemetery has 810 burial plots and each of them is marked by a stone in the symbolic shape of a cut tree trunk.²⁰

Using local materials and ornaments typical for this region Bogdan Bogdanović succeeded to create a cheerful and playful monument as he says. This monument belongs to the city of Mostar, it is an essential part of its townscape. On the last of its seven cascades there is a stone bloc with engraved circle motive and shield. It is a so called 'cosmos' stone which represents the final aim of human civilization: humanity, faith in human thought and its strength and eternal human progress.

Today's state of the Memorial is in bad condition. It has been partially made good in 2005 and since then not much has been done on maintenance. The visible cracks on the curved parts of the walls, paving stones missing and crack in the monuments have been a result of the shelling as well as underground water movements that haven't been rehabilitated in due time. Some of the features then restored have already suffered new damage.

4.3 Monument to Battle of Kozara, Mrakovica on mountain Kozara

Mount Kozara is located in the northwest part of Bosnia. The highest point is 978m above the sea level. The Mrakovica plateau where the Monument sits is on the height of 806m and is surrounded by the forest which is the exact sight of the battle that took place in 1943.

¹⁶ Šarić, S., (2001).

¹⁷ Commission to preserve National Monuments, Decision from a session held between 19 to 24 January 2006

¹⁸ Trumić, A., (1988).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Commission to preserve National Monuments, Decision from a session held between 19 to 24 January 2006

The Memorial Mrakovica (Fig. 3) was designed by academic sculptor Dušan Džamonja and officially opened in 1972. The complex consists of Memorial, Memorial Museum and the wall and it was built in the memory of fighters from Kozara and residents of this area who died in the camps, from Jasenovac to Auschwitz, during World War II. The grand size of the monument symbolically represents the liberty and freedom-loving spirit of the traditional people from Kozara region. On the memorial wall are engraved in bronze the names of 9.921 partisans who were killed in this area during the World War II.²¹



Fig. 3: Monument to Battle of Kozara, Mrakovica on mountain Kozara.

Monumental set of stairs climbing north-west take us to the plateau where the 33m height reinforced concrete sculpture stands symbolically in the middle of the circle. In a radial form, from the circle arise concrete three-dimensional 'rays' creating layers of visual reinforcement and support for the vertical central part of the monument.

At current state of the monument is in semi good condition. There hadn't been any particular damage done to the Monument in the recent years and minimal maintenance had been kept. In 1967 the area was proclaimed into the Nature Park Kozara and therefore some maintenance is done as a part of this. Still, on 4th July each year the battle of Kozara is remembered and the victims have not been forgotten. The space is used as it was intended- to honour the lives of those who have fallen for the freedom.

4.4 Monument to Battle of Sutjeska, Tjentište on mountain Maglić

One of the most important battles during the WWII in former Yugoslavia was the battle of Sutjeska. The battle took place in southeast Bosnia in between mid May and mid June 1943. 7.370 soldiers lost their lives in the harsh and unpredictable mountains which were in 1962 proclaimed as Sutjeska Nature Park and covered the area of 70.000 hectares. The monument (Fig. 4) itself was one of the elements of the entire memorial complex that. The entire memorial complex was constructed in several segments since 1958 to 1975 and it consisted of variety of sculptural and architectural interventions in the landscape. These were memorial mausoleum, the monument itself, memorial house, information centre, youth hostel and numerous

²¹ http://www.panacom.net/bosna_i_hercegovina?s=kozara on 10.03.2012

smaller monuments in accordance to the Program of Planning and spatial organization of the Nature Park, total of 79 interventions to mark most important people and places of battle.



Fig. 4: Monument to Battle of Sutjeska, Tjentište on mountain Maglić.

The main value of the spatial solution is expressed in a maximum preservation of landscape and respect towards the victims. In the physical landscape of exceptional beauty, between other architectural interventions central place belongs to the monument itself. The monument was designed by famous Yugoslav sculptor Miodrag Živković and was revealed by Marshall Tito in 1971. Composition of the monument is very dynamic as a reminder of battles and the form widens up to the sky longing for peace. By using the white stone the monument sits in contrast against the background.

Memorial house was officially opened in 1975 and the importance of it lies in its fresco paintings showing certain important elements from the battle.²²

The importance of this monument is not only reflected in its symbolism and grandeur of the entire urban and landscape treatment, but also in engagement of coming generations with its ideology.

Because of its placement within the Nature Park hundred thousands of people from all over the country would gather on 4th July not only to remember and pay their respect to the victims, but also to keep the ideas of socialism alive.

Commemorating the Battle of Sutjeska was the biggest commemorative celebration in the SFRY until 1983. In that year 150.000 people gathered to this event and only one year later in 1984 there were only 10.000 people. Already in 1988 in the daily newspaper 'Oslobođenje' memorial Tjentište was not mentioned anymore as a NOB commemoration place.²³

Today the monument and memorial house are still standing, but they are not well preserved. The commemorations take place sparsely and not in the grand numbers from the past. As this still is a Nature Park of astonishing beauty lost visitors find their way to the resting place of the brave Partisans.

5 NEW CURRENTS

It is important to mention that "Memorials can heal and become part of the process of peace and reconciliation but if they are not created with the involvement of the people for whom they are most significant, they can also exacerbate existing tensions by cementing differences. With the passing of time, memorials, like memories, are continually re-interpreted. Though outwardly they remain the same, their significance in society is shaped by changing needs."²⁴

²² Nacionalni Park Sutjeska Tjentište, (1984).

²³ Karačić, D., (will be published in 2012).

²⁴ Sting Sorensen, M. L., 'How will we remember them', www.cam.ac.uk on 16.02.2012

The number of victims fallen during the last aggression against Bosnia is still unknown. There are certain documents that mention a number of 97.207 victims as published in 'Bosnian Book of the Dead' in 2007, but the estimated number is far greater than 100.000.²⁵

For these people new places of remembrance should be established, but what is the real picture regarding this issue? Since Dayton Peace Agreement²⁶ in 1995 the country consists of two entities and both of them run their own politic of remembrance. However, due to lack of money and often due to resistance or denying by the society and governing bodies towards the victims there are no even closely monumental and representative places of commemoration as they used to be built for the victims of NOB in former Yugoslavia. In majority of cases, places where significant number of people was killed during the war are marked by metal plates with engraved names of victims or one granite plate with engraved names. Symbolic monuments which have certain artistic and possibly architectural value are very rare. One example that could be mentioned is the Monument for the fallen children during the siege of Sarajevo. This monument is a result of a competition from 2009. The winner is artist Mensud Kečo whose idea was to build a bronze ring out of cocoon shells and other ammunition with two abstract glass sculptures in the middle. Cocoons were gathered after the war, melted and poured into the ring. On the ring are prints of children's rates and names of fallen children. Two separate glass sculptures in the middle of the ring represent a mother protecting her child.²⁷ With light and water effects this monument became a rare representative example of post-war monument architecture in Bosnia.

6 CONCLUSION

According to the artist Tanja Demian architecture of Eastern Europe from the era of socialism to today can be still considered as uncomfortable legacy that the post-socialist society tries to cope with. In majority of cases the society attempts to delete this legacy from its memory, and sometimes it tries to understand and evaluate it. Weather our society today, wants to inherit it or not, it is definitely our historical experience from which we can learn many things.²⁸

Regarding present condition of these monuments and memorials we can freely conclude that they have been forgotten and neglected within the last 30 years. The fact is also that this process of neglecting the past of Titoist Yugoslavia and all the reminders of that system including the monuments, started already in the late 1980's and early 1990's when first nationalist parties occurred and disintegration of Yugoslavia was in sight. This process was only maintained during and after the liberation war 1992-1995. What goes in favour of decay of these monuments is something quite the opposite of preconceived action of destruction which is the absence of any action.

What about the significance of these monuments in today's Bosnian society? Do they have any historical or symbolic meaning to us and do we recognize their artistic and architectural value?

Destiny of many of these monuments and memorials is shameful. Vraca memorial in Sarajevo was damaged during the war and in peace time there was not enough money for its reconstruction. To make the situation more complicated the memorial is located on the border line between two entities and both of them are pushing the responsibility of preserving this memorial on the other entity. To underline the attitude of governing bodies in both entities towards this memorial (and all the others from Yugoslavian period) one short anecdote has to be said. When the reporter of the weekly Bosnian magazine BH DANI was visiting Vraca memorial in 1999 to look at its condition he asked the boy who was playing around if he knows weather this memorial is ours (belonging to the Federation Part of Bosnia). The boy answered: "No, it is Tito's."²⁹

With such attitude in people's mind it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to persuade people that these monuments are our heritage that we should care about and be proud of it, because of their meaning and what they stand for. Otherwise we are deleting almost 50 years of our history and possibility to learn out of these artistic and architectural achievements.

²⁵ <http://birn.eu.com/en/88/10/3377/> on 10.03.2012

²⁶ Dayton Peace Agreement was signed in 1995 to ensure peace and stability in the country. According to it Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided in two entities Republika Srpska and Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Republika Srpska political predominance have Bosnian Srbs, while in the Federation part political power is divided between Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and Bosnian Croats. District Brčko was created in 2000 out of land from both entities and has its own multiethnic government.

²⁷ <http://www.sarajevo-x.com/vijesti/sarajevo/postavljen-spomenik-ubijenoj-djeci-sarajeva/090205035> on 10.03.2012

²⁸ 'Arhitektura socijalizma kao vizija modernog emancipiranog drustva', <http://pogledaj.to> on 10.03.2012

²⁹ Burić, A., (1999).

In our opinion the responsibility for rising awareness about the importance and value of the NOB monuments among politicians and society should be taken by professionals from art and architecture such as art historians, conservators, architects etc. With diverse projects that are reinterpreting and activating these monuments and memorial parks with different purposes it can be possible to attract variety of people in Bosnia's society in order to bring life to these places that once were our national pride. This task is particularly important in rising awareness within future generations. In this case these monuments do not belong only to Tito-they belong to all of us!

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