

# **Shaping Revolutionary Memory**

**The Production of Monuments  
in Socialist Yugoslavia**

**Edited by Sanja Horvatinčić and Beti Žerovec**

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**Sanja Horvatinčić**

**Beyond the Modernist  
Paradigm: Critical  
Perspectives on  
Authorship in Yugoslav  
Memorial Production**

Less than two years after the end of the Second World War, Jadran Film, a newly founded film studio and distribution company based in Zagreb, took on the ambitious project of documenting the construction of the *Monument in Gratitude to the Red Army* in Batina, Croatia (see figs. 118–122).<sup>1</sup> Located on the right bank of the Danube River, this small village was the site of a key battle in the liberation of the eastern parts of Yugoslavia in November 1944 and one of the strategic points in the final phase of the liberation of Europe.<sup>2</sup> The documentary had aimed to promote Yugoslavia's political alliance with the Soviet Union, but after the political and diplomatic ties between the two countries were severed in 1948, its public distribution was abruptly suspended. Using original wartime footage and animations that illustrated military tactics, the first part of the film explains the chronology, dynamics, and consequences of the historic battle. This is followed by scenes of early post-war memorialization practices over the graves of fallen soldiers, who were given modest memorials in towns and villages wracked by the war; in this way the film suggested the need to create a more representative, centralized site of memory.<sup>3</sup> The main part of the film is dedicated to the elaborate engineering and creative process in the construction of the Batina memorial complex. The sculptor Antun Augustinčić is introduced as the key protagonist in the creative effort: as he examines the site of the historic event with Communist Party leaders and military personnel, they tell him what the main thematic and spatial specifications of the project should be.<sup>4</sup> The technological and material conditions for the construction of the monument, which were little known to the average citizen, are then fully disclosed. The aim was for the general public to learn about the arduous labour that went into obtaining the materials for the monument (such as cutting and transporting blocks of stone from the Dalmatian island of Brač) as well as the numerous stages in the creative and technical process of producing the statues and reliefs in bronze and stone – from developing the designs, plans and models, to modelling, casting, chiselling, and carving the figures, to the technical realization of plateaus, steps and pedestals (fig. 435).<sup>5</sup> As the film reveals, the construction of the monument

- 1 *Spomenik zahvalnosti Crvenoj armiji (Monument in Gratitude to the Red Army)*, written and directed by Milan Katić, cinematography by Frano Vodopivec, Hrvoje Sarić, and Hugo Ribarić, Jadran Film Zagreb, 1948, 18 min., held in the Croatian Film Archives Department – Cinematheque, Croatian State Archives, Zagreb. The film was one of the first ambitious projects produced for the propaganda newsreel *Filmski pregled*. See Leonida Kovač, “Jesmo li još uvijek moderni?”, in *Refleksije vremena 1945.–1955.*, Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb, 2012, p. 285.
- 2 See Nikola Božić, *Batinska bitka*, 2nd ed., Matica srpska and Muzej socijalističke revolucije Vojvodine, Novi Sad, 1990.
- 3 For an overview of the monuments to Soviet soldiers built in Serbia during and immediately after the Second World War, see Olga Manojlović Pintar, “‘Široka strana moja rodnaja’: Spomenici sovjetskim vojnicima podizani u Srbiji 1944–1954”, *Tokovi istorije*, nos. 1–2, 2005, pp. 134–144.
- 4 Augustinčić is the only person in the film presented as an “artist” (e.g. “the artist’s idea turns into a work”): he is shown working with the sculptors Pino Grassi and Radeta Stanković on the main figure, which symbolizes Victory, and with Grga Antunac and Rudolf Ivanković on the group of Red Army soldiers. We know, however, that the architect Drago Galić designed the architectural layout and that Ante Despot, Želimir Janeš, and Ivan Sabolić were also involved in making the sculptures. The film also shows the sculptor Frano Kršinić creating the plaster models for the five stone figures that illustrate five kinds of weapons used by the Red Army (see also fig. 120).
- 5 Films documenting artistic production were also made in the interwar period, such as *Modeliranje, lijevanje i cizeliranje Meštrovićevih Indijanaca, 1927–1928 (Modelling, Casting, and Chasing Meštrović’s*



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 Frames from the film *Monument in Gratitude to the Red Army* (director Milan Katić, 1948), showing different phases of the construction of the monument in Batina, Croatia. For images of the monument, see figs. 118–122.

depended not only on the close collaboration of artists, architects, and engineers, but also on the extensive participation of skilled workers and the mobilization of nationalized public resources, such as building and sculpting materials, transportation, and construction equipment. Early on, the Yugoslav architects and artists had assumed control of the Batina project from the Soviet engineers,<sup>6</sup> so the expeditious realization of such a grand collective endeavour demonstrated the new state's capacity for highly

*Indian*, 1927–1928) by the director Milan Marjanović. This film, however, was not intended for general distribution in public cinemas. See Dejan Kosanović, *Kinematografija i film u Kraljevini SHS / Kraljevini Jugoslaviji, 1918–1941*, Filmski centar Srbije, Belgrade, 2011, p. 74.

- 6 As Katarina Mohar notes, Marshall Tito had promised the Red Army command that the Batina monument would be finished before August 1, 1945, so that Soviet troops could pass by it on their way home. But “a group of artists, led by Augustinčić, opposed the initial plans, which allowed for the timely construction of the monument, managing to delay the deadline and bring about the replacement of the project leader”. The monument was not completed until 1947. Katarina Mohar, “‘Freedom is a Monument’: The Victory Monument in Murska Sobota – Its Erection, Destiny and Context”, *Acta historiae artis Slovenica*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2013, p. 122.

professional memorial production, a capacity that would only improve over the following decades.

Described as an “example of the massive creative power of the [Yugoslav] people, who are today united in building socialism”, the process of monument building, so meticulously documented in the film, became a powerful metaphor for the construction of the new society. Despite the altered political messages, which continued to change even after 1948, and the proliferation of stylistic and technological approaches as well as different commissioning mechanisms, this metaphor continued to be felt in the ambitious memorial projects of the following decades, especially those intended to mobilize the whole of Yugoslavia through federal competitions and fundraising campaigns. Yet, the ideological matrix of socialist monument-making – which necessitated not only the acknowledgement of the collective labour behind the art practice, but also the inclusion of a wide range of social actors at all levels and phases of memorial production – created constant tensions and variances with the growing efforts to apply the modernist paradigm in this particular field of artistic practice. Nothing reveals these contradictions and tensions more than the position of individual authors and the modes of their involvement in these processes.

## Monuments and Authorship

Despite being a central preoccupation of the modernist paradigm, the notion of authorship has not been thoroughly examined in relation to the production of war memorials and monuments. Although the historical avant-gardes radically challenged the notion of the artistic genius, and Marxist analyses insisted on addressing the question of labour within the art system, it was only with post-structuralism and – more precisely – with the introduction of the concept of the “counter-memorial” in the 1980s that new concepts of authorship in memorial, public, and socially engaged art started to proliferate.<sup>7</sup> Current discussions on the issue suggest that the notion of authorship in the production of publicly commissioned or collectively produced works of art is still an open and largely unexplored field of study.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, the radical interrogation of the sociopolitical function of monuments, as well as the incongruous modernist stance on the question of artistic autonomy in relation to such overtly political tasks as state-sponsored commemorative practices, have haunted the discourse on this topic throughout the 20th century, which is permeated with paradoxical notions of “invisibility” and “impossibility.”<sup>9</sup>

- 7 Notable examples are Jochen Gerz’s “public authorship” and Thomas Hirschhorn’s “unshared authorship”. See Jochen Gerz, “Toward Public Authorship”, *Third Text*, vol. 18, no. 6, 2004, pp. 649–656; and Thomas Hirschhorn, “Gramsci Monument”, *Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2015, pp. 213–240.
- 8 See, for example, Danielle Child’s analysis of Hirschhorn’s “monuments” in Chapter 3 of her book *Working Aesthetics: Labour, Art and Capitalism*, Bloomsbury, London, 2019.
- 9 The notion of invisibility – which derives from Robert Musil’s statement in his 1927 essay “Monuments”: “There is nothing in the world as invisible as monuments” (*Selected Writings*, Continuum, New York, 1986, p. 320) – has often been used in academic discourse to describe the highly problematic position of monuments in the (art) history of the 20th century. On the notion

The additional burden of the “post-socialist condition”,<sup>10</sup> which imposes new forms of ideological resentment towards the symbols of the “totalitarian past”, has put these objects in a rather schizophrenic position; along with their rigorous aesthetic evaluation and canonization, they are also continually dismissed or trivialized as “alien” relics of failed political alternatives. While the modernist approach operates with notions of the “masterpiece”, “originality” and “creative genius”, the post-socialist view – often embedded in post-Marxist theory or enmeshed in an anti-communist ideological matrix – aims to reduce these monuments to ideological tools and their authors to political hirelings devoid of any substantial artistic agency.

By pointing to the various changeable modes of monument production within the given historical and political-geographic framework, this chapter aims to question the normative notion of authorship in memorial production and suggest a wider scope of analytical possibilities for the phenomenon as a whole. One way to achieve this is to recognize the co-existing levels of memorial production, which generated different commissioning models and conditioned distinct types of authorship. Also, by looking beyond the pervading notion of the male “artistic genius” as the central agent of artistic production in the post-war period, and taking into account the memorial authors’ manifold reciprocal relations with other social actors within the complex and dynamic system of monument production,<sup>11</sup> this analysis seeks to address the “blind spots” of public art production within the production of memory in socialist Yugoslavia. By focusing on its contradictions – such as high-modernist individualism vs. amateur and collaborative practices, or the affirmation of the female historical subject vs. the limited participation of female authors – we open up new analytical perspectives on authorship in memorial sculpture and architecture, while affirming agents and aspects that have persistently slipped through the cracks of modernity and staking out a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

## The Stratification of Memorial Production in Yugoslavia

Memorials and monuments, with their pronounced social function of defining communities and constructing political identities, have always been part of the sphere of overtly political interests and, as such, have always involved a broad, dynamic social engagement as well as an alert critical reception. In Europe and elsewhere, following the political and social upheavals after the Second World War, these interests generated, facilitated, and fertilized an ever more complex relation between art and politics,

of impossibility, see Bernard Ceysson’s often quoted essay “The Impossible Statue”, in *Europa Nach der Flut: Kunst 1945–1965*, ed. Silvia Sauquet, Thomas M. Messer et al., Künstlerhaus, Vienna, and Fundación la Caixa, Barcelona, 1995, pp. 522–530.

10 I am referring to the concept developed by the American critical theorist Nancy Fraser in *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the “Postsocialist” Condition*, Routledge, New York, 1997.

11 See Sanja Horvatinčić, “Spomenici iz razdoblja socijalizma u Hrvatskoj – Prijedlog tipologije” (“Memorials from the Socialist Era in Croatia – Typology Model”), doctoral dissertation, University of Zadar, Zadar, 2017, pp. 40–139.

which became particularly evident in memorial architecture and sculpture. Monuments and memorials were built not only to commemorate landmark events and unprecedented numbers of victims and heroes, but also to express and keep potent the rival ideologies throughout the turbulent Cold War era.<sup>12</sup> The post-Cominform Yugoslav leadership, as one of its strategies for securing an “in-between” position in the polarized global politics,<sup>13</sup> opted to grant relative autonomy to the sphere of culture and arts.<sup>14</sup> But as Ljiljana Kolečnik observes, contrary to the popular image of the relationship between art and the state in socialist societies, this relationship did not include the complete passivation of artists. Rather, artists accepted an entirely new form of politically pragmatic Art-State relation which – from that moment on and for both parties concerned – was on rather clear foundations. Seemingly removed from any direct and open ideological expectations, relieved of market pressure by constant financial governmental support, artists were invited to enjoy that new, almost ideal situation without any unnecessary lamentations over the social and ethical responsibilities of the Arts. The State, on the other hand, employed art within its political schemes in the way it found suitable and appropriate to the currents of the given historical moment.

Kolečnik later notes:

In that respect and through a period of almost thirty years, the State demonstrated a high degree of flexibility regarding incomparable aesthetic and ideological differences amongst art practices which it managed to incorporate into the field of its immediate political interest. From the present point of view, it is even justified to say that there was no form of expression which did not find its place within the scope of that field – from eclectic mild-modernism and various types of abstraction to so-called “primitivism” in the 1950s, from neo-constructivism or “socialist aestheticism” in the 1960s, to the conceptual art of the 1970s.<sup>15</sup>

- 12 In the past few decades there have been numerous symposia, exhibitions, and scholarly publications on the relation between post-war art and politics as reflected in public and commemorative sculpture, including “Sculpture in Postwar Europe and America, 1945–1959”, special issue, *Art Journal*, vol. 53, no. 4, winter 1994; *Figuration/Abstraction: Strategies for Public Sculpture in Europe 1945–1968*, ed. Charlotte Benton, Routledge, London and New York, 2004; and *Art in Europe 1945–1968: Facing the Future*, ed. Eckhart Gillen and Peter Weibel, Lannoo, Tielt, Belgium, 2016.
- 13 Here I refer to the notion of “in-betweenness” as discussed by a number of leading scholars on Yugoslav art and architecture, which should not, however, be confused with the notion of “in-betweenness” used by the post-colonial cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha (as in *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994). See, for example, Ljiljana Kolečnik, *Između Istoka i Zapada: Hrvatska umjetnost i likovna kritika 50-ih godina (Between East and West: Croatian Art and Art Criticism in the 1950s)*, Institut za povijest umjetnosti, Zagreb, 2006; and Wolfgang Thaler, Maroje Mrduljaš, and Vladimir Kulić, *Modernism In-between: The Mediatory Architectures of Socialist Yugoslavia*, Jovis Verlag, Berlin, 2012.
- 14 The Communist Party of Yugoslavia began gradually withdrawing from the spheres of culture and science at the end of the 1940s. This process began with a speech by Edvard Kardelj in Ljubljana in 1949 and was finalized with Kardelj’s speech at a meeting of the Commission for Ideological-Political Work, held as part of the Third Congress of the League of Communists of Serbia in Belgrade in 1952. Edvard Kardelj, *Izlaganja na III. kongresu SK Srbije*, Rad, Belgrade, 1954, p. 14, cited in Kolečnik, *Između Istoka i Zapada*, p. 91.
- 15 Ljiljana Kolečnik, “Dangerous Liaisons: The Relationship Between Art and the Socialist State:



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*The Franja Partisan Hospital, near Cerklno, Slovenia, at the official opening of the historical site, in May 1946 (fig. 436); a postcard of the Franja Partisan Hospital from the mid-1950s (fig. 437).*

When it came to memorial production, however, the relationship between the state and artists was conditioned by a larger and arguably more complex set of parameters. Compared to the institutionalized art system, the field of memorial production had a wider scope with a greater variety of social agents who participated, or felt entitled to participate, in the decision-making and production processes, and who were less bound to the established roles and hierarchies of the art system.<sup>16</sup> The degree to which political decisions and non-expert aesthetic preferences could influence the final outcome of a memorial project depended on the specific constellation of legitimate agents in the decision making, as well as pragmatic strategies and unofficial negotiations, which were employed differently at different levels of memorial production. Most commissions and decisions were made at lower levels of the political and social apparatus, such as local branches of the Federation of Veterans Associations of the People's Liberation War, municipal people's councils (*Mjesni narodni odbori*), commune-level branches of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia, political associations and workers' councils, and even individuals.<sup>17</sup> It is important to point out not only that commissioning methods and decision-making processes changed throughout the period, but also that they always coexisted with, and were conditioned by, diverse and intertwined factors on various levels of production, from shifts in memory politics, to governmental reforms, to the evolving trends in artistic and architectural practices.<sup>18</sup>

The Croatian Experience in the 1950s", in *Local Strategies, International Ambitions: Modern Art in Central Europe 1918–1968. Papers from the International Conference, Prague, 11–14 June 2003*, ed. Vojtěch Lahoda, Artefactum, Prague, 2006, pp. 213, 218.

16 See Kolečnik, *Između Istoka i Zapada*, pp. 30–31.

17 For a focused analysis on this topic, see Heike Karge's chapter, "Local Practices and 'Memory from Above'", in the present book, pp. 92–113.

18 Important changes in managing and sustaining memorial production were introduced with the territorial management reforms of the 1950s and with the creation of self-managing interest



No single, centrally planned policy for directing or controlling these processes ever functioned very well, despite the efforts of different political bodies or specific proposals.<sup>19</sup> Rather, commemorative and monument-making practices came about and developed as a consequence of various trajectories that originated in the early post-war period and largely irrespective of the development of cultural politics and the art system. First of all, there was the populace's immediate and widespread social need to memorialize the war victims. Combined with the political interest in canonizing key political and military events, and the institutionalization of a memory politics through the hierarchical party-controlled veterans' organization, the situation was not unlike that in other countries around the world after the war. Its intensity in Yugoslavia was a direct consequence of the country having suffered one of the highest rates of civilian and military deaths in Europe,<sup>20</sup> and of the fact that the Communist Party, through its successful leadership of the national antifascist resistance, had won massive support throughout Yugoslavia, allowing it to assume political power and establish its hegemony without much difficulty after the war. Another important factor was the heritage institutions – monument preservation offices, museums, and academic institutions – which authorized and legitimized the “War and Revolution” narrative by listing memorial objects, sites, and landscapes as part of the national heritage, thus significantly influencing the thematic and spatial parameters that directly informed the design of the monuments. This was achieved, for example, by emphasizing the importance of preserving and exhibiting the material culture of the recent past, from wartime artefacts and significant buildings, sites, and compounds such as Partisan hospitals and clandestine military bases, to entire battlefields

communities (SIZ) after the 1974 constitutional reform. See Kolešnik's chapter, “Cultural Models and Cultural Policies in Socialist Yugoslavia”, in the present book, pp. 61, 84–88.

19 See Karge, “Local Practices and ‘Memory from Above’”, pp. 103–113.

20 Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, Penguin, New York, 2005, p. 18.

and Partisan-held territories (see, for example, the Partisan hospital *Franja* on figs. 436–437).

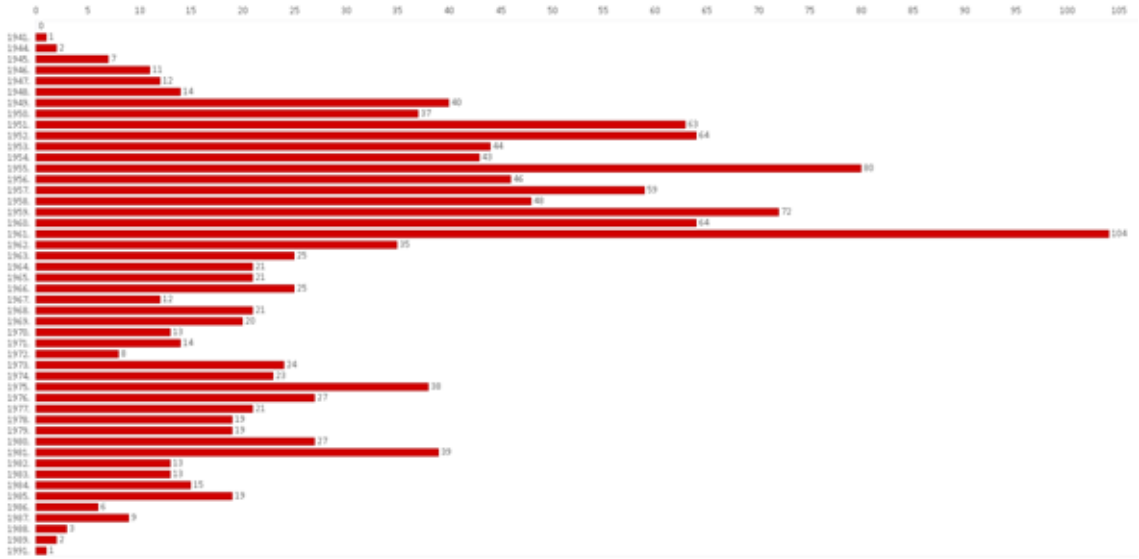
Although a comprehensive understanding of the gradual stratification of memorial production should be sought at the intersection of various trajectories, this production was never structurally within the range of interests covered by Yugoslav cultural politics *per se* but was primarily within the domain of memory and heritage politics as well as the social activities related to commemorative practices.<sup>21</sup> Influences from the sphere of official cultural politics are most clearly discernible at the highest levels of production. These influences were the result of including intellectuals and the representatives of federal or republic professional organizations (such as art and architectural associations) in the conception, organization, and selection of projects for monuments and memorial complexes. The competitive selection system, which was organized at the federal or republic levels, not only facilitated innovation in the formal and conceptual solutions for monuments; it also served as a stronghold of professionalization in the field of memorial production, which in turn enabled further stratification. This generated a growing disproportion in what was perceived as the “aesthetic quality” of monuments: the “aesthetic disproportion” between memorials produced at the highest levels and semi-professional, amateur, or mass-produced works, which became even more pronounced through the course of the 1960s with larger investments in high-level production, was in most republics the consequence of the quantitative peak of memorial production in the early 1960s (fig. 438).

The focus on “aesthetic quality” was further enhanced through the proliferation of theoretical discussions and fervent debates about monuments in the public media, mainly by intellectuals and art critics who, aware of but not necessarily guided by the theoretical discussions taking place mainly in the West, developed an elaborate Yugoslav critical discourse on monuments – which itself offers an important subject for further study. This critical discourse converged with memory politics in the overlapping interests of the veterans’ organization, one of whose main objectives since the beginning of 1960s had been the mediation of “revolutionary traditions” to the younger generations.<sup>22</sup> With this agenda on the table, the veterans, too, embraced the contemporary aesthetic trends, which became noticeable in the way the formal and programmatic designs for monuments incorporated and anticipated cultural and educational activities, as could be seen in efforts to expand and elaborate the infrastructural components for educational and commemorative events at the memorial sites – for example, open-air classrooms centred on existing monuments,<sup>23</sup>

21 For historical studies on Yugoslav cultural politics, see Kolešnik’s *Između Istoka i Zapada* as well as her articles “Dangerous Liaisons” (cited in n. 15) and “Cultural Models and Cultural Policies in Socialist Yugoslavia” (in the present book); Ljubodrag Dimić, *Agitprop kultura: agitpropovska faza kulturne politike u Srbiji 1945–1952*, Rad, Belgrade, 1988; Goran Miloradović, *Lepota pod nadzorom: sovjetski kulturni uticaji u Jugoslaviji: 1945–1955*, Institut za savremenu istoriju, Belgrade, 2012. For an analysis of Yugoslav memory politics, see Heike Karge, *Sećanje u kamenu – okamenjeno sećanje?*, Biblioteka XX vek, Belgrade, 2014.

22 For more on this topic, see Karge, *Sećanje u kamenu – okamenjeno sećanje?*, pp. 53–65.

23 The description of monuments as “open-air classrooms” was first introduced by Gal Kirn and Robert Burghardt in “Yugoslavian Partisan Memorials: Between Memorial Genre, Revolutionary Aesthetics



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A diagram showing the total number of monuments unveiled per year in Croatia in the period 1941 to 1991, based on an analysis of 1,737 monuments.

or memorial houses whose hybrid architectural-sculptural designs served as iconic monumental sculptures, commemorative venues, museum buildings, and cultural centres all at the same time.

Stratification within memorial production was based primarily on the authors' reputation or success in the art world, which was largely contingent on their social status and symbolic capital, as well as on the commissioning procedures, which were guided by the desired social and aesthetic impact of the monuments. This implied the involvement of different decision-makers, from local residents to specialized regulatory state bodies, which resulted in visible distinctions between different types of authorship, most of which differed from the modernist ideal of autonomous "artist-genius": from collective or anonymous production by ordinary citizens, factory workers or school children, to small-scale projects by local craftsmen and amateurs, to production linked to academy workshops or professional artists specializing in memorials. While craftsmen and amateurs were mostly engaged by direct commission from local authorities and organizations, the professional artists were given more prestigious and costly tasks and were typically selected by expert juries in highly competitive public competitions. Both models of production allowed for a variety of social actors to take part. And these chances were rather good, making the field open and inclusive and resulting in a body of heterogeneous and versatile memorials,

and Ideological Recuperation", in "Of Regret and Other Back Pages", special issue, *Manifesta Journal*, no. 16, 2012, p. 67.

even if, from the perspective of art professionals and heritage experts, they were usually mediocre and generally unsatisfying.

## From Prophetic Individualism to Socially Engaged Practices

A question that is commonly raised in discussions about commemorative public works in socialist countries – and less frequently in the discourse on monuments constructed in the capitalist world in the same period – is: Did the artists who created the monuments willingly comply with the imposed tasks and official narratives, and thus became “regime artists”, or did they have no choice in the matter? Research shows that the enormous social and political demand for monuments led to greater production, which offered opportunities for a majority of artists, but especially sculptors, to take part in public memorial projects. According to my own statistics, at least 185 recorded sculptors and about 100 architects and landscape architects took part in memorial production in Croatia in the period between 1945 and 1990.<sup>24</sup> More opportunities for public assignments, in turn, improved an artist’s material status and enhanced their visibility and structural position within the new society. In other words, in the absence of a capitalist art market, artists had to work and establish their practice primarily through state commissions and funding, a large proportion of which was undoubtedly for commemorative work. Yet it would be wrong to think that, after the initial post-war period with its programmatic cultural-political strategy, artists and architects had little choice regarding their preferred field of production. While involvement in state-sponsored memorial projects certainly benefited an artist’s or architect’s career, many other publicly funded opportunities also existed or were starting to appear, and many artists and architects achieved successful careers without taking part in or showing any particular interest in war-related commemorative projects. Many artists, for example, were involved in self-managed businesses or tourist enterprises that competed internationally, and some even built successful careers through international art markets. It is important to note, however, that those who came from previously underprivileged social groups did indeed benefit from the large number of public commissions for monuments, just as they did from other advantages offered by the socialist system, starting with a fully funded education at any of the growing number of art academies and schools of architecture.<sup>25</sup>

For many artists and architects invested in monument production, such projects were not unavoidable or required assignments, nor were they merely a chance to put bread on the table or make a notable career; memorials offered these artists and architects an opportunity to express and mediate their own war experiences and

24 See Horvatinčić, “Spomenici iz razdoblja socijalizma u Hrvatskoj”, pp. 118–119.

25 After the Second World War, all segments of public education expanded, with many new institutions created to achieve the goal of free universal education. In addition to the art academies in Sarajevo and Skopje, founded in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively, a new system of higher education in applied arts and design was developed, with continually growing admission rates and student numbers.



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Architect Andrija Mutnjaković and sculptor Stevan Luketić in the studio, developing the project for the competition for the *Monument to the Victory of the Revolution of the People of Slavonia*, in Kamenska, Croatia, 1960. For the monument that was selected in the competition and realized in 1968, see figs. 298–299.

traumas – themes that, as with other European artists at the time, also preoccupied their studio work. Many of them had been actively involved in the war, either as victims of fascist persecution or as fighters and supporters in the antifascist resistance – experiences that often left a significant mark on their post-war production. Some of the key figures of the interwar sculptural scene in Croatia, such as Antun Augustinčić and Vanja Radauš, started documenting their wartime experience before the war ended and returned to the topic again and again in the dozens of public monuments they created throughout their prolific post-war careers. Others, such as Lojze Dolinar and Frano Kršinić, who had spent the war in occupied cities, sometimes even serving in high administrative positions in the fascist governments, continued to be highly productive in the post-war period. This generation of artists, whose expertise in monumental projects had been confirmed before the war,<sup>26</sup> rarely took part in major post-war public competitions, not only because as academy professors they felt entitled to receive direct commissions or submitted proposals even before the public competition was announced,<sup>27</sup> but also because their stylistic approach had lost

26 See Beti Žerovc's chapter, "The Development of Public Monuments and Monuments to the Fallen on the Territory of Yugoslavia from the Late 19th Century to 1941", in the present book, pp. 20–57.

27 Vanja Radauš's proposal for the monument to the victims of the Jasenovac concentration camp (1951–1952) was the first artistic response to this project, which in the 1960s would be realized from a different proposal by the architect Bogdan Bogdanović. In 1957, on his own initiative, Radauš made a sketch for a monument in Kamenska, Croatia, a project that did not become the subject

favour since the mid-1950s and competition juries were turning away from the kind of classical typologies and figurative sculpture that characterized their work.

The shift to the modernist paradigm, meanwhile, endowed the younger generation of artists with the mythic role of “secular prophets”, whose individual artistic expression was expected to mediate and transpose such abstract ideas as revolution, victory, brotherhood and unity, or the inconceivable traumas of human death and suffering. The great interest and investment in commemorating war events created a fertile ground for expanding existing methods and approaches or devising original formal and typological solutions for monuments.<sup>28</sup> These efforts shaped and guided entire artistic careers, such as that of the Zagreb-based sculptor Dušan Džamonja, who provided several accounts about how his involvement with the topic of the Holocaust, and especially his proposals for big international competitions for the former concentration camps in Dachau and Auschwitz, left significant and lasting marks on his sculptural methods:

In [these proposals] ... I managed to achieve that psychological identification between symbols and methods. To understand this symbolism, I believe no simple example could provide a better explanation than this: when I am hammering a bunch of nails into a piece of wood, it means – in a psychological sense – the torture of a living organism. Once I have securely affixed the metal coat, I use the method of burning the wood, after which the metal coat remains as a kind of an eternal witness and trace of the former life. ... I believe that this type of engagement has an influence on the method of my studio art practice.<sup>29</sup>

Similar accounts have been left by his contemporary, the Serbian sculptor Olga Jevrić, who developed her unique sculptural method and language through repeated efforts to find appropriate solutions to meet the specifications in public competitions for monuments in Serbia and Montenegro:

There were things smouldering inside me caused by the period of wartime tragedies, the challenges, and they led me to the topic of monuments. In 1951, a proposal for a monument in Prokuplje – a block of stone in the shape of a *stećak*<sup>30</sup> –

of a federal competition until a few years later. “Zapisnik osnivačke sjednice Odbora za izgradnju spomenika palim borcima Slavonije-Našice” (“Minutes of the Founding Meeting of the Committee for the Construction of the Monument to the Fallen Partisans of Slavonija-Našice”), Koordinacioni odbor SUBNOR Našice (Coordination Committee of SUBNOR Našice), July 21, 1957, Zvečevo, p. 7, HR-DAOS, State Archives in Osijek (hereafter DAOS).

- 28 These innovative projects were soon recognized by foreign architecture critics, who presented these monuments in such publications as the British *Architectural Review* and the French *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* (see especially issue no. 108, in 1963), as well as the Soviet journal *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo SSSR*. Adolf Rieth's book *Den Opfern der Gewalt: KZ-Opfermale der europäischen Völker*, Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, Tübingen, 1968, which appeared the following year in English as *Monuments to the Victims of Tyranny*, F. A. Praeger, New York, 1969, included monuments by the Yugoslav architects Edvard Ravnikar, Nandor Glid, Vojin Bakić, Zdenko Kolacio, Svetislav Ličina and Prvoslav Janković, Bogdan Bogdanović, Bratislav Stojanović, and Dušan Džamonja.
- 29 Dušan Džamonja, “Kozara je afirmacija naše NOB-e”, *Pobjeda*, July 6, 1972, n.p.
- 30 *Stećak* (plural: *stećci*) is a Serbo-Croatian term for several types of medieval tombstones found in



440  
Olga Jevrić working on the sculpture *Proposal for a Monument*  
– *Bubanj*, in her studio in Staro Sajmište, Belgrade, 1959.

experienced as an expression of dissent, as resistance to violence, revealed to me that space in communication with mass was an active element. The next step was a proposal for a monument in Milanovac. Space penetrated the arranged relations of the blocks of a deconstructed *stećak*. I had the feeling that these blocks had been activated, that they were radiating, as if space had become the conductor of some miraculous energy charge. These discoveries were precious. ... That turmoil, those experiences brought by the historical period that marked our youth, those things in me, the resistances, poured through like an avalanche, and it seemed to

Bosnia–Herzegovina and in neighbouring regions of Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia. The earliest known examples come from the mid-12th century, while their production reaching its peak in the 14th and 15th centuries. In socialist Yugoslavia the *stećak* was used as a politically potent, unique cultural symbol of Yugoslav multi-ethnicity and multiconfessionalism, which transcended national borders. It was not uncommon for the figural and ornamental motifs and typologies of the *stećci* to be used in modern art practices.

me that the method of construction I had discovered gave me a chance to convey and express them.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike Džamonja's dozens of large-scale memorial projects, Jevrić's fruitful initial explorations in this field were never realized (see one of her unrealized *Proposals for a Monument* on fig. 440). As I will discuss in more detail in the last section of this chapter, women's involvement in memorial production – however superbly developed – was in various ways disadvantaged and thus still remains less known. Even so, women's reflections on their own personal and social experience of the wartime's upheavals, suffering, and struggles were no less intense and formative in their artistic development. Both Džamonja's and Jevrić's interpretations of these topics were distinctly introspective and concerned with the expression of individual emotion, while the methods they employed were based on intuition and self-examination. Both sculptors explained their motivation for addressing these topics as either inevitable or therapeutic, and made a point of defending their autonomous choices. As Džamonja stressed: "There is nothing accidental about my participation in competitions for monuments to war victims; it can only be explained by my wish to thus gain some relief from the nightmare. These are not tasks, not obligations, but something much deeper, associated with my sub-consciousness, for my entire being."<sup>32</sup>

Jevrić, on the other hand, claimed: "[I] never subordinated my monument proposals to any social prescription. They were defined as markers, mementos, as projections of complex inner states, emotions, the consciousness of confronting the primordial manifestations of the struggle between good and evil, the instinct for destruction, and the need for construction."<sup>33</sup> Such claims, however, were characteristic of most professional sculptors, regardless of their formal choices. Indeed, most artists strongly rejected the crude division between "figurative and non-figurative styles", arguing for a clearer distinction between "those who know how to express their view of the world through artistic means, and those who only descriptively register it".<sup>34</sup>

Although most of the high-profile artists identified with or strived towards the modernist ideal of the artist-genius – albeit sometimes apologetically – they were also aware that their work was directly dependent on the social demand. In an essay titled "Sculpture and Society", published in the proceedings of the First Congress of Yugoslav Sculptors held in 1960 in Valjevo, Serbian sculptor Vojin Stojić argues:

As opposed to other kinds of visual art, sculpture is, along with architecture, bound directly to society by the nature of its material aspect. It has never been, nor could be the preoccupation of a single individual. That is not its atmosphere. Otherwise, it ceases to exist. [This is true] especially of a specific type of sculpture – the monumental, memorial, votive; it is unimaginable without the immediate social interest.<sup>35</sup>

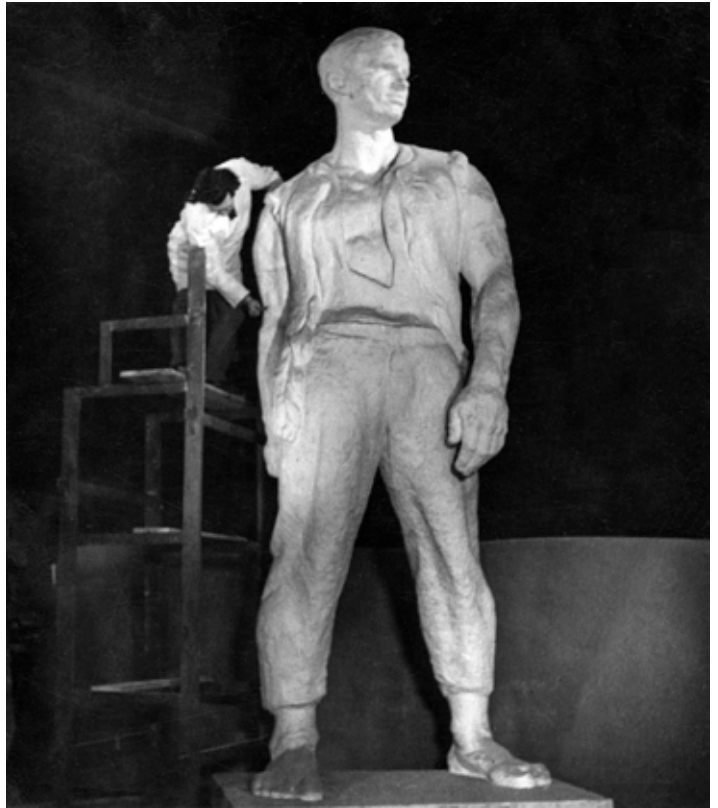
31 Olivera Janković, "Razgovori sa Olgom Jevrić (1992–1993)", *Arte.rs*, [http://www.arte.rs/sr/umetnici/olga\\_jevric-134/tekstovi/razgovori\\_sa\\_olgom\\_jevric-1294/](http://www.arte.rs/sr/umetnici/olga_jevric-134/tekstovi/razgovori_sa_olgom_jevric-1294/) (accessed December 18, 2018).

32 Dušan Džamonja, "Obelisk i 60.000 ruža", *Vjesnik*, January 19–20, 1975, p. 7.

33 Janković, "Razgovori sa Olgom Jevrić (1992–1993)".

34 D. Horvatić, "Biti kipar, govoriti oblikom", interview with Vanja Radauš, *Telegram*, December 8, 1967, p. 5.

35 Vojin Stojić, "Društvo i skulptura", in *Prvi skup vajara Jugoslavije u Valjevu od 1. do 3. X. 1961 g.*, Valjevo, 1961, p. 5.



441  
Kosta Angeli Radovani working on the  
*Monument to the Uprising of the People  
of Drežnica* in his studio in Zagreb, 1949.

Many of the most prolific monument designers remained consistently loyal to figurative art and saw the human form as fundamental to the commemorative gesture. The Montenegrin sculptor Luka Tomanović, for instance, openly objected to the bias against “figurative sculptors”, which, he claimed, “banned” realism from memorial production:

The most difficult thing is to make a realistic sculpture that has aesthetic value. Here the main component is the artist’s emotion, followed by their thought. For me, this has always been primary. If a painting or sculpture does not “convey” something, then it has no artistic value. But as a member of many juries, I have noticed that artists always present symbolic sculptures in competitions, because they know that realism stands no chance of winning.<sup>36</sup>

By the same token, the Croatian sculptor Kosta Angeli Radovani’s insistence on the universal humanist message in the figurative approach should not be discounted

36 Milan Čukić, “Luka Tomanović, vajar: ‘Samo ne o sorealizmu’”, an interview with Luka Tomanović, *Četvrti jul*, no. 1238, February 11, 1985, p. 14.

on the basis of its anachronism with respect to the new strategies for mediating social memory. Rather, what is at work here is a complex understanding of the sculptural medium as the essential part of a monument, which aims to bring artistic creation closer to the working class.<sup>37</sup> Radovani saw the shift in strategies for mediating social memory through monuments as the artists' "enlightened relaxation" of their social responsibility. Although he acknowledged that what constitutes a monument can change – the monument "can even disappear, become a school, a bridge, a highway, an educational fund, or the latest photothermal instrument for the early detection of breast cancer" – he continued to emphasize the necessity of "the sharp, simple, almost technical language of the essence" which the monument imposes in order to "more fully adhere to its content and material".<sup>38</sup>

Meanwhile, certain art critics at the time offered ever more radical views of the social function of memorials. Reflecting Lewis Mumford's thesis on rejecting the monument's representative social function,<sup>39</sup> as well as the practice of building utilitarian objects with commemorative or symbolic meaning, neo-avant-garde art critics and architects (but less often sculptors) argued for the total abandonment of the monument as an artistic object:

Putting it more simply, a good, contemporary monument should not contain the gesture of glorification, but: the act of continuing the idea and work of those to whom the monument is erected. Accordingly: the function of the monument should not be: a signal for meditation on the past, but an act for the future.<sup>40</sup>

In sharp contrast to the formal and creative concerns of sculptors, the Croatian architect Darko Venturini went as far as to propose in mid-1970s that the living environment of the memorial site itself be the ultimate form of commemoration.<sup>41</sup> This idea was contained in the novel memorialization model developed in the 1970s, namely, elaborate spatial plans for protected memorial areas (*spomen-područja*), which were intended to emphasize the historical significance of the entire landscape – whether in the remote mountains of Petrova Gora, Kalnik, or Kozara, or in the Sutjeska River canyon, or on the Adriatic island of Vis – while at the same time addressing their environmental and economic potential for the local communities (for *Petrova Gora Memorial Area* see fig. 442).<sup>42</sup> Although such projects included

37 See, for example, Kosta Angeli Radovani, "Angažman kao kriterij", *Večernji list*, July 3-4, 1976, p. 12.

38 Kosta Angeli Radovani, "Lutanja između dobrih i loših spomenika", in *Između proroka i radnika: Ogledi o stoljećima hrvatskoga kiparstva*, ed. Ive Šimat Banov, Erasmus naklada, Zagreb, 2007, pp. 279-280.

39 Lewis Mumford, "The Death of the Monument [1937]", in *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art*, ed. Leslie Martin, Ben Nicholson, and Naum Gabo, Praeger Publishers, New York and Washington, 1971, pp. 263-270.

40 Radoslav Putar, "Smisao i mogućnost spomenika", *Arhitektura, urbanizam*, no. 10, 1961, p. 46.

41 Darko Venturini, "Spomenik našeg doba", *Arhitektura*, no. 155, 1975, p. 7.

42 Memorial areas are in many cases stark examples of unfinished modernization projects. Their grandiose monuments and ambitious tourist facilities, such as in the memorial areas on the mountains of Petrova Gora, Croatia (figs. 316-318), Grmeč, Bosnia-Herzegovina (figs. 341-343), or Šamarica, Croatia (figs. 404-408) have been marred by the wars in the 1990s and later privatization, and the localities they were meant to symbolically mark and bring visitors to have been depopulated while the heroic histories of their landscapes are rejected or contested.



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The general physical plan for the *Petrova Gora Memorial Area*, 1972. For the main monument on Petrova Gora, Croatia, see figs. 316–318.

authored sculptural and architectural works, they inherently challenged the conventional notion of single artistic authorship, thus dissociating the notion of the monument from the art field and bringing it closer to the new understanding of the cultural and natural heritage.

Projects for protected memorial areas were complex spatial-planning endeavours that required an interdisciplinary approach, as well as close cooperation with the local communities and various political and social organizations, all of which resulted in long lists of experts and collaborators. The monument was no longer embodied in a single object or building, but in a series of symbolic, and often distinctive, markers aimed at establishing a network of significant checkpoints and trails. Such memorials became meaningful only when people immersed themselves in the historic landscape. One such example is the plan for the memorial area in Udin Woods, near Kranj, developed by a group of young Slovene architects in 1982. Intended as a “recreation centre for the working people”, it featured the typical sculptural and architectural interventions found at more traditional memorial sites.<sup>43</sup>

43 The group was composed of Irena Černič, Damjan Gale, Janez Koželj, and Vojteh Ravnikar. See Stane Bernik, “Arhitektonski spomeniki v Sloveniji”, in *Pogledi na novejšo slovensko arhitekturo in oblikovanje*, Park, Ljubljana, 1992, pp. 120–121. See also Franc Štefe, *Udin boršt*, Komunist, Ljubljana, 1982.

Although memorial areas often featured grandiose complexes, equipped with an elaborate touristic and educational infrastructure, the central aim was to achieve an economically and environmentally sustainable memorial-social environment. In line with international agreements on cultural heritage protection, such projects were realized in close collaboration with landscape architects as well as with experts in heritage and environmental protection; consequently, these concepts followed contemporary approaches to conservation and heritage management, including making visible the different historical layers on the site and presenting the cultural heritage as an active part of the country's socio-economic life.

As in other areas across Yugoslavia in the 1970s, new concepts for memorialization were also applied to the site of the historic Battle of Batina, whose memorial was the subject of the never-released documentary I discussed in the opening of this chapter. That grandiose monument, built in 1947 to honour Yugoslav–Soviet comradeship and dominated by the Augustinčić's symbolic female figure of Victory (see figs. 118–122), not only had long outlived its political message, but it had also long been eclipsed by the formal innovations of dozens of modernist memorial complexes.<sup>44</sup> The new plan for the Batina site included the construction of a new museum and new symbolic infrastructural components, such as a Memorial Bridge honouring the 51st Vojvodina Division, which connected the two sides of the Danube River, one in Croatia, the other in Vojvodina, where the battle took place. Such additions were no longer viewed solely as symbolic gestures – they were also a response to the already tangible economic crisis. As was stated in the plan:

Accordingly, the aim of establishing this memorial area would be not only to mark the significant places and events in a narrow and geographically defined area, but, above all, to give all these markings a socially beneficial function and to plan the subsequent development of the wider area in a way that is beneficial to the lives of citizens and visitors. This means that all aspects of the natural, social, touristic, and economic development must be an integral part of the content of the memorial area. Only in this way is it possible to give it a socially beneficial and acceptable function.<sup>45</sup>

Memorialization was now being used to boost economic development through small local businesses and tourist attractions, such as wine festivals, folklore festivals, biking trails, sailing competitions, etc.<sup>46</sup> If in 1947, the Batina memorial was used to showcase Yugoslav sovereignty and the power of collectivizing natural resources

44 The Batina memorial has had a long journey: from the symbolic bronze statue of Victory after the Second World War, to the bridge, museum, and wine festivals in the 1970s, to its position today looking out, perhaps ominously, over Croatia's – and the European Union's – border with Serbia. Ignored by Croatian memory politics and the national heritage authorities, the memorial area concept has been abandoned and the monument itself has again become the subject of diplomatic relations, with the Russian Federation being one of the few financial investors in the restoration of Croatia's antifascist heritage sites.

45 "Spomen-područje Batina" ("Batina Memorial Area"), 1971–1978, "Proslave" ("Celebrations"), 1971, HR-DAOS-1110, box no. 39, DAOS.

46 Ibid.

and labour, then in the early 1970s, it became yet another model for implementing Yugoslavia's self-managed economic and social policies based on the principle of associated labour.<sup>47</sup>

The tendency to transgress the modernist reliance on the prophetic role of the individual "artistic genius" and to envision monuments that better served living communities – not only as vehicles of remembrance, but also as a way to foster and revitalize the positive social legacy of the People's Liberation Struggle with its values of solidarity, antifascism, and the struggle for emancipation – was paralleled by developments in a completely different sphere of cultural production. The conventional commemorative practices at the major memorial sites, which had become an obligatory part of the Yugoslav educational system, did not easily reflect the interests and concerns of the generation born after the war, nor could they compete with the appeal of the emerging popular culture – and not only because many young people saw the enormous monuments as symbolic of the very political establishment they were now starting to question and criticize. The new generation of artists, too, were not keen on incorporating this type of modernist sculptural and architectural production into their contemporary artistic practice. Among other growing economic and political issues, these artists' criticism targeted specifically the "petrified" concepts and slogans conveyed through these costly memorial projects with their gigantic monuments.<sup>48</sup>

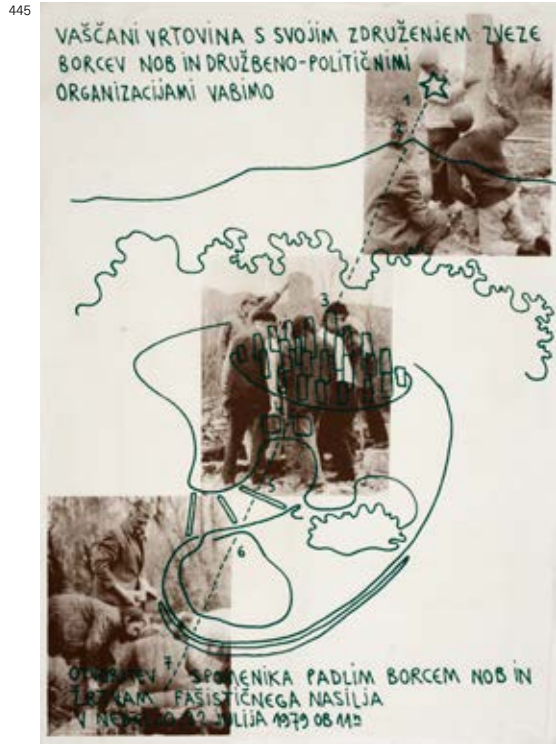
But what might seem like an impossible intersection between neo-avant-garde tendencies and memorial production did in fact occur in Yugoslavia. Marko Pogačnik, one of the best-known Slovene conceptual artists, and a founding member of the neo-avant-garde OHO Group (which later formed the Šempas Family, a commune in the village of Šempas), worked on several memorial projects from late 1970s to mid-1980s. This unusual effort has been framed by the artist himself as a separate stage in his artistic development – he refers to his "network of monuments in the Vipava Valley" as the fifth of seven "chapters" in his oeuvre.<sup>49</sup> (see figs. 443–445). Interestingly, this period in Pogačnik's work coincides with the implementation of new models for protected memorial areas, as described above. Pogačnik, speaking in the third person, describes how he started working in this field:

Virtually at the same time the commune in Šempas wound up, Marko P. was invited by the local chapter of the Slovene League of Combatants [i.e. the Partisan veterans' association] to make, in the village of Vrtovin in the Vipava Valley, a monument to the Partisan resistance fighters who had perished in the war between 1941 and 1945. Marko came up with the idea of applying the principle of collective work, which had evolved in the Šempas Family stage, in the landscape of Vipava Valley. In the years to come there followed invitations from other

47 For a discussion of the principle of associated labour and its relation to cultural politics, see Kolešnik, "Cultural Models and Cultural Policies in Socialist Yugoslavia", pp. 60–62.

48 See Bojana Pejić in conversation with Sanja Horvatinič and Beti Žerovc, "The Politics of Gender Representation and the Spatialization of Power in Socialist Yugoslavia", in the present book, pp. 287–289.

49 Marko Pogačnik, "Back to Art – Art Forward", in *Umetnost življenja – življenje umetnosti / The Art of Life – The Life of Art*, Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, 2012, p. 51.



443–445  
*Monument to the Fallen Fighters of the People's Liberation Struggle, Vrtovin, Slovenia.*  
 Marko Pogačnik (author), 1977–1979.

Poster inviting people to attend the inauguration of the monument in Vrtovin (fig. 445).

villages in the Vipava Valley as well, not all of them related to monuments to dead Partisans.<sup>50</sup>

Not only did the local veterans' organization directly commission a monument from a well-established conceptual artist, but Pogačnik accepted the offer and was willing to let "the artistic aspect of this stage [in his work] yield to the overwhelming ideological and functional parameters of the project". Yet despite the artist's claim that "the monuments in the Vipava Valley were based on the interaction between the artist and the local community" – by which he meant that the monuments, based on variations of a geometric spiral shape, were constructed by members of the local communities under the artist's guidance – the project did not fulfil his intended artistic agenda. While Pogačnik had expected that his involvement would go "beyond the requirements of the public interest for preserving the memory of wartime heroes

50 Ibid.

... the artistic and geometric elements remained in the background, giving way to the service purpose or the symbolic significance of the monuments”.<sup>51</sup> Pogačnik’s notion of “Earth healing”,<sup>52</sup> which has been central in his work since the late 1970s, and the spirally arranged memorial compositions, were unable to satisfy the desired aim of including art in “the social, cultural, and political processes of the given region (under the circumstances of the socialist order)”, but instead, his monuments were treated like any other official commemorative site. The conventional idea of using monuments as sites for rituals of collective remembrance did not fit Pogačnik’s own view of the artistic possibilities of this specific segment of public art production.

## **Invisible Authorship: Amateurism, Craftsmanship, and the Trouble with Art Criticism**

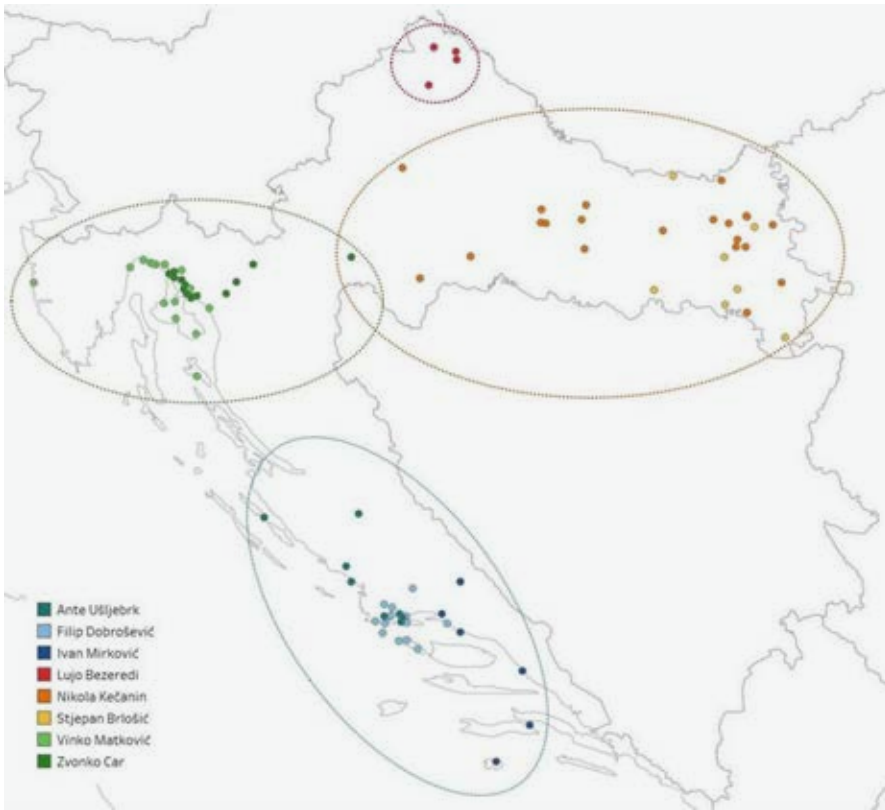
Unlike the examples mentioned in the previous section, most of the monuments in Yugoslavia were not designed by professional artists or architects, nor were they of any particular interest to art critics. A survey of the monuments built in Croatia during socialism shows that approximately a third of them, mostly in rural areas, were made by anonymous or unidentified individuals or collectives.<sup>53</sup> Judging by these monuments’ typology, materials, and limited detailing, their authors were most likely local amateurs or craftsmen such as stonemasons, carpenters, and blacksmiths, whose names are unrecorded and, increasingly, difficult to identify. The typological and formal aspects of these monuments were conditioned by the available materials in the given region, while their morphology and iconography, including any religious elements, often reflected deep-rooted local traditions. The same analysis shows that “authored” monuments, conversely, are concentrated in cities and urbanized areas, where people were motivated, and had the resources, to allocate more funds to the design of significant public spaces; it was here, too, that critical aesthetic assessments were more pronounced.

Another prolific group of monument-makers were the trained artists, mainly sculptors, who adhered to standard academic norms and monument typologies throughout their careers. Unlike their professors at the art academies, whose high-quality work and professional prestige secured them important commissions throughout Yugoslavia and even abroad, these artists operated mainly on the local or

51 Ibid., pp. 51–52.

52 Ibid., p. 52. Pogačnik’s concept of “Earth healing” is based on translating “alternative healing methods that were proving successful with people into the artistic-ecological practice usually called ‘eco-art’”: “For this, he [Pogačnik] schooled himself in discerning the vital energy currents and Earth’s centres and the ways of perceiving them. Art should relevantly complement scientific ecology rather than just repeat its patterns.” The artistic process of earth healing usually involves a method that Pogačnik calls “lithopuncture”: “A recognisable feature of these projects is the use of natural stone columns with carved symbols called ‘cosmograms’” (ibid., p. 56).

53 The analysis was based on 1,737 monuments on the territory of Croatia. See Horvatinčić, “Spomenici iz razdoblja socijalizma u Hrvatskoj”, p. 89.



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The geographical distribution of monuments in Croatia showing that some sculptors worked mostly on the local or regional level. Such sculptors, for the most part, adhered to the standard academic norms and monument typologies throughout their careers.

more limited regional level. Here they found unending demand for familiar, “safe” solutions and standard typologies, such as busts, figurative reliefs, and full-length figures on pedestals, and time-honoured iconographic motifs, such as armed or wounded Partisans, which appear again and again in these monuments. It is likely that, given the high demand for such monuments, these artists had neither the motivation nor ambition to participate in costly public competitions. An analysis of the spatial distribution of the authorship of Croatian monuments clearly indicates the local or regional orientation of this particular group of authors (see fig. 446).<sup>54</sup>

54 Ibid., pp. 100–102.

447



448



447-448  
*Monument to the Fallen  
 Fighters and Victims of Fascist  
 Terror, Degrade, Croatia.*  
 Tonči Martinić (sculptor), 1970.

The standardized motifs and typologies of these authors, as well as their conservative formal treatment of the sculptural elements can overshadow their unique solutions and exceptional sensibility for creating a particular symbolic relation to the localized wartime narratives. These qualities are hard to discern without a micro-historical approach to the wartime event or the use of ethnological and anthropological methods, as in many cases these authors are appropriating the local religious tradition. A telling example is the series of stone monuments created by the stonemason Tonči Martinić in the villages of Dograde and Gustirna in the Trogir hinterland of central Dalmatia: these works recall the basic iconographic composition of a Christian altarpiece (see figs. 447–448). Martinić's typical composition consisted of a central Partisan soldier next to a mother with a child, an ensemble that was completed by a central relief depicting specific, at times even bewildering, scenes from local antifascist resistance stories. The recognizable iconography and the straightforwardness of the depicted scenes and figures allow the monument to communicate easily with the local community even today.

An example of anonymous authorship that relies on local working-class traditions is the *Monument to Mate Mejašić's Group of Insurgents*, constructed in 1976 on the site of an uprising in village of Velika Jelsa near Karlovac, Croatia (see fig. 449). As is often the case with such local initiatives, there are no available archival sources about the commission of the monument, so we are left only with the information inscribed on the memorial plaque, which tells us that the monument was erected by the local community of Velika Jelsa and the workers' collective of the Ilovac Brickyard. The sculpture was composed of specialized machinery parts used for quarrying clay, so we can assume that workers from the brickyard collective were in some way involved in its peculiar design, or at least in the monument-making process. With another work, however, the *Monument to the Fallen Fighters of the Boris Kidrič Light Metals Factory* (1967, see fig. 450), in Lozovac near Šibenik, Croatia, we know that it was designed by the factory worker Niđo Erceg, with assistance from the professional sculptor Lujko Lozica. The monument's vertical element, made of aluminium, resembles a T-ingot, the aluminium plant's main product. Such symbolic use of factory products and machine parts, meant to underscore the profession of the workers who gave their lives for the antifascist resistance, recalls the modernist abstract monuments of the period and, at times (as with the *Monument to Mate Mejašić's Group of Insurgents*), resembles the methods and the aesthetics of French *nouveau réalisme*.

Assemblage techniques were also used by established sculptors, such as Oto Logo, whose sculptures made from armaments and other metal elements were installed mostly in museum interiors. The Slovene writer and amateur sculptor Tone Svetina made more than fifteen memorials composed of old armaments, in the form of both sculptures and reliefs (see figs. 451–454). As a Partisan fighter in the famous Prešeren Brigade in Slovenia's mountainous Gorenjska region, Svetina was drawn to art and developed his method at the front, where he was surrounded by the remnants of grenades from the First World War. The idea of collecting and transforming them into new aesthetic objects came as an immediate response to the experience of war: "Welding fragments into sculptures means setting them in a new rational harmony, which is the basis for beauty through the hidden essence of an idea that gives it the



449  
*Monument to Mate Mejašić's Group of Insurgents, Velika Jelsa near Karlovac, Croatia. 1976.*

450  
*Monument to the Fallen Fighters of the Boris Kidrič Light Metals Factory, Lozovac, Croatia. Nido Erceg (author), Lujo Lozica (sculptor), 1967.*

value of a new whole.”<sup>55</sup> The symbolic act reusing leftover weapons for war monuments was not an exception or a novelty per se, yet the specific manner of welding of the metal parts into an aesthetic whole, symbolically “silencing” the military past by transposing rifles into artistic material, echoes procedures we find in *enformel* painting and sculpture.

Despite compelling similarities to cutting-edge art phenomena in Yugoslav and Western European art, the innovative methods devised by these self-taught artists did not necessarily come through such contemporary art system channels as art journals and galleries, but from their personal experience, symbolic associations, and the available means for creative production. Not part of the modernist art canon,

55 Stana Roman, “Razgovor s pisateljem-borcem Tonetom Svetinom”, *Železar*, vol. 10, no. 49, December 6, 1968, p. 9, cited in Mina Mušinič, “Javni spomeniki 19. in 20. stoletja na Gorenjskem”, doctoral dissertation, Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis – Postgraduate School of Humanities, Ljubljana, 2013, p. 70.

451



451  
*Monument to the Fallen Fighters of the Third Battalion of the Prešeren Brigade, Gorenjska, Slovenia. Tone Svetina (sculptor), 1974.*

452  
*Monument to Struggle and Work, Domžale, Slovenia. Tone Svetina (sculptor), 1975.*

452



453



453  
*Central monument in the Battle of Kozara Memorial Park, Gornji Podgradci, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Tone Svetina (sculptor), 1983.*

454  
*Monument to the Children of Kozara / Wounded Bird, Gornji Podgradci, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Tone Svetina (sculptor), 1983.*

these examples remind us not only that we need to employ a different set of criteria when evaluating amateur memorial production, but also that we need to reconsider presumed borrowings and creative influences.

One of the factors that made it easier these monuments to make such a strong connection with the local community and workers' collectives was, indeed, the fact that there were no normative-aesthetic expert decision-makers involved in the commissioning process. These experts' grand and sophisticated artistic visions, as well as monuments' abstract formal language, often conflicted with the community's limited finances and the local traditions of memorial and visual culture. Since the mid-1950s, and especially since the early 1960s, images of desirable monumental forms were promoted through professional magazines and publications, which drew upon and reproduced the modernist canon. Interestingly, aesthetic and political requirements quickly found common ground in the ultimate moral argument, namely, giving proper honour to the dead.

The frequent unsparing complaints about the low "aesthetic quality" of the majority of memorials can be found in both daily newspapers and professional journals throughout the socialist period. Some critics argued for a controlled, centralized production that would put an end to "amateurism and dilettantism" and stop the "memorial anarchy",<sup>56</sup> while others radically rejected any memorial that featured "elements of past social concepts" and was "entirely unable to express its own society."<sup>57</sup>

This situation eventually generated antagonism between the "experts" and the "amateurs and dilettantes", as well as a significant gap between the "modernized" centres and the "backward" peripheries. Considering the great discrepancy in production conditions, the variety of aesthetic and technical solutions on different levels of production was no surprise.

This discrepancy opened up a debate about the essential communicative function of memorials as vehicles of social memory. In 1968, the Croatian art theorist and critic Vera Horvat Pintarić, when discussing the "receptive capabilities" for Džamonja's new body of work, posed the following question:

Relying on the memorial tradition of the past, the commissioner is still primarily led towards traditional solutions, in the belief that a monument of public interest can serve its function only if it conveys its content in a way that is acceptable to diverse social groups. ... We cannot avoid yet another question: is the contemporary moment, marked by the emergence and development of abstract art, ... even able to accept a public monument aimed at consecrating and glorifying a certain historical event or person, in a way that would at the same time make it effective in its communication, i.e. in conveying its message to wider social strata?<sup>58</sup>

She concludes that such expectations seem "utterly utopian" and puts the main responsibility for the formal anachronism of monuments on "the representatives of

56 [Boris Gabršček], "Arhitekt-ova anketa o spomenikih NOB", *Arhitekt*, no. 9, 1953, p. 30.

57 Andrija Mutnjaković, "Spomenik naše revolucije", *Čovjek i prostor*, no. 124, 1963, p. 1. Mutnjaković, a Croatian architect and theorist, went so far as to draw parallels with fascist aesthetics.

58 Vera Horvat Pintarić, "Spomenička skulptura Dušana Džamonje", *Umetnost*, no. 8, 1968, p. 49.

the social commissioning process (who are also burdened with obsolescent conventions of the past)". Although she does not say so explicitly, she is clearly referring to the non-expert members of the commissioning committees, the representatives of the veterans' associations and political representatives. It is they, she claims, who are "characterized by the aforementioned level of (underdeveloped) perceptive capabilities and (atrophied) visual thinking, which is below the average of the so-called 'wider public'".<sup>59</sup>

A telling example of a different, yet still characteristic, intellectual approach to this issue, one that broached the class and cultural divisions between the centre and periphery, is found in Grgo Gamulin's analysis of the results of the competition for the monument on Mt Kozara a few years later (for the realized monument, see figs. 304–308). Gamulin, one of the most prominent post-war Croatian art historians, was a jury member for the competition. He contrasted the "civilizational forms' especially present in projects by Dušan Džamonja and Slavko Tihec – abstract, of course, and originating from the urbanized evolution of both our own and European sculpture" with "the mountain landscape of Kozara, that patriarchal, rural setting".<sup>60</sup> To justify the jury's selection of Džamonja's winning project, Gamulin stressed the mystical power of abstract art: "How will [the Bosnian region of] Krajina accept a solution that obviously comes from 'afar', from unknown spiritual spheres that grew above a life so completely *other* and different?"<sup>61</sup> In explaining why Džamonja's project was the right choice for the monument to the Battle of Kozara, Gamulin's conclusion is paradigmatic of the reasoning used in high-level decision-making, which indeed produced the awe-inspiring forms that today seem so bewildering in such rural settings. He argues that the jury's duty is not to meet the expectations of the local, rural inhabitants of Krajina, but rather to build monuments for eternity: "We knew very well that only an idea born in some hidden spiritual strata and revealed in an unprecedented sculptural concept can be 'more enduring than bronze.'"<sup>62</sup>

On the other hand, some of the more prominent artists were not as comfortable with the emerging discrepancy between their artwork and the local "receptive capabilities" and felt the need to soften or balance their elitist positions. In one of his interviews, Dušan Džamonja recounted a conversation he had with a local shepherd who had been following the construction of the *Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina* in Podgarić, Croatia (see figs. 293–294, 517). Džamonja told an interviewer that when the monument was completed,

the old man stood beneath the concrete wing, which, at its great height of ten metres, was literally hovering in the sky. And spontaneously, almost silently, he said to himself, "Now, this is something nice." Standing nearby and overhearing his words, I was surprised and, out of curiosity, asked: "Do you like it, grandfather?" The old man answered with a smile: "Of course! I do!" Naturally, I wanted more of an answer and was curious to know why he liked it, so I repeated the

59 Ibid., p. 52.

60 Grgo Gamulin, "Spomenik na Kozari", *Život umjetnosti*, nos. 15–16, 1971, p. 131.

61 Ibid., p. 133; emphasis mine.

62 Ibid.

question. He replied immediately: “It’s like a miracle!” I was greatly surprised by the old man’s answer. This encounter astonished me and will probably remain in my memory forever.<sup>63</sup>

The motives behind the desire of both critics and professional artists to combat or “correct” popular tastes and raise aesthetic standards must not be taken for granted. We should view their efforts in relation to their own material interests and structural positions within the system of monument production. It is only by taking into consideration the continual co-existence of different levels of memorial production, and the conflicting positions among the various groups of authors in the field, that we begin to grasp such tensions, as well as the more obvious conflict between proponents of traditional figurative memorials and the younger generation of monument-makers, led by architects such as Andrija Mutnjaković and Edvard Ravnikar, who opposed grandiose gestures and monumentalism and argued for more rational, functional solutions. By the same token, arguments in favour of professional artists and architects and against “amateurism” and “dilettantism” were certainly not made (solely) “for the sake of beauty” or out of reverence for the fallen fighters. The fervent advocates of higher aesthetic standards were also fighting for a higher level of control over monument production, which could benefit or permanently secure their authority within the system.<sup>64</sup> Analysis of the various levels of production must therefore begin with a critical scrutiny of the power structures that defined this particular field of production.

## A Gendered Perspective on War Memory and Memorial Production

Given that the dominant cultural memory informing memorial production in socialist Yugoslavia was that of the People’s Liberation War and the socialist revolution, and since war narratives are one of the most markedly male-dominated domains of cultural memory, we need to pay special attention to the gendered hierarchies present in the formation of these narratives, as well as to the hierarchies that conditioned or legitimized women’s entrance into the field of memorial production. As I have discussed, the professionalization of memorial production went hand in hand with the rise of the high modernist notion of artistic individualism, an ideology that fostered sexism and women’s exclusion from certain fields of public and cultural practices. The Croatian Marxist feminist philosopher Blaženka Despot, extrapolating from Marx, claims that “the ruling ideas of an epoch are not only that of the ruling class, but also of the ruling gender”.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, the ruling *politics of memory* in an epoch is similarly defined by the ruling gender.

63 Jozo Pulić, “Moslavački stih: Kako je nastao spomenik revoluciji u Podgariću”, interview with Dušan Džamonja, *Vjesnik u srijedu*, September 13, 1967, p. 9.

64 See, for example, the 1953 survey of architects made for the Ljubljana-based magazine *Arhitekt*, “Arhitekt-ova anketa o spomenikih NOB”, pp. 29–31.

65 Blaženka Despot, *Žensko pitanje i socijalističko samoupravljanje*, Centar za kulturnu djelatnost Zagreb, Zagreb, 1987, p. 8. Despot is alluding to Marx’s statement: “The ideas of the ruling class are in every

The revolutionary victory of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia in May 1945 brought radical changes to all spheres of post-war society. The emancipatory social struggle and active engagement of women during the war was an inherent part of the Communist Party's ideological agenda. The Women's Antifascist Front, founded in 1942, immediately began introducing radical political changes, mainly through the education and political organizing of women.<sup>66</sup> Yugoslav women's suffrage, already attained during the war on Partisan-liberated territory, was constitutionally affirmed in 1946. Nevertheless, despite the practical and quantifiable effects of women's emancipation during and after the war, winning and securing gender equality remained a slow, difficult, and often highly contradictory process.<sup>67</sup> Regardless of the official credit given to women for their wartime participation in armed conflict, material support, and underground resistance, they were underrepresented in all leadership positions, especially those responsible for memory politics.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the immense importance of the socialist period in women's social and political emancipation, their voices were not reflected proportionally in the public discourse. Consequently, the capacity for articulating specifically female narratives and memories of war and revolution in the public space was constantly being undermined. This can be seen most clearly in the disproportionately small number of monuments dedicated specifically to women, the stereotypical representational patterns, and female authors' rare participation in memorial production, among other indications.<sup>69</sup> Even so, the situation in socialist Yugoslavia was in many ways tremendously improved for the majority of the female population. Public spaces, including those to which women had only limited or no access before the war – such as governmental facilities and, in the more pronouncedly patriarchal rural areas of Yugoslavia, even parks and other gathering places – were for the first time symbolically marked by female historical figures, mostly as part of the elaborate depictions of war narratives or as busts commemorating distinguished Partisan heroines (see, for example, figs. 426–427).<sup>70</sup>

epoch the ruling ideas" (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, 1976, p. 67).

66 Women participated in the People's Liberation War in relatively high numbers throughout Yugoslavia. Of the approximately 800,000 soldiers fighting in Partisan units, 100,000, or 12 per cent, were women, of whom one in four died as active combatants; see Ivana Pantelić, *Partizanke kao građanke: Društvena emancipacija partizanki u Srbiji, 1945–1953*, Institut za savremenu istoriju and Evoluta, Belgrade, 2011, p. 11.

67 Jelena Batinić, *Women and Yugoslav Partisans: A History of World War II Resistance*, Cambridge University Press, New York and Cambridge, UK, 2015, p. 219.

68 For example, there were only five women – Spasenija Babović, Vera Aceva, Kata Pejnović, Vida Tomšić, and Dušanka Kovačević – out of a total of sixty-eight members, in the plenum of the Central Committee of the Federation of Veterans of the People's Liberation War (the federal Partisan veterans' organization) when it was founded in 1947. Overall, women accounted for less than 10 per cent of the organization's governing bodies and plenum members. See *Osnivački kongres Saveza boraca Narodno-oslobodilačkog rata*, Glavni odbor Saveza boraca Narodno-oslobodilačkog rata, Belgrade, 1947, p. 43.

69 This issue is discussed further in Pejić in conversation with Horvatinčić and Žerovc, "The Politics of Gender Representation and the Spatialization of Power in Socialist Yugoslavia", pp. 289–293.

70 Even in such a large city as Zagreb, only one public monument to a female historical figure was erected before the Second World War. See Sanja Horvatinčić, "Erased: On the Circularity of Misogyny on the

To understand the small percentage of women authors in the field of memorial production, we need to consider the complex issue of women's emancipation in Yugoslav society, especially in the fine arts and architecture. The deep-rooted patriarchy in these traditionally male domains was not easily dismantled by the post-war enfranchisement of women. Women studying architecture and sculpture were often directed into the decorative and applied arts, or into projects related to housing, health care, or interior design, which gave them less access to major public commissions, especially those of high symbolic value and political significance, such as war memorials, which were traditionally associated with masculine culture. Nevertheless, as recent comparative surveys have shown, women in Yugoslavia and other socialist countries assumed more prominent roles in architecture and the arts than those in the post-war capitalist world.<sup>71</sup> Although in socialist Yugoslavia women enjoyed greater economic independence and social mobility, allowing them to enter the sphere of arts and culture, many of the women active in memorial production were either married to prominent artists or architects or had other family ties higher up the social scale.

If we look at the statistics from my analysis of more than 1,700 monuments built in Croatia between 1945 and 1990, it becomes clear that women accounted for less than 4 per cent of the sculptors: out of the 185 sculptors involved in the production of monuments during socialism, we find only six women:<sup>72</sup> Vera Dajht-Kralj with four monuments;<sup>73</sup> Gabriela Kolar;<sup>74</sup> Ksenija Kantoci,<sup>75</sup> and Jasna Bogdanović<sup>76</sup> with two monuments each; and Milena Lah and Marija Bezeredi with one each.<sup>77</sup> Of the approximately 100 architects who authored or participated in memorial projects in

Example of Female Representation in the Public Space of Zagreb”, in *Back to the Square! Art, Activism and Urban Research in Post-Socialism*, BLOK, Zagreb, 2015, pp. 90–101.

- 71 See Mary Pepchinski and Mariann Simon, “Introduction”, in *Ideological Equals: Women Architects in Socialist Europe, 1945–1989*, ed. Mary Pepchinski and Mariann Simon, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon, UK, and New York, 2017, pp. 1–2; and Theodossis Issaias and Anna Kats, “Gender and the Production of Space in Postwar Yugoslavia”, in *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980*, ed. Vladimir Kulić and Martino Stierli, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2018, pp. 96–104.
- 72 The database for my analysis is found on a CD-ROM as an appendix to my doctoral dissertation, Horvatinić, “Spomenici iz razdoblja socijalizma u Hrvatskoj”, housed at the National and University Library in Zagreb. This list does not include memorial busts, plaques, and unrealized projects, which would significantly raise the number of contributions by women, as well as the total number of artists considered in the analysis.
- 73 Memorial ossuary and the *Monument to the Fallen Fighters of the People's Liberation Struggle and Victims of Fascist Terror*, Graberje Ivaničko, 1955–1956; *Monument to the Fallen Fighters of the People's Liberation Struggle and Victims of Fascist Terror*, Ivanić-Grad, 1956; *Monument and Ossuary of the Fallen Fighters of the 2nd Moslavina Brigade and Posavina Partisan Detachment*, Oborovo, 1957 (in collaboration with the architects Ante Glunčić and Cvetana Bajin-Bakal; see fig. 184); and *Monument to the Fallen Victims of Fascism*, Leprovica, 1965–1966 (with Cvetana Bajin-Bakal).
- 74 *Monument to the Fallen Fighters*, Skrad, 1962, and the memorial fountain on the site of the children's concentration camp in Sisak, 1964.
- 75 *Monument to the Executed Partisans of Drežnica*, Ogulin, 1949 (destroyed), and *Monument to the Fallen Fighters*, Gomirje, 1956.
- 76 *Monument to the 25th Anniversary of Self-Government / Six Factories*, Belišće, 1976 (with Ivan Sabolić), and *Monument to the Fallen Fighters and Victims of Fascist Terror / Hands of Freedom*, Jelenje, 1981.
- 77 Milena Lah created the central sculpture at the *Children's Memorial Graveyard* (designed by Mira Halambek-Wenzler), Sisak (1974; see fig. 459), while Marija Bezeredi collaborated with her husband, Lujó Bezeredi, on the *Monument to the Fallen Fighters / (Great) Mourning* at the Čakovec cemetery (1947).



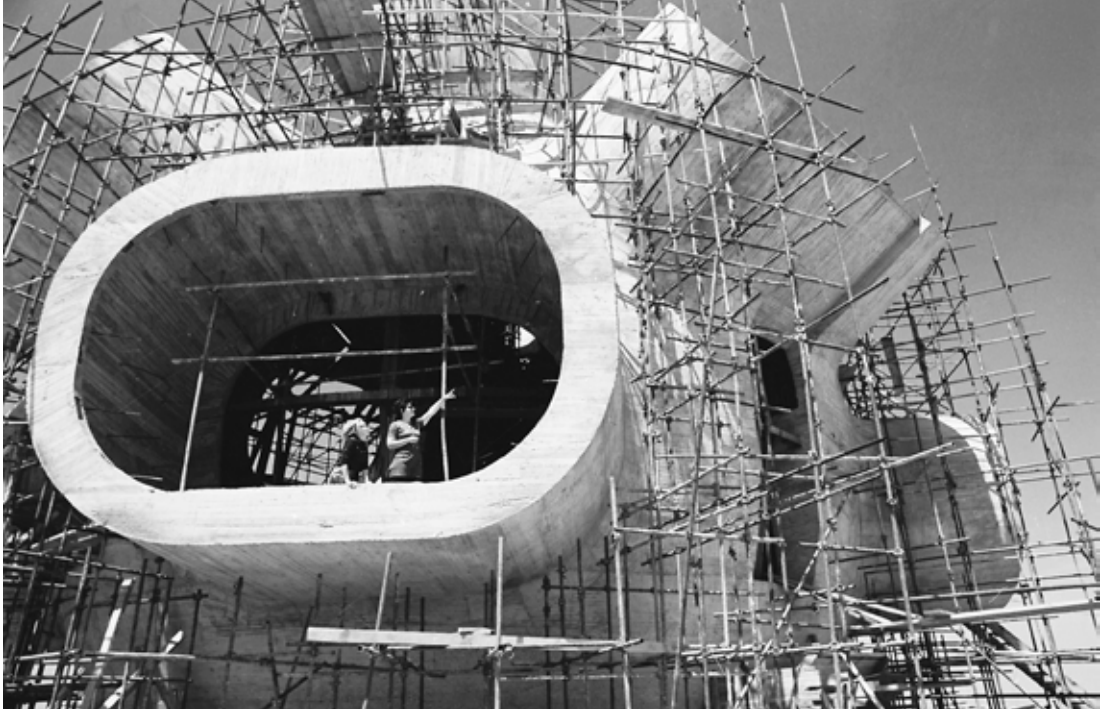
455  
*Monument to the Executed Partisans of Zlatibor*, Šumatno Hill near Zlatibor, Serbia. Ana Bešlić (sculptor), Jovana Jeftanović (architect), 1967.

public spaces, only about 10 per cent were women.<sup>78</sup> Only a very few of the major or large-scale memorial projects were authored by women, and when women were involved in such projects, their contributions were often minimized or marginalized and even today are rarely acknowledged or properly evaluated. In the earliest (published in 1968) of the two most representative monographs on Yugoslav monuments only three of the fifty-seven featured monuments were authored by women: *Monument to the Women Fighters of the People's Liberation Struggle* by Borka Avramova (Tetovo, North Macedonia, 1961; see fig. 257), *Monument to the Executed Partisans of Zlatibor* by sculptor Ana Bešlić and architect Jovanka Jeftanović (Šumatno Hill near Zlatibor, Serbia, 1967; see fig. 455), and a sculptural group by Vida Jocić in the Yugoslav pavilion at the Auschwitz Memorial Centre (1964).<sup>79</sup> In a similar book published nine years later, which included several newly built monumental memorial complexes, two female architects were left out: Živa Baraga, who collaborated on the *Monument to the People's Liberation Struggle / Monument at the Freedom Hill* (Ilirska Bistrica, Slovenia, 1965;

78 Horvatinčić, "Spomenici iz razdoblja socijalizma u Hrvatskoj", p. 119.

79 Miloš Bajić, *Spomenici revoluciji: Jugoslavija*, SUBNOR Jugoslavije, Belgrade, and Svjetlost, Sarajevo, 1968.

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457



456–457

Architect Iskra Grabuloska with a model for the *Monument to the People's Liberation Struggle and the Ilinden Uprising* (fig. 457).  
Grabuloska at the construction site in Kruševo in 1973 (fig. 456).



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*Monument to the Fallen Partisans, Victims of Fascist Terror, and the Workers Who Died During the Construction of the Hydroelectric Power Plant, Zakućac, Croatia. Đurđica Gjanović (architect), 1970.*

see figs. 281–283) with the sculptor Janez Lenassi, and Iskra Grabuloska, who co-authored the *Monument to the People's Liberation Struggle and the Ilinden Uprising* (Kruševo, North Macedonia, 1970–1974; see figs. 456–457) with her husband, the sculptor Jordan Grabuloski (for the realized monument, see figs. 320–326).<sup>80</sup>

Although women were more present as architects in the field of memorial production, usually working in collaborative teams, major projects were rarely authored by women. Svetlana Kana Radević, the first female professional architect in Montenegro, designed a vast memorial complex with elaborate landscaping elements which was dedicated to the war dead of the Lješanska Nahija region (1980; see figs. 348–350) – one of the few projects awarded to a solo female author in a national competition.

Among the several local, and nearly forgotten, examples of female authorship is the *Monument to the Fallen Partisans, Victims of Fascist Terror, and the Workers Who Died During the Construction of the Hydroelectric Power Plant*, designed by the architect Đurđica Gjanović and built in 1970 in the village of Zakućac near Omiš, Croatia (fig. 458). This is a memorial park in front of the entrance to the hydroelectric power station; in the middle of the park stand two tall, slim parallel blocks of concrete (9.3 metres and 8.3 metres high), whose surfaces are adorned with an

80 *Revolucionarno kiparstvo*, [text] Juraj Baldani, ed. Drago Zdunić, Spektar, Zagreb, 1977.



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Detail of the monument in the *Children's Memorial Graveyard*, Sisak, Croatia. Milena Lah (sculptor), Mira Halambek-Wenzler (landscape architect), 1974.

abstract pattern.<sup>81</sup> The plateau on which the monument stands is paved with pebbles; set in the ground in front of each block are slabs listing the names of the people being commemorated.

A rare example in the memorial field of an architectural-sculptural collaboration by two women is a project by the sculptor Milena Lah and the landscape architect Mira Halambek-Wenzler for the *Children's Memorial Graveyard* in Sisak, Croatia, completed in 1974 (see fig. 459). The project was particularly demanding not only because of the commemorative subject but also because the conventions and functional aspects of spatial design for memorial cemeteries left little room for new interpretations. The cemetery, which is located on the original burial site of the children who died in the Sisak children's concentration camp, consists of nine round plates of white marble, of various diameters, placed directly on the ground to mark the locations of the mass graves. Lah's abstract bronze sculpture – from her series based on the motif of birds – stands on one of the central marble slabs. In addition to the innovative interpretation of the standard typology of tombstones, a distinctive aspect of Lah and Halambek-Wenzler's design is the way the memorial elements are

81 See Tomislav Perić, *U spomen revoluciji*, photographs by Stanko Karaman, Općinski odbor SUBNOR-a, Koordinacijski odbor za njegovanje revolucionarnih tradicija općine Omiš (SUBNOR Municipal Committee and the Coordinating Committee for Conserving the Revolutionary Traditions of the Municipality), Omiš, 1983, p. 296.

scaled and shaped to a child's perspective. The poetic nature of the central sculptural form and the playful yet respectful arrangement of elements on the site of the tragic event assume the potential presence and emotional engagement of youngest visitors to the memorial cemetery.

With the emergence of the new typology for memorial areas in 1970s, the focus of memory politics shifted from mourning the dead and celebrating victory to less overt means of communicating the messages of the war and revolutionary history to the younger generation of visitors. Landscape architecture, although crucial for the new memorialization models, was nevertheless viewed as an auxiliary, even second-rate, branch of architecture. It was, perhaps, for this very reason that women so easily predominated in this particular architectural niche, and this may also explain why even today scholars tend to overlook the importance of landscape architecture in Yugoslav memorial production. As is true of many other artistic media and creative professions throughout history, women in the memorial-making field were forced to enter new territories and hidden niches, which often bore such dismissive labels as "applied", "decorative" or "experimental". It is also notable that many of these landscape architects were married to prominent architects, with whom they often collaborated on memorial projects (e.g. Silvana and Josip Seissel, and Mira Halambek-Wenzler and Fedor Wenzler), which opens yet another, largely unexplored topic, namely, the invisible female labour in professional partnerships between spouses in the architectural and artistic production of this period.

## Conclusion

Given the widespread interest today in commemorative practices and monument-making, it is increasingly important, if not imperative, to address these socially and politically charged cultural phenomena in the context of the historical conditions, processes and agents of their production; only thus can we reduce the chances of a biased view of their normative "aesthetic value" and "quality".<sup>82</sup> The question of authorship, with its inherent inequalities and various forms of artistic labour, serves as prism for a critical analysis of the established modernist canon of memorial production in Yugoslavia. A multitude of practices resulted from the vast social demand for monuments and memorials, which in turn generated a stratification of memorial production in the decades following the Second World War. While this demand led to the proliferation and diversification of agents at the lower levels of memorial production, it also brought about the professionalization of memorial practices and, with this, the application of modernist principles at the highest levels of production. Here the practice of most of such artists was framed by the assigned requirements and the imperative of "originality" – revealing, more than in any other artistic field, the constructedness of the modernist myth of the autonomous artist-genius. In fact, socially

82 The need for contextualization has become especially clear in recent years, as we have witnessed a new wave of sociopolitical movements across the world in which many monuments are being perceived as embodiments and symbols of a longstanding systemic politics of social injustice, whether based on race, gender, or class.

progressive concepts developed not from such autonomous geniuses but from the collaborative and interdisciplinary practices that focused more on imagining and designing new forms of collective living than on individual formal exercises. On the other hand, the invisible labour and imaginative ideas of anonymous craftsmen and amateurs, however “conservative” or “naïve” their formal expression might have seemed to the experts at the time, often answered the immediate demands and conceptual frameworks of local communities and memory stakeholders in ways that were far more engaging and emancipating than the massive memorial complexes and contemporary artistic expression of the prominent professional sculptors and architects.

Finally, to discuss women’s involvement in this male-dominated field is to expose yet another contradiction in the modernist myth. It means discovering and examining previously unacknowledged methods, fields, and criteria in memorial production – whether by investigating the structural causes behind the disproportionate lack of female narratives and authors, inquiring into the lack of gender balance in the relatively common practice of married professional couples, or exploring the significance of such female-dominated disciplines as landscape architecture in humanizing memorial spaces.

Just as the multiplicity of authorial practices within the stratified field of memorial production help us to recognize invisible agents and to evaluate their work, the female presence in the field of memorial sculpture and architecture can showcase the need for rethinking the prevailing criteria used in assessing and historicizing memorial production as such. Looking at the exceptions to what has been considered the norm or the canon forces us to re-examine the concept of authorship itself and to reaffirm the importance of collective, collaborative, and amateur practices, which we can now perceive as constitutive elements of the effort to commemorate the sacrifices and victories of the war and, indeed, of the Yugoslav socialist project as a whole.

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