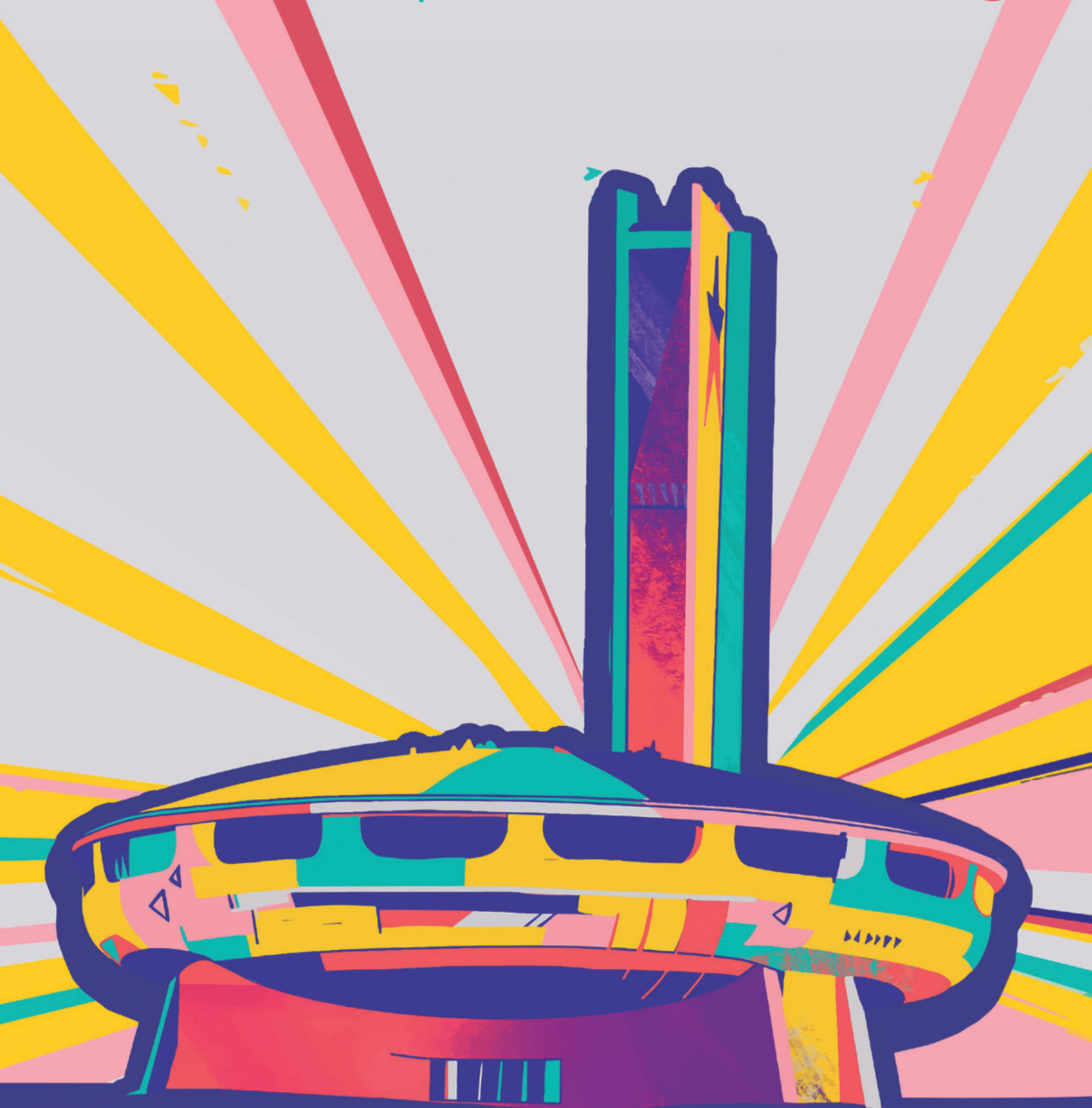


In Restauro | Dissonant Heritage



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In Restauo:
Post-war Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe.

**In Restauro:
Post-war Heritage of Art and Architecture
in Central and Eastern Europe.
Integrated Approaches to Dissonant
Monuments and Sites**

International ICOMOS Conference of the
Bulgarian and German National Committees
in cooperation with the Municipality of Kazanlak,
the Buzludzha Project Foundation and the Iskra History Museum

Partners:

University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia;
Bulgarian National Academy of Art in Sofia; Bern University of the Arts (HKB);
Technical University of Munich (TUM); Diadrasis NGO; German Federal Ministry
of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI); Europa Nostra;
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and Villages (CIVVIH)

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Welcome and Goodwill Messages



Welcome by ICOMOS Bulgaria

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues,

The topic of this conference is extremely relevant for Bulgaria, as it is related to the fate of a significant part of the Bulgarian cultural heritage, created in the second half of the 20th century – during socialism.

The truth is that the national conservation system of Bulgaria has proven to be unprepared to deal with the fundamentally contradictory heritage. On the one hand, it includes sites with indisputable architectural and artistic values – such is the case of the *Buzludzha Monument*. On the other hand, some of them suggest strong ideological messages that are absolutely unacceptable in the context of today's democratic changes. Simultaneously, this heritage is a solid document of its time, a “window to the past” that can be irreversibly closed if this heritage is compromised or destroyed.

This contradiction raises a series of difficult questions: How can we separate the achievements and limit the propaganda? How should we preserve the testimony without uplifting it to glory? How can we admire it without being manipulated? How can we accept and recognize it when the wounds have not yet healed? How can we preserve the valuable elements of this type of monuments all by limiting their symbolic message?

The inability of the Conservation System to answer these questions costs the fate of many of these heritage sites. The Mausoleum, the monument „1300 years Bulgaria” and many other memorials have been destroyed. Valuable buildings of Bulgarian modernism of that time, although devoid of political connotations, were left without protection and were compromised or demolished. ICOMOS Bulgaria is extremely concerned about this situation.

That is why I perceive this conference not only as a prestigious international event, but also as an opportunity to save real values.

Above all, I believe in the expert principle as the basis for conservation. I also believe in international expert cooperation and partnership in expert networks. The history of ICOMOS Bulgaria has remarkable examples of such successful international expert networks. I will quote only the initiative by ICOMOS Bulgaria in 2000 “Expert network of Southeastern Europe”, which launched the project Cultural Routes of Southeastern Europe. This project provoked the first regional political forum dedicated to cultural heritage (Varna, 2005), with the participation of heads of state from the region, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and ICOMOS.

It is a pity that for reasons beyond our control, the opportunity for such a partnership between ICOMOS Bulgaria and ICOMOS Germany was missed in the award project “Keeping it modern!” of the Getty Foundation.

That is why ICOMOS Bulgaria is confidently involved in the preparation and holding of this conference. I am glad that young Bulgarian researchers, members of ICOMOS, with valuable scientific contributions in the study of the cultural heritage of the second half of the 20th century, also took part in the conference. I am sure that their contribution will be effective.

I sincerely hope that the conference will be a platform for a fruitful dialogue. I also hope that it will send out clear messages and recommendations to the national conservation system in Bulgaria to achieve a more modern and effective approach to understanding and preserving the dissonant heritage. I am sure that these messages will be useful for other countries in Central and Eastern Europe as well.

Dear Colleagues,

The system of values is the one that determines the behavior of the individual and of entire communities. It also determines the behavior of our ICOMOS community – the constant guardian of the preservation of the most valuable in the human historic environment. This is a task as noble as it is difficult. We – the Bulgarian National Committee of ICOMOS are part of the family of the International Council on Monuments and Landmarks and are thus called to follow and actively support and council tirelessly in favor of the protection of human treasures. It is our goal to stimulate the spirit by reviving cultural values and by including them in modern life!

At the same time, this is a battle for equality, the same one that is being fought by all European countries. It leads us to the foundations of what we now call European solidarity. We are convinced that the social, political, and spiritual energy of culture is always manifested in interaction.

That is why, today, I call on you, Colleagues, to open the window for light to come in, but also for our light to be seen. This is how we understand the light of connection and communication. Because we are a community! We have deep confidence both in our own strength and in the strength of our connection!

I wish everyone a warm welcome!

Gabriela Semova-Koleva
President of ICOMOS Bulgaria

Welcome by ICOMOS Germany

On behalf of ICOMOS Germany, I would like to welcome you to this conference.

ICOMOS Germany was founded in 1965 and today has over 450 members. ICOMOS is one of UNESCO's advisory bodies on World Heritage issues. However, we also see ourselves as experts on everyday heritage issues and, in recent decades, increasingly as advocates for an extended and pluralistic concept of heritage. This concept is committed to cultural diversity and considers conflicts over heritage sites as an opportunity to define a current position regarding our own past. This applies to conservators and cultural managers as well as to citizens and civil society actors in politics and administration.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of the Iron Curtain in Europe were a signal for the unification of Berlin and the two post-war German states. This break was also a precondition for the unification of the ICOMOS National Committees of East and West Germany 30 years ago.¹ Since then, the debate about the legacy of Germany's undemocratic predecessor states has repeatedly formed a thematic priority of the work of ICOMOS Germany. In addition to the question of how to deal appropriately with state and party buildings from the Nazi system, which often enough continued to be used pragmatically by government and administrative bodies in East and West, the legacy of socialism in Central and Western Europe was frequently at the centre of controversial debates. The demolition of Lew Kerbel's Lenin Monument in 1992 or of the Palace of the Republic (between 2006 and 2008) in Berlin are among the most prominent monument losses that the reunified German capital has had to record.

Since German unification in 1990, however, there has always been the central question of conservationists: How can democratic societies deal with the legacy of persecution, oppression, and resistance without eliminating the evidence of an undesirable history? Do democratic societies need the memory of war and tyranny in order not to repeat the mistakes of the past?

From the very beginning, ICOMOS Germany has been concerned to broaden the view beyond the socialist part of East Berlin and East Germany and to include the experiences of socialist neighbouring countries of the former

Eastern Bloc.² Conference and meeting titles, most of them published in the publication series of the German National Committee or by co-organisers, highlight the diversity of topics, but also the changing perspective over the course of a generation. A milestone, perhaps even a turning point in the negative reception of socialist monumental art that had predominated up to that point, was marked in 2012 when the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) and ICOMOS discussed the topic "From Rejection to Appropriation? The Architectural Heritage of Socialism in Central and Eastern Europe"³ and explored new ways of interpreting and accepting or tolerating negative monuments by means of artistic interventions. The latest ICOMOS Discussion Paper, *Evaluations of World Heritage Nominations related to Sites Associated with Memories of Recent Conflicts*,⁴ stands for the current position statement on this topic. Can we convert/transform troublesome heritage conflicts into positive location factors?

In addition to Poland in the East – Germany's most important neighbouring country alongside its western neighbour France – and the tried and tested exchange with colleagues from the former Soviet Union, it has also repeatedly been contributions from Bulgaria that have provided essential reference material for heritage debates on the legacy in post-socialist states of Europe. One of the most fascinating case studies has certainly been the memorial landscape of Buzludzha with the landmark on Chaji Dimitar, which was opened 40 years ago in these weeks (23 August 1981). I am very pleased that we can continue and intensify the discussion on "Integrated Urban Approaches to Dissonant Post-war Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe" at the foot of the Buzludzha Monument directly on site these days. And I would like to cordially thank all those involved, especially our partners and hosts from Bulgaria and on the spot in Kazanlak, namely Mayor Galina Stoyanova and her municipal Iskra History Museum with director Momchil Marinov and his team.

Jörg Haspel
President of ICOMOS Germany

¹ See Eiserner Vorhang und Grünes Band. Netzwerke und Kooperationsmöglichkeiten in einer europäischen Grenzlandschaft/Iron Curtain and Green Belt. Networks and Opportunities for Cooperation in a European Border Landscape (ICOMOS – Hefte des Deutschen Nationalkomitees LXXII), Münster 2020.

² See Bildersturm in Osteuropa. Die Denkmäler der kommunistischen Ära im Umbruch (ICOMOS – Hefte des Deutschen Nationalkomitees XIII), München 1994

and Stalinistische Architektur unter Denkmalschutz? (ICOMOS – Hefte des Deutschen Nationalkomitees XX), München 1996.

³ A. BARTETZKY, C. DIETZ, J. HASPEL (eds.), Von der Ablehnung zur Aneignung? Das architektonische Erbe des Sozialismus in Mittel- und Osteuropa, Köln/Wien/Weimar 2014.

⁴ <https://openarchive.icomos.org/id/eprint/2051/>.

Welcome by Galina Stoyanova, Mayor of Kazanlak The Buzludzha Monument is not a Political or Ideological Question but a Point of Departure to its Future

The mayor of Kazanlak greeted the participants of this international conference on the Monument House on Buzludzha Peak and dissonant heritage “In Restauro: Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe – Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites”. The Host of the Scientific Forum is Kazanlak, and the patron is the mayor – Ms Galina Stoyanova. In the hall of the Museum of History Iskra, she greeted the organizers, the national committees of ICOMOS Bulgaria and Germany, the Buzludzha Project Foundation and the partners of approved academic and professional organizations in the cultural heritage field as well as the over 30 international experts from eight participating countries.

“I am glad to welcome you in the territory of the Kazanlak Municipality in the magnificent Valley of Roses and the Thracian Kings! On the eve of the conference, the decision of the Specialized Expert Council for the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Values (SECPICV) to submit an intangible cultural value statute for the Monument House on Buzludzha Peak brought a ground for hope. For all of us citizens of the beautiful valley, this is another step towards the protection of this already so widely known monument. A step, which gives us hope, that it will receive the well-deserved care and preservation for you and for the coming generations”, the mayor of Kazanlak declared. “Indeed, from now on we wait for the moment to take the next administrative steps and for the final statement of the Minister of Culture. The evaluation of the expert council is an encouraging sign for us, that the monument on the Buzludzha Peak will soon receive justice after years of vandalism and forgetfulness”, Ms Galina Stoyanova pointed out.

The mayor of the Kazanlak Municipality mentioned that the Buzludzha Monument had been listed among the most threatened objects in Europe in 2018, according to the classification of Europe’s leading organization for the preservation of cultural heritage Europa Nostra and the Institute of the European Investment Bank. Ms Galina Stoyanova declared her support to the efforts by the Buzludzha Project Foundation led by the young architect Ms Dora Ivanova and her team, by Prof. Jörg Haspel, president of ICOMOS

Germany and Ms Gabriela Semova-Koleva, ICOMOS Bulgaria. She also emphasized the co-operation of the former and current regional governors of the Stara Zagora district, Ms Gergana Mikova and Mr Ivan Cholakov to revive and enhance the cultural heritage of Buzludzha.

“Buzludzha is not only a technical or financial question”, the mayor of Kazanlak declared, “it is a point of departure, an object, which will never be used again as once intended”, Ms Galina Stoyanova said. “That’s why, I welcome once again the organizers and the participants of the conference. Please be assured that you find in us, the Kazanlak Municipality and in me personally, like-minded people and partners! I also hope to gain many new friends through our common cause. It is neither political nor ideological. It is a chance for the development of tourism in the region, which we must seize. I have been saying this ever since I had the opportunity to meet Dora and her idea to resurrect this monument so that we can preserve it as a Monument of Time”, the mayor of Kazanlak said.

Ms Galina Stoyanova wished success to the conference participants and thanked architect Ivanova for her merits in promoting and preserving the Buzludzha Monument.

Within two days, scientists from all over the world and the organizers would exchange ideas for the future of the Buzludzha Monument, an impressive representative of the 20th century’s modernism.

Kazanlak is the fourth Bulgarian municipality that became a partner of the Urban Agenda for the European Union two years ago and it is the only Bulgarian municipality figuring as a representative in the field of cultural heritage. The Urban Agenda is a key tool of the European Union for the future development of European cities as major motors of growth in all fields of life. In 2020, the Urban Agenda focused on dissonant heritage as misunderstood cultural-historical heritage, an example of which is the Buzludzha Monument. Experts define this new category as an important instrument to deal with cultural heritage, which does not fall into the field of problem-free inheritance, but rather into a field of public disagreements, conflicts, oppositions and discussions.

Goodwill Message

*Dear Ms Stoyanova,
Dear Mr Haspel,
Dear Mr Marinov,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Thank you very much for your invitation. I would have liked to come because I am very interested in the topic of your conference. As a historian and as someone who works for German-Bulgarian relations. Unfortunately, other commitments did not allow me to be present in person.

Bulgaria and Germany in the EU have a lot in common. And that is not only the German tourists on the Black Sea coast, the Bulgarian students in Germany and the German students here, or the good economic relations.

Bulgaria and Germany are linked by a historical experience: the time of upheavals, of new beginnings – after 1945 and again after 1989.

These experiences have left traces in Germany and Bulgaria in all areas of society, including of course architecture.

Our exchange, our conversation about this experience and about historical buildings of past regimes is more topical today than ever, both in Bulgaria and in Germany. And not only that. The discussion about how to deal with these buildings is similar in both countries.

I would like to mention an example from Germany that concerns me personally. In 1999, the Foreign Office moved from Bonn to Berlin. It moved into the Reichsbank building

of the National Socialists, which was completed in 1940 and became the party headquarters of the Communists after the war. A building that seemed to be contaminated twice. “Historically burdened”, as some described it in the discussion before the move from Bonn to Berlin.

If you look at the building and its use today, you will hopefully come to the conclusion, as I have, that Berlin has succeeded in transforming this building into a place from which the reunited Germany can shape its diplomacy: democratic, committed to the unity of Europe and serving peace in the world – in short, a place that stands for modern Germany.

You know much better than I do that the discussion falls short if one were to look at historical buildings only in terms of their architectural features and disregard the political purpose that most historical buildings served. On a tour of the Buzludzha Monument, this becomes very clear. And when looking at many relevant buildings in Germany, too.

It is therefore very important that the discussion about the political past of these “uncomfortable monuments” (as one of the many terms in academia is called) both in Germany and in Bulgaria paves the way for a conscious, enlightened and thus honestly processed approach to the history of our two countries.

This is exactly what I wish for your conference. I am looking forward to the results.

Best wishes, much success and all the best!

Christoph Eichhorn
German Ambassador to Bulgaria

Goodwill Message¹

Dear Participants from all over Europe,

First, I would like to thank you very much for inviting me to today's conference on *Post-War Heritage in Central and Eastern Europe*.

I am very happy to comply with this, and I am extremely pleased that you have managed to organise this event despite the difficult current circumstances of the pandemic.

With your event today, you are addressing a topic that is very important to us in Germany and to which we have devoted ourselves over the past two and a half years: **Dissonant Heritage as a central focus in our work in the Urban Agenda for the EU**.

As part of the Urban Agenda for the EU, we are engaged in an intensive European dialogue on our cultural heritage.

We have jointly discussed highly relevant questions, among them: What is particularly important for our cultural heritage, what are the particular needs? What does it take to strengthen, protect and further develop Europe's heritage?

Our ministry, together with our Italian colleagues, is leading this three-year European process. In the end, we expect to have answers to these questions and to make recommendations – for municipalities and regions, for member states and for the EU – how to deal with cultural heritage in a more advanced and cautious way.

One so-called Action is dedicated to the “controversial”, “difficult”, “uncomfortable”, “dissonant” or even “dark” cultural heritage in Europe and explores integrated approaches for dealing with it.

One of the starting points dealing with this topic was the extraordinary Buzludzha monument in your city of Kazanlak, which is also member of our working group in the Urban Agenda.

Thanks to the commitment of numerous actors, among them the Getty Foundation, safety work has been carried out on the monument, and perspectives for future-oriented uses have been developed.

Since our initial conversations, one of the most important questions was: How can Buzludzha, a place of historical importance for many Bulgarians, be made accessible to the public? And how can it be meaningfully linked with the other cultural treasures of your region – including the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Thracian Tombs and your unique rose tradition? We consider these “integrated approaches”, this connection to urban and regional development and tourism, to be very important.

Out of this initialising project in Bulgaria a remarkable European action has grown. With a group of European experts, including ICOMOS, the European Investment Bank

Institute, the Dutch Federation of Cultural Heritage Cities, the European Observatory on Memories at the University of Barcelona, and numerous others, we have developed a so-called Action and have looked at roughly 50 other “dissonant heritage sites” all over Europe now.

We are particularly pleased that we have also succeeded in setting up our own research project. Already now, while we are still in the middle of the process, the project has already made valuable European connections, for example to the Council of Europe's cultural routes programme.

Our aim is to find out how to deal with dissonant heritage in different parts of Europe – how it is managed, what political and financial support it receives (or lacks), how the local population can be reached, which cooperation exists or should be established.

We are particularly interested in the dissonant heritage of the 20th century, which so significantly shapes our Europe of the 21st century, and in the smaller cities and peripheral regions that so far have often been overlooked.

We are currently conducting surveys at the 50 sites already mentioned, ten case studies and ten expert interviews and will reflect on our findings at an expert workshop in Barcelona in October.

We would like to use this valuable knowledge to develop a toolbox with principles and recommendations for all those who deal with their dissonant heritage: for instance, in the areas of urban development, monument protection, creative industries, marketing and tourism.

I am convinced that we are working on a very timely and relevant topic that has a lot of potential and whose protection and further development are very important:

1. Important because of its potential for cultural education and for the communication of history:

Our debate helps us to deal with and understand the identities of Europe and the different time layers that shape our cities. With our open debate, we face Europe's responsibility in terms of history and memory for an urban policy in the service of cultural diversity, tolerance and democracy building. In the current discussion on “Black Lives Matter” and the consequent reinterpretation of colonial history and its monuments, the discussion about “uncomfortable” or “controversial” heritage is particularly timely and opens up very relevant reflections about the heritage related to our future.

2. Important because of its potential for cultural tourism:

Dissonant heritage can release valuable economic potentials for urban society at large, thus enabling communities to care for their heritage, and can raise awareness for unusual monuments and sites as they become alternative destinations and foster innovative forms of cultural tourism.

Strategies for successfully dealing with dissonant heritage can only be developed in an open and public dialogue that is rooted in the local context.

By enabling dialogue like today's conference, we can ensure the direct involvement of citizens and citizens' initiatives.

Thank you very much for your attention!

Anne Katrin Bohle
State Secretary
EU Urban Agenda/Partnership Culture and
Cultural Heritage, German Federal Ministry of the Interior,
Building and Community

¹ Text of the opening video message to the conference.

Buzludzha Monument and Keeping It Modern

In 2019, the German National Committee of ICOMOS helped set in motion a process to safeguard the future of Buzludzha Monument with a Getty Foundation grant that supported a conservation management plan for the site. The following year, Getty provided an additional smaller grant to stabilize the monument's interior mosaics. Both grants were part of our international Keeping It Modern initiative, launched in 2014 to support the conservation of significant 20th-century architectural heritage around the world.

Modern architecture emerged at a global scale in the decades after the First World War, based largely on the *rational* use of modern materials, the principles of functionalist planning, and the rejection of historical precedent and ornament. The new architecture soon became synonymous with technical, political, and social progress; its open floor plans, greater transparency, and innovative design were regarded as symbols of a new era of modern living. However, the experimental materials and novel engineering techniques used in many of the most innovative buildings have not always performed well over time. Today they present significant conservation challenges.

The Getty Foundation believes that comprehensive research and planning is at the heart of conservation best practices and that it is imperative to understand underlying causes of deterioration before making repairs. Keeping It Modern grants, therefore, predominantly support the creation of conservation management plans to guide long-term maintenance and policy; the thorough investigation of building conditions; the testing and analysis of modern materials; and the development of research-based conservation proto-

cols. In the case of the Buzludzha Monument, preservation specialists and local experts produced both a conservation management plan and a digital *Building Information Model (BIM)* — a robust online platform that incorporates laser scans, archival materials, and more. Together these products create a shared knowledge resource for decision-making about the monument and its future care.

The Buzludzha Monument reflects the Brutalist style that was popular in Western Europe in the mid- to late-20th century. Bulgarian architect Georgi Stoilov designed the monument as an expansive, discus-shaped body, with a free-standing steel roof and dramatic tower. It is a distinctly Bulgarian structure that on the outside makes a conscious connection with the West, while on the inside encapsulates Soviet ideals of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Looking ahead, the successful preservation of the landmark will largely depend on plans for its adaptive reuse, which must respect the building's embodied meaning and original fabric. The project team has led a brilliant public awareness campaign to demonstrate that this national heritage monument is a masterpiece of architectural engineering, an integral part of Bulgarian history, and a civic site with great potential for continued enjoyment if given a new function.

This meeting and the work it presents to preserve the Buzludzha Monument and share learnings with the heritage field is the result of strong collaboration and commitment. I extend special thanks and congratulations to ICOMOS Bulgaria and Germany, in particular to Gabriela Semova-Koleva and Jörg Haspel, as well as to Dora Ivanova, Director of the Buzludzha Project Foundation, who has been a tireless advocate for preserving the monument.

Antoine Wilmering
Senior Program Officer
Getty Foundation, Los Angeles, California, USA

Goodwill Message

*Dear Distinguished Guests,
Dear Colleagues and Friends of Europe's Cultural Heritage,*

A very good morning to you all from the National Park of Tara in my native country, Serbia. It is my great pleasure to join you today on the occasion of this very special conference, which takes place in hybrid form, both onsite in Kazanlak (Bulgaria) and online.

Let me first convey Europa Nostra's special thanks to the organizers of this extraordinary conference on an extraordinary subject: the ICOMOS National Committees of Bulgaria and Germany, with the vital support of the German Federal Government, as well as all other involved partners and hosts.

Those of you who know me know how passionate I feel about my native region of the Balkans and South East Europe, with its distinctive turbulent history, which is the reason we have gathered this week. There is a special boldness that characterizes the spirit of place here, an expression through architecture and sculpture and the arts, which is of its time.

When it comes to the heritage of the post-war period, today this heritage is often ignored or even rejected with shame, especially when it is associated with troubled or unpleasant historical events, developments and personalities of our recent history. For this reason, they are often endangered: they become victims of vacancy, decay, theft, demolition, or get disfigured by reconstructions or modernisation attempts. Let me add that the recent history and heritage of post-communist countries is largely unfamiliar to a broader public in Europe. Yet, the significance of this dissonant heritage as *lieu de mémoire* is meaningful and evident at a European level and we need to protect it.

The most vulnerable period of any cultural expression comes with the generation following its creation: because neither is it still the domain of the creator, nor has it yet been accepted into the canon of national or international heritage; it is "work in progress". That is what is so challenging yet energizing about this subject in this place at this time.

Cultural heritage is a vast canvas on which Europeans define their multiple identities and nurture their shared values. Sometimes this is by continuing and preserving traditions, perhaps especially those at risk of dying out. Sometimes Europe is the crucible of ideas which grows into a real cultural or political movement. Sometimes creativity and innovation – and heritage as its legacy – can only be achieved by challenging conventions. And so it is with dissonant heritage.

As the European voice of civil society committed to cultural heritage, Europa Nostra's canvas is as broad as the horizons of the civilisations and cultures which have shaped our continent. Indeed, we – just as the cultural heritage in our

care – constantly face new challenges. And climate change is definitely the predominant challenge of our time. So, it was a pleasure to collaborate with ICOMOS on our European Cultural Heritage Green Paper with its ambitious aim to put cultural heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal. We are always stronger together! We therefore know that this will be a fruitful partnership with future collaboration and successes!

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The Buzludzha Monument is a breath-taking inspiration for discussion and collaboration. As you know, it was included in the 2018 List of our *7 Most Endangered* programme, run in partnership with the European Investment Bank Institute.

In a sense, endangered heritage is always about dissonance because the endangered sites are exceptionally significant, and there is the discord of exceptional risk, often because that significance is being questioned. And it challenges us: what should we save, how, and why?

After the inclusion of the Buzludzha Monument on our *7 Most Endangered* List, we organised a mission there, combining Europa Nostra's expertise with that of our partner, the European Investment Bank Institute, striving to help define a vision of hope and viable future for this endangered site. It is testimony to the great team behind this project, led by the indefatigable Dora Ivanova, that we, today, not only have such vision of hope and viable future for the Buzludzha Monument. In fact, the site itself has become a symbol of hope and viable future for others around Europe and beyond, seeking recognition of their values as dissonant heritage.

We are grateful for the support and commitment of so many different partners: from the European Investment Bank Institute and ICOMOS to the Getty Foundation. Together, we seem to be bringing this dream within reach. Therefore, I am so pleased that two members of the 2018 *7 Most Endangered* programme's mission team, Graham Bell, Europa Nostra Board Member, and Mario Aymerich of the European Investment Bank Institute, are with you today on this challenging journey to share their expertise and insights.

Let me leave you with this closing exhortation: sometimes cultural heritage goes through times of trial, especially when its significance is challenged, doubted, or even despised. But please, let us keep the faith, and let us demonstrate to Europe, as a whole, that where the Buzludzha Monument leads, others can follow.

Thank you very much.

Sneška Quaadvlieg-Mihailović
Secretary-General, Europa Nostra

Goodwill Message



CIVVIH
ICOMOS



Thank you very much for your invitation to this great event. It is a great pleasure and honour for me to give a goodwill message here at this 'Dissonant Heritage Conference' in Kazanlak, Bulgaria on behalf of the three International Scientific ICOMOS Committees on 20th Century Heritage (ISC20C), on Cultural Tourism (ICTC) and on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH). All three Committees are partners of this prestigious event and have contributed to the programme of the meeting.

My name is Claus-Peter Echter and I am the President of CIVVIH, which researches and promotes the understanding, protection, conservation, urban planning and management of historic cities, towns, villages, and urban areas. The conservation of heritage in cities is a commitment to the historic layers of the city. The aim is to preserve the historic fabric and basic structure of the city and to illustrate the local historic dimensions in future urban development.

The ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage (ISC20C) is inter-disciplinary in its membership and recognises the diversity of regional and cultural expression in 20th-century heritage. The ISC20C welcomes expert, associate and institutional members and focuses its efforts on conserving and celebrating 20th-century monuments, buildings, and landscapes. A particular focus of the ISC 20C is advocacy through public awareness and education for sites at risk of disfiguration or demolition.

The ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC) is a global network of cultural heritage, conservation, and tourism professionals and academics. They play a pivotal role in research, providing a platform for cutting-edge transversal thinking, developing policy directions and providing advice and expertise on cultural tourism at local, national and international levels, including multilateral organisations like UNESCO, UNWTO, IUCN and ICROM.

Governments, communities and business are keen to promote cultural and heritage resources as strategic priorities for sustainable tourism development, which has been accelerated by the implementation of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

There is growing interest in the topic of integrated approaches to dissonant, contested or controversial heritage

sites in Europe. Compared to monuments like castles and palaces, picturesque old towns, splendid townhalls, delightful residential homes and villas, or attractive cultural landscapes, however, dissonant heritage has been mostly disregarded and rejected. Heritage experts, community activists and civic initiatives have thankfully rediscovered and reappraised this type of heritage. The Getty Foundation in its *Keeping it Modern* programme is supporting the architectural conservation of buildings of the 20th century, including dissonant heritage like the Buzludzha Monument and the Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club.

At this conference we will be discussing integrated approaches to handling and developing dissonant heritage in Europe and how to better integrate dissonant monuments and sites into urban, regional and tourism development.

Citizen engagement and municipal/communal governance are key challenges to work on in achieving desired outcomes for the improved management of dissonant cultural heritage. Policy recommendations to connect different stakeholders for better funding, regulations and knowledge must be subsequently elaborated upon and implemented.

With such guidance we are able to support cities in dealing with the management of their cultural heritage and to contribute to developing solutions and taking action in cities and communities in implementing the New Urban Agenda to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

Kazanlak, 23 July 2021

Dr.-Ing. Claus-Peter Echter
President, ICOMOS International Scientific Committee
on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH)

also on behalf of
Jack Pyburn
President, ICOMOS International Scientific Committee
on Twentieth Century Heritage (ISC20C)

Fergus T. Maclaren
President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism
Committee (ICTC)

Statement

*Dear Participants of this conference,
Distinguished Presidents of ICOMOS Bulgaria
and Germany,
Dear Colleagues,*

What is happening at this conference is part of the big and ongoing European debate on dissonant heritage. Germany, a country with a complex and ambiguous recent history, has a special role to play in this debate. I remember back in 1995, Prof. Michael Petzet, President of ICOMOS Germany and later President of ICOMOS International, organized an international conference in Berlin on the fate of „Stalinist architecture“ imported from the Soviet Union and with the participation of representatives of the former socialist countries. All participants agreed that it was already a kind of cultural heritage, but that its future was too uncertain due to its controversy. Symbolically, the conference took place on *Karl Marx Allee*, former Stalin Allee, in East Berlin. The location has a controversial fate itself: initially, after the unification of Germany, it had been scheduled for demolition, but, by 1995, was already protected as a „monument“. Today it figures as a World Heritage nominee, along with its former political antagonist, the *Hansa Viertel* in West Berlin. This is a remarkable evolution!

Later, in 1999, during my ICOMOS World Heritage *Museum Island* evaluation mission in Berlin, we talked at length about this evolution with Prof. Haspel, then Chief Conservator of Berlin. He explained to me the conservation strategy adopted after the unification in Berlin for the so-called „Critical Reconstruction“ meaning the preservation of all contradictory historical layers (modernist, Nazi, communist) by reconciling them. I remember his words: „We do not tear down anything, we only add to it“ (I have to note, however, that after all, the socialist *Palace of the Republic* in Berlin has been demolished...).

Later, further after the unification, a real architectural laboratory followed some impressive architectural interpretations of complex historical stratifications in Berlin: the *Berlin Wall*, the *Neues Museum* by David Chipperfield, Renzo Piano’s Shopping Center and Raphael Moneo’s Hotel on Potsdamer Platz, the reconstruction of the *Reichstag* by Norman Foster, and why not, even the “Wrapped Reichstag” by the Bulgarian artist Christo and Jeanne-Claude.

Bulgaria has not yet taken this path. The national protection system, at its origins far too amortized, yet cannot shake off the idea that the contested legacy of socialism is only a source of problems and conflicts. Therefore, a number of valuable buildings from this period have not been protected and often compromised or even destroyed.

Lately, there seems to be a spirit of change though. Young researchers, such as my students, whom I am proud of – Emilia Kaleva and Aneta Vasileva, have been modestly but convincingly presenting and defending the values of the cultural heritage of socialism for over 10 years now and have been working on possibilities for their preservation, including for that of the *Buzludzha Monument House*. I hope you have appreciated their contribution to this conference. The *Buzludzha Memorial House* itself will soon be protected as a cultural heritage site. I am confident that the *Buzludzha Project*, as well as the current conference, will contribute to the good fortune of this heritage. In my opinion, the recently presented draft recommendations have the qualities of a message from the conference that will have an impact on the real conservation policies and practices.

However, I think that the change in conservation behavior with regard to contested heritage also depends on changes in thinking in a broader context. What do I mean by this?

First, we should gradually realize that dissonance of heritage is not necessarily a defect. It is a natural result of the cultural heritage rights of different communities, especially in a multicultural society. The application of these rights inevitably creates contradictions between them. I remember the heated debate within ICOMOS in 1998, when we first proposed the draft Declaration of Stockholm together with Krzysztof Pawlowski from Poland and Dinu Bumbaru from Canada, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UN. With this draft ICOMOS, for the first time, insisted on „the right to respect the authentic evidence contained in heritage as an expression of cultural identity“. Later, the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Faro, 2005) linked „the right of every community to enjoy cultural heritage“ to its „responsibility to respect the cultural heritage of others“, and hence „the common European heritage“. If we accept that human rights, including the right to heritage, are a democratic value, then we should accept that dissonant heritage is also a value, provided that it does not violate human rights and achievements. Therefore, its dissonance should not be neglected or neutralized, but rather integrated among the other values of the context. For example, we should not forget that *Buzludzha*, as mentioned in the morning, is part of an environment with a unique ancient culture – including one of universal value to humanity.

Second, we must also keep in mind the remarkable evolution in the notions of the value of the environment over the last half century. We see how quickly the notion of the environment as a collection of closed valuable enclaves is aging, each claiming to be a universal good. It gives way to the

idea of the value of an open global cultural environment, including authentic cultural and natural, material and spiritual values, different historical layers and places of collective memory – integrated cultural context, cultural landscape, carrier of a diversity of identities, pluralism of the spirit of place and of different communities. This cultural diversity, no less valuable to man than biodiversity, is a „development factor“ that ensures „a full intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual life“ (quoting the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001). Dissonant heritage undoubtedly creates part of this diversity.

Third, we must consider the evolution in the notions of the very preservation of cultural heritage. We see how the model of closed, elitist conservation systems inspires the idea of integrated conservation, based on the coordination between conservation, cultural, structural, social, educational and other policies seeking to strike the balance between preservation and development. A similar logic has been launched in one of the recent projects of the European Union, the *New European Bauhaus*. It relies on the symbiosis between culture, art, science and technology, based on sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion, in connection with the *European Green Deal*. Indeed, this basis makes it much easier to „harmonize interests“ according to the *ICOMOS Declaration of Stockholm* and to establish „conciliation procedures“ in accordance with the *Faro Convention*. Undoubtedly, in these procedures civil dialogue will play a key role to get to know each other and to understand the historical development of the values of different communities. But it is precisely the dissonant heritage that has valuable potential to stimulate this dialogue.

Fourth, all this sheds new light on architecture in synthesis with the arts, sciences and technologies. Architecture as a

hybrid system is able to interpret and represent the complex and contradictory cultural context, to preserve its authenticity, to reach agreement between historical layers and thus to unify ideas and appropriate functions. It can communicate between communities and disseminate knowledge about their values with all available artistic means, materials and technologies. All this creates opportunities for the dissonant heritage to send positive messages and to involve people. There is a key phrase in the *ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites* (Quebec, 2008): „Every act of conservation is also an act of communication.“ Architecture encompassing arts and technologies is able to provide this „heritage communication“, a notion put forth by the UNESCO Regional Summit on “Communication of Heritage: A New Vision of South East Europe” (Opatija, 2006). It thus plays an important role to achieve social cohesion and to support the fate of the dissonant heritage.

Finally, the immanent ability of society to resolve conflicts, accept differences, and harmonize interests should not be underestimated. What matters for this ability is the question on which of the two ethical systems the particular society is based on:

- on consent, pluralism, consensus, dialogue with the other, or
- on the violence of the majority against the minority, sanctioning any dissonant deviation from the established rigid political or cultural model.

I think we can look at dissonant heritage as one of the incentives to change our thinking about cultural heritage and its preservation.

Prof. Todor Kretev
Honorary Chairman of ICOMOS Bulgaria



5 Min



Introduction



Timeline of the Ongoing Journey to Preserve and Revitalize the Buzludzha Monument. An Updated Summary Report by the Buzludzha Project Foundation

Lyubomira Momcheva and Dora Ivanova

1. Taking responsibility – making a choice to take action (Figs. 1 and 2)

In 2013, Dora Ivanova, a Bulgarian student of Architecture at the Technical University of Berlin, discovered the Buzludzha Monument. Instead of an abandoned ruin from the past, she saw an outstanding architectural heritage site with tremendous potential for future reuse. Following some initial research, she realized that no one was taking care of the building nor were there any plans for its future. Ivanova decided to start a campaign for the monument's preservation. As a first step, in 2014 she defended her Master thesis entitled *Buzludzha – Between Past, Present and Future*, which focused on research of the Buzludzha's multi-layered aspects. Following her graduation in 2015, she founded the Buzludzha Project Foundation with the aim to preserve the monument and to turn it into a functioning heritage site.

The local grassroots initiative has since grown into an international project and become an example of a successful conservation practice of dissonant cultural heritage. Since the very beginning, the philosophy behind the project has been that the difficult past should be remembered to learn from it and to develop critical thinking. The purpose of preserving the monument is to be a platform for dialogue and education. The initiative shows that active citizens' involvement can be an important tool for successful heritage preservation. Indeed, it proves how each and every one of us can take responsibility, search for solutions and take action instead of complaining and waiting in vain for something to happen.



Fig. 1 View of Buzludzha Monument

2. First steps – starting the discussion and raising awareness

The first challenge to secure Buzludzha's future was to convince the Bulgarian public that the monument is a valuable heritage site in need of protection. During the first two years of the foundation's work, the initiative focussed on provoking the discussion and raising awareness through conferences, exhibitions, and strategic meetings. Such outreach was crucial for the viability of the project as it helped to steadily grow public support and yield professional advice. The list of the official events held during this period reflects the scope and variety of dialogues and exchanges, which paved the way for the next phases of the project.

Conferences:

- Roundtable Event *Soc Heritage – Heritage at Risk*, Sofia, 20 August 2015
- Roundtable Discussion *Soc Heritage*, Berlin, 5 September 2015
- Scientific Conference *Historiography of Transitions*, Veliko Tarnovo, 16–17 October 2015
- Conference *Modern Heritage at Risk*, European Parliament, Brussels, 23 February 2016
- International Conference *Heroic Art and Socialist Realism*, Sofia, 11 March 2016
- Panel *Universal Language of Culture – Regional Policies for Heritage Preservation*, part of the 12th World Meeting of Bulgarian Media, Prague, 17–21 May 2016



Fig. 2 Drone view of Buzludzha



Fig. 3 Open-air exhibition in Kazanlak, 2016

Buzludzha Project Exhibitions:

- 14th World Triennial of Architecture, *Interarch*, Sofia, Union of Architects in Bulgaria, 17–30 May 2015
- Public Library, Montana, 8 October–10 November 2015
- Art Gallery, Kazanlak, 18 November–10 December 2015
- Art Gallery, Gabrovo, 19 January–19 February 2016
- Central Library, Stara Zagora, 29 February–30 March 2016
- Annual Meeting of the Chamber of Architects, Sofia, University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, 17–24 March 2016
- Open Air Exhibition, Main Public Square, Kazanlak, 22 August–1 December 2016 (Fig. 3)
- Exhibition and Discussion, National Palace of Culture, Sofia, 15–24 September 2016

Strategic Meetings:

- Prime Minister, Mr. Boyko Borisov, 5 June 2016
- Stakeholders meeting at the Ministry of Culture, 14 June 2016
- Local Authorities discussion in Kazanlak Municipality, 25 June 2017

3. Gaining international recognition – the 7 Most Endangered nomination

Following a nomination made by the Buzludzha Project Foundation, in 2018 Buzludzha was listed among the *7 Most Endangered* heritage sites in Europe, a programme run by Europa Nostra, a leading heritage organisation in Europe, and the European Investment Bank Institute.

Together with the foundation experts in cultural heritage and finance from these two organisations undertook a mission to the monument in September 2018. They visited the Buzludzha Monument and met with representatives from the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Culture, and the Regional Administration of Stara Zagora. The mission report, published at the end of 2018, presents key findings and recommendations.

“In summary: a very challenging project dealing with the recovery of a masterpiece of architecture and crafts, with evident European interest due to its historic significance, its peculiar characteristics, and its numerous potential future uses.” Mario Aymerich, Technical Advisor to the European Investment Bank Institute

This was the first international recognition of the Buzludzha Monument as a cultural heritage site at risk in an official European report.

4. Initial funding – support by the Getty Foundation

Thanks to the national and international awareness campaigns, word about the project reached the Getty Foundation in Los Angeles and the Buzludzha Project Foundation learned about their grant programme *Keeping It Modern* (KIM) supporting research and conservation planning of heritage sites of the 20th century. Since 2014, the KIM has supported 77 projects of outstanding architectural significance that contribute to advancing conservation practice. The grants focus on the creation of conservation management plans that guide long-term maintenance and conservation policies, thorough investigation of building conditions, and the testing and analysis of modern materials.

In early 2019, the Buzludzha Project Foundation, in cooperation with ICOMOS Germany having supported the Foundation with expertise from the onset, prepared an application for the KIM programme. The scope of the proposal was carefully conceived with the support of experts from a variety of disciplines. Indeed, the application turned out to be successful. In late 2019, the Getty Foundation awarded a funding of USD 185,000 for the project *Research, Conservation Planning, and Adaptive Reuse Study of Buzludzha Monument*.

The project was undertaken by a multidisciplinary team of Bulgarian and international experts. The project partners were: ICOMOS Germany and the Buzludzha Project Foundation as project coordinators, the Technical University of Munich, and the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy of Sofia as academic partners.

Here we would like to express our gratitude to ICOMOS Germany for the constant support throughout the years,



Fig. 4 The team of conservator-restorers

helping to launch the operations of this highly complex preservation process of Buzludzha.

Building a team – decision-making through multidisciplinary discussions

Work on the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Buzludzha Monument led to the enlargement and wider development of the team (Fig. 4). An international advisory committee to consult on the interdisciplinary work was formed. Many team members had supported the initiative beforehand thanks to the previous networking efforts of the foundation. Others joined the team just for this specific project and remained involved ever after. Within a two-year timeline, a team of over 100 international specialists in the fields of architecture, engineering, restoration, tourism, business, and marketing carried out the research, analysis, and design.

Coordinating a large team of experts with a variety of backgrounds presents challenges. These challenges were met through open and constructive dialogue. The entire team met regularly, often in day-long meetings, to present results and discuss future development. Thanks to these meetings each team member could develop a thorough understanding of the complexity of the task. Moreover, regular public meetings were organized to reach out to all those who wished to get involved and become volunteers.

Volunteers are an essential part of the process. Their involvement shows public support, brings quality and transparency, and helps to build a stable community around the cause.

We are happy to state that following the completion of the CMP in 2021, all team members continue to be involved and support the project. Some of them became board members of the foundation while others took positions in the operational team.

5. Research – gathering information and getting a better understanding of the site

Research started with the digitisation of archival materials, including the categorization of the original blueprints and photographs and the scanning of the approximately 2,000 files.

Research on site started with the first-ever cleaning campaign in the monument. Its main focus were the staircases in order to gain access to all areas of the building.

Three-dimensional laser scanning, also known as LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), was performed by Zenit GEO. The geodesy team made over 540 single station scans, which were georeferenced and combined into a single point cloud containing more than seven milliard points.

The point cloud, in combination with the archive's blueprints, were used to create an exact 3D model of the building (Fig. 5). The building information model (BIM) was created by the architecture team of E House Architects and the engineering team of BIAS-M, with BIM management carried out by AllStudio. The model allows further intelligent research and planning by all experts.

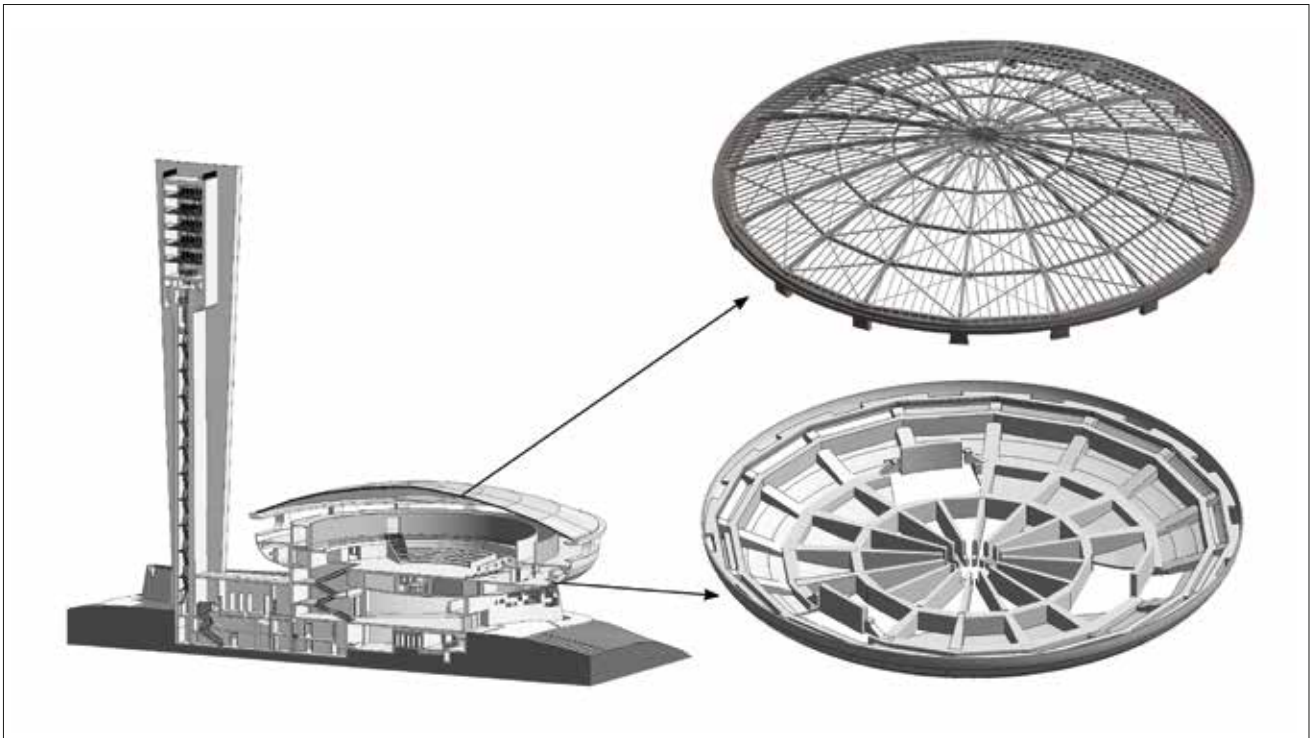


Fig. 5 3D Model of Buzludzha

A detailed field study was carried out by a team of restorers and architects from three universities from Germany and Switzerland — the Technical University of Munich, the University of Applied Arts of Bern, and the Academy of Fine Arts of Dresden. The team created a catalogue of Buzludzha's materials and surfaces; it is divided into three main categories referring to their location or type – exterior, interior, and mosaics. The catalogue brings light to the high number of materials and techniques used in the construction of the monument and the high-quality craftsmanship involved.

The utilities study was carried out by a group of experienced engineers from Bulgaria: Miroyub Bozhinov (water sewage system), Katia Ivanova (heating, ventilation and air conditioning), Rad Stanev (electricity). The conclusions were that the installations and technologies in the building were excellently planned and implemented to the highest standards of their time. Technologies were imported from both sides of the Iron Curtain and were well used on site. Unfortunately, there is no usable infrastructure left. However, the technical principles can be considered and analysed for the future reuse.

The structural investigation was crucial for the further planning. It was conducted by the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy of Sofia (UACEG) and led to the conclusion that the main structural elements were stable and the building could be conserved. Afterwards, the engineers of Bias-M conducted structural calculations to examine the load capacity of the elements with generally positive results.

The heritage experts Dr Emilia Kaleva and Dr Aneta Vasileva from ICOMOS Bulgaria and UACEG analysed the architectural and historical aspects of the Buzludzha Monu-

ment. Their research contextualizes Buzludzha and positions it within the specific socio-political, economic, and cultural backgrounds in Bulgaria.

Mariela Malamatenova examined the artistic elements from an art-historical perspective.

Grigor Perchekliyski, Desislav Evlogiev and Stoyka Ru-seva further scrutinized Buzludzha's landscape setting including the park, the infrastructure and the objects, built to serve and enhance the monument, their condition and cultural value.

As further part of the research complex, the project launched an oral history campaign called *Buzludzha's Unwritten Stories*. The documented stories helped to better understand the many technical and organisational elements of the monument, but most of all yielded insights into what Buzludzha meant for the people of Bulgaria. The stories shone a light on the emotional dimension of the building and helped build a coherent image of it. The team was led by Anelia Ivanova and all interviews were video recorded.

6. Conservation planning and adaptive reuse study – conclusions

After research had been carried out in all its forms, the project began a detailed analysis in all important fields. E House Architects assessed the monument's cultural significance based on internationally recognized criteria. The study covered the historical, aesthetic, social, scientific, and spiritual values of the building and its elements. Emilia Kaleva assessed the significance based on the Bulgarian criteria system. Both analyses proved that Buzludzha is a site of exceptional national and international cultural significance.

In addition, the assessments identified some risks as well as constraints and opportunities for the future. Based on these assessments the team developed conservation policy principles for each element of the building as well as a set of conservation guidelines.

Developing a revitalization concept was a key part of the process. The concept was based on the results of the interdisciplinary research and analysis referred to above. It was carried out by the architectural team of Studio Uwe Brueckner and E House Architects. The team developed different reuse scenarios leading to the creation of the final multifunctional revitalization concept that showcases the potential of the monument as a place for culture, history, and events.

Furthermore, a sustainable tourism plan was developed by the International Cultural Tourism Committee of ICOMOS. It was informed by tourism research and marketing studies involving a visitors' survey and visitation analysis. Two of the main recommendations were to encourage year-round visitation and to make the opening of the monument for visitors the first step in the conservation process.

Finally, a business plan presented the implementation costs of the project and a timeline reflected the phases of the conservation work. The document, developed by Martin Zaimov and his team, also included a management and a financial plan.

In fact, the report at hands gives a brief overview of the foundation's efforts throughout the years. Editing, synthesising and a translation of the Conservation Management Plan is in progress and the document will be available to the public in 2023.

7. Emergency stabilization measures – saving the mosaics (Figs. 6–11)

Through the research and analysis of Buzludzha it became clear that the most valuable and, simultaneously, most endangered elements of the monument were the mosaics covering an area of almost 1000 square meters. Prompt actions were required to stop the rapid loss of the artwork. Therefore, the team submitted a second application to the Getty Foundation's *Keeping It Modern* programme and received a grant of USD 60,000 in support of the mosaic stabilization in 2020.

An international team of conservator-restorers from the National Academy of Art in Sofia, the Technical University of Munich, the Bern University of the Arts, and the Diadrasis NGO from Athens collaborated to implement the project. Eager volunteers supported the process.

The team began its work by studying the characteristics of the mosaics, including the supports, the deficiencies of the materials, the variety of art techniques used, etc. It gathered the information about the main phenomena to then plan the next emergency measures.

After this documentation campaign, the team collected all loose mosaic tiles (*tesserae*) that had fallen off, documented and stored them in over 150 containers. Subsequently, the areas around the mosaic walls were cleaned from debris in preparation of the planned works.

As a matter of fact, all emergency measures planned in the preparatory campaign were fully implemented and all



Fig. 6 Mosaic documentation



Fig. 7 Emergency measures carried out on the mosaics



Fig. 8 Gathering the mosaic tesserae



Fig. 10 Shelter erected around the outer mosaic ring



Fig. 9 Monitoring mission during the winter



Fig. 11 Team of volunteers in front of Buzludzha

mosaics stabilised mechanically. To protect the mosaics from climatic impacts, a temporary shelter was constructed to shield the inner mosaic ring. The shelter consists of a structurally independent protective roof over the mosaic and a water-repellent but air-permeable textile providing vertical protection. The shelter functions as a climate buffer. It avoids rapid shifts in the general climate, prevents condensation, and protects from snow, frost and wind erosion during winter months, which had caused significant damage to the mosaics in the past.

To continue work on the preservation of Buzludzha's mosaics and to also protect the outer mosaic ring from destruction, the foundation announced the funding campaign *Adopt a Mosaic* in 2021. It was a success and provided the necessary funds to carry out the required work. Ten mosaics were adopted by individuals and local companies: Georgi Stoilov, architect of the monument; Galina Stoyanova, mayor of Kazanlak; Roman Zhelev and Dr Antonia Bozukova; M+S Hydraulics; Edelweiss Hotel; Dimana and Dimitar Shopovi; Dr Eng. Krasimira Dimitrova; Neli and Adel Zakut; and Dr Ivan Doshkov. In addition to the adopters, 162 people joined the campaign with smaller donations. A total of approximately EUR 49,000 was raised. Thanks to the financial support and the help of some 100 volunteers on site, a protective shelter was constructed over the outer mosaic ring in 2021. Hence, the outer mosaics have now been through their first winter protected from the harsh weather on Buzludzha peak.

Since the beginning of the project, the restoration team had regularly monitored the site and confirmed that all mosaics remained stable. Indeed, the emergency measures proved to be highly effective.

In recognition of their generous support to save the mosaics, the adopters were awarded with the title *The Honourable Bulgarians of 2021*, an annual campaign launched by the newspaper *24 Hours* and the Bulgarian National Television bestowing citizens, who engaged in the most significant good actions in and for the country.

The whole process greatly attracted the media's interest and national and international coverage sparked excitement in Bulgaria, Europe, and beyond.

8. Celebration of achievements – organising public events

Involving the general public is key to the sustainable development of any social project, especially one of dissonant character. This is why the foundation focused on reaching out to the people not only through traditional and social media, but also through live local events and organized a scientific conference for the professionals as well as a festival for the broader public. The events were an invitation for dialogue and discussion. The aim of the festival, in particular, was to share the project development publicly and to show that it is not a topic for experts only. In fact, the event addressed all citizens and encouraged them to learn more about the topic, to participate in the discussions and to get involved. Both events were highly successful.

The international conference *In Restauro: Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Eu-*



Fig. 12 *In Restauro* conference at the Iskra Museum in Kazanlak, 2021

rope – Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites was held on 22 and 23 July 2021 in the History Museum Iskra in Kazanlak and also streamed online (Figs. 12 and 13). The event presented the two main outputs of the two projects for the Buzludzha Monument: the conservation management plan and the emergency stabilisation project of mosaics, both carried out between 2019 and 2021. The conference was a key event not only because of its international scope (with participants from Bulgaria, Germany, Estonia, Russia, Georgia, Switzerland, Italy, the UK and others), but also because of its interdisciplinary and broad nature involving experts from various fields and with disparate experience and perspectives on dissonant heritage. At the conference the Buzludzha project's accomplishments were presented as a best practice in the field of dissonant heritage preservation, and also in the field of research and detailed conservation management planning for heritage sites. Examples of other international cases further strengthened the impact and outreach of the event.

The conference greatly contributed to the foundation's work in terms of partnerships, and local and expert support. The foundation plans to hold similar events on a regular basis to create a platform for knowledge exchange on national and international level.

The first Open Buzludzha Festival's slogan was "Music for Mosaics". The aim was to raise awareness and funds for the protective shelter of the outer mosaic ring. The three-day festival took place right after the conference, from 23 to 25 July 2021, and offered a diverse music programme on two stages as well as presentations, discussions, and tours outside the monument. It was organised by the Buzludzha Project Foundation, Bar Dak and the Kazanlak Municipality through a committed team of volunteers. It brought over 800 people closer to the cause and the possible future of the monument.

Inspired by the success of the first festival, the team organized the second Open Buzludzha Festival in 2022, from 19 to 21 August. The slogan was "You Are the Key. Open



Fig. 13 Participants of the *In Restauro* conference visiting the monument

Buzludzha” as the festival supports the opening of the monument for visitors and promotes the message that everyone is key to preserving cultural heritage and making a change. There were 130 musicians on three stages and a colourful daily programme focused on cultural and natural heritage. In addition to the Buzludzha presentation and tours, 10 cultural organizations were invited, representing the richness of the region. They included local museums, art performances, nature and sport activities. The highlight of the festival was the stage right at the monument, which featured 3D-mapped projections on Buzludzha (Fig. 14). A total of 1,500 people visited the festival. Today, the team is already planning the next festival, which is turning into an annual event, celebrating the site and its preservation.

9. Securing the building – providing visitor access

In 2021, the monument was visited by approximately 50,000 individuals who would have liked to, but could not, enter the building as it remains closed and surveyed to prevent accidents. Yet, the number of people interested to visit the building’s inside is further growing in 2022. Providing visitor access is an important step to raise awareness and to ensure the sustainability of the project. This is the main goal of the foundation in 2022.

In September 2021, the Buzludzha Monument was listed as a heritage site of national significance. This very important step allowed applying for state funding from the Minis-

try of Culture for the first time. The Buzludzha Project Foundation thus prepared a proposal aiming for save temporary visitor access. The regional administration of Stara Zagora, as the legal manager of the site, in partnership with the Buzludzha Project Foundation and the Kazanlak Municipality, submitted the project proposal with success and received a funding of EUR 198,000. The project comprised the following three phases.

First, the roof of the building was cleared (Fig. 15). In fact, since the original copper sheets of the roof cover had been stolen in the 1990s, the remaining layers of the roof were left unprotected and decayed constantly. Therefore, the risk of falling objects had become the main safety threat inside the building. Whenever a strong wind blew, roof material fell off in- and outside the building. Now, the debris was carefully removed from the roof but also from the other main areas to prevent accidents and allow access also for future conservation works.

Second, emergency conservation measures were implemented to safeguard the dome mosaic (Fig. 16). Indeed, the mosaic artwork in the dome was the last remaining unprotected mosaic piece owing to its inaccessible position up on the 12m high ceiling. To do the required work, a stable working platform with the dimensions 10m x 10m x 10m was constructed. The works stabilized the mosaic and constructed a protective shelter over it. With the accomplishment of these emergency measures for the mosaics, all mosaics in the monument are now stabilized and protected.

Third, secure visitor access yet required some equipment. Many marble and granite plates had gone missing leaving



Fig. 14 Open Buzludzha Festival 2022, 3D projections



Fig. 15 Drone view of the cleared roof

uneven surfaces on the floor. To avoid tripping hazards, the project realized temporary wooden pathways creating a new temporary layer and providing safe zones for visitors. Finally, an information pavilion, video projection, and a physical

model of Buzludzha will become part of the visitors' experience.

The process was supported by the business community, by volunteers, and experts. The work will be finalized before



Fig. 16 Stabilisation of the mosaics of the dome

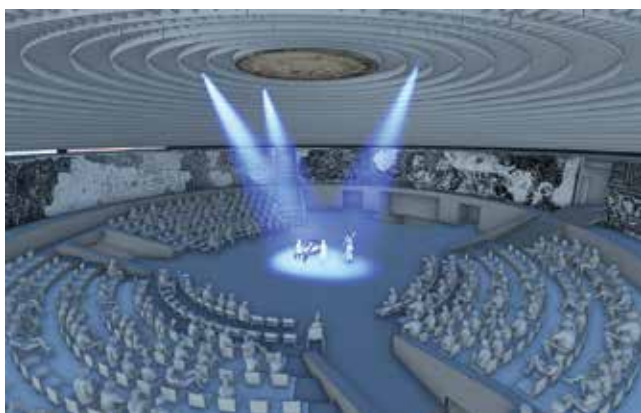


Fig. 17 Vision of events at Buzludzha

the end of 2022 and the official opening of the monument for visitors is planned for 2023.

10. The vision – long term goals

After finalizing the first two main tasks on-site – implementing emergency measures for the mosaics and providing visitors access – the next most urgent goal is the consolidation of the building. To stop the decay of the entire monument and provide a controlled environment inside, a new roof covering and new windows are needed. This task requires research, design, budgeting, financing, and institutional approval as well as the actual construction works. The existing metal structure of the roof can be used, but some specific

elements need to be strengthened or replaced. Moreover, the coating of the entire structure needs to be renewed. After the metal construction is repaired, the new roof covering can be implemented.

The next task would be the adaptation of the pylon to allow visitors access to its top. From a panoramic platform at a height of 70m above the mountain peak, visitors will enjoy a spectacular view. The visit to the top of the tower can operate independently of the programme in the main building. Additionally, the technical rooms on ground level can be converted into a café and lounge, offering a place to relax before and after a visit or when waiting for events and tours in the main building or the pylon.

The final phase should transform the building from a visitable artefact to a functional building, which can host a wide range of events and exhibitions. This phase includes new technical equipment and infrastructure for the whole building such as heating, electricity, ventilation, running water and a sewage system. Conservation, restoration, or renovation works have to be implemented on all surfaces. Furthermore, measures for the acoustics of the main hall will be required.

At this point, full revitalization of the building will be achieved. The authenticity of Buzludzha is preserved and the building has become a storytelling platform serving educational purposes through diverse exhibitions and events. Visitors can see the architecture of Buzludzha as it is. The story of Buzludzha, and many other related topics are presented through 3D-mapping projections, and further technological tools. For events and conferences removable seating transforms the space into a functional conference hall for at least 400 people. The Buzludzha experience includes a year-round cultural calendar with events in the fields of music, cinema, theatre, dance, fashion and more. The space and the flexible technical equipment create exclusivity for each event.

The concept for the revitalization vision is developed by Studio Uwe Brückner and E House Architects and shows the possibilities for a new Buzludzha experience (Fig. 17).

To summarize, the Buzludzha Project Foundation works for the preservation and the reuse of the Buzludzha Monument. However, the goal is bigger than the monument itself. It represents a cause for the care of cultural heritage in general, for the development of cultural tourism, the motivation and mobilization of civil society, the development of the region and the creation of bridges between institutions, municipalities, museums, and society. The goal is to develop best practices contributing to the efficiency of the heritage preservation system in Bulgaria and the development of a significant cultural destination on the map of Europe.

Credits

Figs. 1, 14: photo Aaron Tyler

Fig. 2: photo Mariyan Tashev

Fig. 3: photo Alexander Ivanov

Figs. 4, 6–10: photo Dora Ivanova

Fig. 5: © E House Architects and BIAS-M

Figs. 11–13, 16: photo Nikifor Haralampiev

Fig. 15: anonymous

Fig. 17: © E House Architects and Studio Uwe Brückner

Conservation and Management Plan: Significance Assessment and Conservation Strategies for the Buzludzha Monument

Anna Nevrokopska and Dobrin Tsvetkov

Exactly two years ago, the team of E House Architects joined the Buzludzha Foundation project funded by the Getty Foundation within the “Keeping It Modern” programme to prepare a Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) for the Buzludzha Monument (Fig. 1). The purpose of the presentation is to shed light on this task and to convince you that with the help of the CMP the building of the Buzludzha Monument and its surroundings will be preserved for future generations. Some would disagree – they would argue that this was a completely unnecessary pouring of huge funds into a cause doomed to fail and that there are so many other things that are more important. Others would add that the socialist heritage is not our heritage. Still others would not hesitate to accuse us of trying to “restore” communism on Mount Buzludzha.

Yes, the controversial past of the building erected 40 years ago is the main reason for its current condition. Functioning for only eight years, almost four times longer it was the subject of total looting and subsequent processes of destruction. Today, the distance of time allows us to discover and present to the world the enormous cultural potential of this place, analysed and developed in the Conservation and Management Plan.

Buzludzha is significant, but there is something extremely different about it that sets it apart from any other site anywhere in the world – its contradiction. Buzludzha is the legacy of two mutually exclusive periods – the period of socialism and the period of democratic changes (Fig. 2). We would

be hard-pressed to find another example of a site where destructive processes, decay and degradation add value to the extent of Buzludzha. The main credit for the development of the concept for controversial heritage goes to architect Aneta Vasileva and architect Emilia Kaleva, who are the key experts in the preparation of the study and analysis of the significance of the Buzludzha Monument.

The analysis of the values of Buzludzha was developed in parallel according to two criteria systems – the Bulgarian and the international criteria systems. The result of both systems showed the highest significance score, with no particular contradictions between them. Here are some main points of the evaluation according to the international criteria system:

We believe that Buzludzha can and will become a leading example for dealing with controversial heritage. Our society needs help in understanding and accepting its own past and moving forward, and perhaps Buzludzha is just what we need. This determines the high scientific value of the monument in the field of sociology and political science.

Architecture has always been and will always be a reflection of the time in which it was built. Buzludzha is undoubtedly the most vivid example in Bulgarian architectural history of the enormous strength and intellectual power that was harnessed for the purposes of propaganda and manipulative suggestions in totalitarian society. The traces of this overall urban planning, landscape, architectural and monumental solution can still be seen today. The visitor’s path was carefully considered, from the Dimitar Blagoev monument in the



Fig. 1 The grand stairs leading to the entrance of the Buzludzha Monument



Fig. 2 The square in front of the main building; in the foreground the remains of the monumental composition “Banners”



Fig. 3 “Forget Your Past” – graffiti slogan above the main entrance of the building (after the democratic changes)

lowland to the culminating moment of entering the building. All this is visible today, even under the collapsed concrete, cracked stone and stolen metal. The historic value is high to exceptional.

But for whom is Buzludzha actually valuable? In our analysis, we identified several different community groups that recognise Buzludzha as valuable. Perhaps the strongest impression is made by the group that uses the monument as a kind of stage for social dialogue. The slogan “(Never) Forget Your Past” has established itself over the years as an emblem of the monument and its contradictions (Figs. 3 and 4). In addition, of course, we have the political supporters of the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the local people, amateur motorcyclists and cyclists, architecture and art lovers, and, last but not least, the artists who are inspired by Buzludzha.

Have you ever stood in front of something knowing you liked it, but couldn't explain why? What happens is that the object affects you through its aesthetic qualities on a subconscious level. One definition of aesthetic value is: “for the object to evoke or provoke thoughts and emotions”. It would be hard to find a person who, upon first encountering Buzludzha, did not gasp in amazement (Figs. 5 and 6). This is proven by the strong creative response in the last ten years. Buzludzha is an object of creative inspiration in almost every sphere of art: opera; contemporary poetry; short movie; choreography; photography; fashion design, etc. The aesthetic value is high to exceptional.

Buzludzha has the power to attract the attention of the public. The proof of this is not only the hundreds of people who visit Buzludzha every day even though it is closed to

visitors, but also the incredible international team of specialists who have taken part in the preparation of this plan. This power of attraction is the most powerful weapon that Buzludzha currently has.

Now that we have a better understanding of the significance of the monument, let's look at the risks for its preservation. Here I want to thank Emilia Kaleva for her key participation in the development of this part of the plan. Let's start with the most obvious threat – Buzludzha has no roof anymore (Fig. 7). But how does this affect the building? First of all, the freezing and thawing processes separate the adhesive layer of the mosaics from the base of the wall (Fig. 8). The other major physical problem is the collection of water in the voids of the plate between the supporting concrete beams. In some places, water finds its way through the thin layer of the plate, the results of which are leaks, collapse of the concrete cover, exposure of reinforcement and growth of mossy vegetation. Buzludzha needs complete roofing as soon as possible.

Buzludzha is an object for a purposeful visit. One does not pass there by chance at 1500 metres above sea level, so it needs a new active function, different from the original one, to ensure its sustainable preservation. This is directly related to the lack of targeted funding for conservation. Given the changed political and especially market conditions after 1989, it is unlikely that the state will provide permanent financing as it did before 1989. The lack of legal protection and of clear boundaries and regulations for the preservation of the monument poses the risk of inadequate interventions that would violate the integrity of the site. This makes it all



Fig. 4 A later photo with "Never" before the same slogan and new graffiti "Enjoy Communism" (reference to the Coca Cola slogan)

the more necessary to have clear rules and regulations for the protection of the site.

The Buzludzha Conservation and Management Plan is necessary for the monument's sustainable conservation. The essential part of the plan is the conservation policies and the timetable for their implementation. The time plan covers a ten-year period and is developed in three main phases: emergency measures; consolidation and adaptation. In the first phase, the most urgent measures to prevent direct physical threats will be carried out. Some of these activities have already started. The second phase envisages ensuring a controlled microclimate in the building and starting individual conservation activities on the artistic, architectural and structural elements of the building. The third phase is related to the implementation of a comprehensive project for the conservation and adaptation of the building. The adaptation project must be based on a well-thought-out assignment that is in harmony with the specifications of the conservation plan and the needs of society. This depends directly on the form of permanent and targeted funding for the building and its management.

The site conservation policies are a set of principles and regulations for restrictions, recommendations and instructions at various levels for the conservation of the heritage value. Three of the main principles that have been followed are:

1. Prohibition of the complete restoration of the appearance of the building from the first period of its existence. This

would erase the traces of the second period, which is inadmissible according to the arguments presented earlier.

2. New interventions must be made with respect to the two periods of the building's existence.
3. New interventions must have a minimal permanent impact on elements of cultural value. At the same time, the intervention must provide a new active function to ensure the permanent and sustainable conservation of the site.

Within the study and analysis of the site, four elements are distinguished which can be considered separately due to structural, functional, spatial or other characteristics. These are the volume of the main body of the building, the pylon with the two pentagons, the technical block together with its underground levels, and the surrounding space. These elements were considered with their specific value characteristics, resulting in different regulations for each of the four elements. Here are some of the main building regulations:

1. Permanent or temporary roofing should be provided as soon as possible. In the case of insufficient funding, a temporary covering should be carried out above the mosaics in the ceremonial hall, to protect them from the direct impact of rain and snow. The freeze-thaw cycle poses the greatest danger in terms of weathering damage. The temporary covering above the mosaics should be made in such a way as to protect them from snow drifts.
2. After protecting the building from the adverse effects of rain and snow, steps should be taken to pump out water



Fig. 5 The foyer at the main entrance



Fig. 6 The hammer and sickle mosaic medallion hanging over the main hall



Fig. 7 Photo from above: the pylon with the star, the main building and the stairs leading down to the square



Fig. 8 The couloir and the outer mosaic ring



Fig. 9 The interior of the main hall where the inner mosaic ring and the steel roof structure can be seen

- between reinforced concrete rings according to the plan for pumping out water and normalising humidity.
3. Periodic monitoring and maintenance of the concrete components and metal structures should be carried out. The conservation of items and materials of particular importance is a preferred method of interpretation. For elements of the building structure whose load-bearing capacity is impaired due to defects or erosion, it is permitted to apply the reconstruction method (Fig. 9).
 4. Any actions that threaten the stability of the mosaics are prohibited.
 5. Permanent interventions are permitted only when they are of vital importance for the new use of the building. Such can be: engineering infrastructures; new suspended ceilings; new roof; new windows. They should be executed with respect for the spirit of the place and in harmony with the original substance and design or in accordance with a concept of exposure of the ruin.
 6. The graffiti should be further analyzed for whether they contribute to the social and aesthetic significance of the site, as they may carry information about the social and political changes in Bulgaria after the fall of

communism. Special attention should be paid to the reproduced graffiti image of Todor Zhivkov. Based on professional analysis, it should be decided which graffiti works should be preserved and which removed. The memory of removed graffiti may be preserved in an alternative way through photographs, 3D mapping or other means.

For the technical unit:

1. Permanent changes are permitted if they serve the revitalization of the site. Such changes can be new functions: coffee bar; restaurant; information centre and/or ticket centre; exhibition space. The following interventions are allowed: removal of interior walls and/or additions; removal or change of openings; new openings in the roof and floors; change of levels; underground extensions; underground connections both functional and infrastructural.
2. No new openings are allowed on exterior walls.
3. A volume upgrade is not allowed.

In a similar way, there are regulations for the pylon and the surrounding space. As you can see, the conservation regulations aim to provide a general framework for intervention

in the building. This intervention can have a variety of very different readings. In Uwe Brückner's presentation, you will see and hear one such reading that we developed together. It should be noted that this concept is not part of the conservation and management plan.

Buzludzha is a place of highest cultural significance that is threatened with complete and irreversible destruction. A conservation and management plan is necessary to express and sustain this significance. To succeed, it needs broad institutional and public support. A first step in this direction can be your active participation as its advocates. For us, there is no doubt that the elaboration of the CMP is the best opportunity to set an example of successful management of controversial cultural heritage. Everyone will benefit from this, because only in this way can we be sure that the erased past will not be repeated.

Credits

Figs. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8: Nikola Miller

Fig. 2: Nikola Mihov

Fig. 7: Emil Iliev

Fig. 9: Dora Ivanova

I
Modern Mosaics and Architectural Surfaces –
Conserving and Restoring
Controversial Post-war Heritage



ПРОЕКТ
БУЗЛУДЖА

Buzludzha Monument/Bulgaria – “It’s Big Stuff”. Ways to Conserve a Ruined Dissonant Monument

Thomas Danzl

Prologue:¹ “The past is a foreign country”²

I am pretty aware about the fact that I am always not only a warmly welcomed guest in Bulgaria but also still a foreigner, and one with high respect for its past. I hope we agree, that both of us – Bulgarians and foreigners – need a guide, a Cicerone or a Virgil as in Dante’s *Divina Commedia*, to this often pleasant and also unpleasant past. You and I, we feel the same distance in time looking at the remains of the former Buzludzha Monument of the Communist Party, which, in those days of summer 2021, was listed to become a National Monument.

The otherness – the alterity – offered to us by the monument leads to many different scientific, individual and emotional approaches towards a better understanding of our own experience in dealing with the ruins of the Monumental Park Chadschi Dimitar. It is crowned by the Buzludzha Monument itself. The question is about identity – Bulgarian, European and a global one – to be discussed and understood in

many, mostly dissonant, perspectives: *Damnatio Memoriae*, vandalism, Lost Places Tourism, arts, sports and adventure, internet phenomena and a branding of a dissonant site charged with iconic meaning!

The building was inaugurated forty years ago, in 1981, to celebrate the 1300 years of the foundation of the Bulgarian state. Today, the respect for the – let’s call them – archeological remains of the still sublime yet heavily fragmented building is literally calling for the focused interdisciplinary teamwork of (art) historians, architects, engineers, conservators/restorers, natural scientists and many other disciplines.

I am glad and proud of the fact that trusted colleagues and I were amongst the very first to start a scientific material survey in the 2019 campaign along with a group of students of conservation, restoration and architecture. During the emergency conservation campaign conducted in Buzludzha between 2019 and 2021, the monument was still regarded as a heritage at risk (2020).³ The 2019 grant awarded to ICOMOS



Fig. 1 Main Hall, outer ring, mosaic with natural stone tesserae, condition 2019



Fig. 2 Main Hall, inner ring during the enclosure works, 2020



Fig. 3 Main Hall, inner ring after the realized enclosure, 2020

Germany and the Buzludzha-Project-Foundation within the framework of the ‘Keeping It Modern’ (KIM) initiative of the Getty Foundation allowed to prepare emergency conservation measures for the mosaics. It also provided funds for the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP), a design project for future use and of a financial plan for the subsequent conservation and restoration campaigns. The knowledge gained in this process with respect to the general state of conservation of the building and its artworks was then used to successfully obtain another grant for the emergency conservation-restoration works of the mosaics (2020).

Our common ground and guidelines were offered by a Cicerone that awaited us already on the spot:

the historical substance preserved on the site.

The extreme climatic conditions, the enormous dimensions of the building, the advanced state of decay of the artworks and the roof as well as the still controversial social and political perception of the ruins of the former Bulgarian Communist Party’s monument represented a multi-layered conservation challenge. Reassuring alone was the presence of indestructible reinforced concrete.

Besides this factor, the mosaics and other architectural surfaces near the roof covering of the dome were certainly the most valuable and most vulnerable elements under threat by the ever-increasing decay of the roof. It was all about gaining time to slow down the decay processes and to develop common guidelines. We all agreed on the concept of a controlled ruin⁴ – a concept that helped, in a first step, to successfully preserve (not only dissonant) cultural heritage of the times before and after the political changes in Eastern Germany.

Who of the conservators’ team of the first campaign of 2019 was really afraid of this “big stuff”? None of us.

Before starting with a condition survey, the team⁵ wanted to learn more about the monument’s past and present consulting archive material and using forensic methods on site. In order to better understand the original setting and the original ideological implications as well as their remaining impact, it seems appropriate to include a brief review here.

Historical, cultural and natural context: the staging of communist iconography up to the Buzludzha Memorial House (1981–1989)

The Dimitâr Blagoev Monument, at the junction road to Buzludzha still marks the beginning of a unique monumental and natural park, where the “sublime” of the impressive Central Balkan Mountain Range is combined with the ideological staging of communist iconography up to the former Buzludzha Memorial House at its peak. The road, which was exclusively built to reach the monumental park with the four most significant places and memorials of recent Bulgarian history is not a mere mountain street. It has been designed to get to the top by public and private transportation providing people with facilities such as parking and resting places, fountains and panoramic views over the Kazanlak Valley. Moreover, it is conceived as a Via Sacra, a pilgrimage to national monuments mostly designed during communist post-war times. While at the crossroad of the street to the Dimitâr Blagoev Monument, the Buzludzha Memorial House can be seen from afar, when the winding road first opens the view to the valley. The crossroad itself shows this distinctive pattern on the hillside, coming up. Its surface area is divided by several expansion joints that interrupt the opus incertum vertically and reveal the casted concrete wall behind. On the left-hand side of this wall the main road to Stara Sagora and Gabrowo first describes a sharp turn to the left – in a close linear distance to the monument – and then reaches, parallel to the treeless mountain, a parking and a meeting place flanked by two monumental fists holding torches. These open the view both onto the valley below and to the Buzludzha Memorial House on the top of the hill. A simple paved path leads up for roaming “pilgrims”.

The other visitors are supposed to return back to the same road and to follow the slender way to the Buzludzha Lodge, opened already in 1936, and to the three Monuments installed there between 1961 and 1970 near the historical lawn. All along the hillside walls are disposed in the pattern of an opus incertum. Also here, parking lots for busses and

cars, drinking fountains and a monument for the three generations of Bulgarian socialism and communism were placed in a direct sight axis with the Buzludzha Memorial House.

The still existing hotels Diana, Edelweiß and Nova Hut Buzludzha offer their hospitality close to this first monumental area to be experienced travelling around. Different paved and illuminated paths lead to the “sacred” forest with its monuments and for those who want to continue walking up to the Monument, there is a paved path that reaches the end of the forest near the parking lot and the rest rooms.

Leaving Buzludzha Lodge and the memorial site one reaches the street again that leads up to the Buzludzha Memorial House passing by the Nova Hut Buzludzha on the left. Soon one will arrive at the parking area with 20 parking lots for busses. It used to offer facilities for the typical visitor with a magnificent wall cladding in natural white marble stone – now destroyed. Starting from here, both a path and a street lead up to the hill and another parking area especially designed for minibuses and cars including the possibility to turn around. The monumental area is reached by stairs to a stepped slope paved by a pattern of squares designed in brown limestone and radially set to design a cobblestone pavement mainly made out of granite. On both sides two granite benches were used probably to lay down floral wreaths. A front stair is designed to axially match the main entrance flanked by the monumental quotation of the Marxian manifesto. It is still framed by the fragments of two gigantic flags, formerly copper plated, and two figurative bronze reliefs – now lost – facing the stairs.

Here, the three million visitors counted in the eight years between the opening and the closure of the Monument were welcomed by the about 150 people working as guides, guards and cleaners. Several groups were guided through the huge monument and its entrance hall with two metal reliefs placed over one of the three stairs. The walls were cladded with ochre lime stone listels, the stairs made out of granite, while the ceilings were covered with a felt-like red wallcovering out of artificial rubber. The stairs were finished with parapets designed to accommodate huge transparent glass panels. Finally, one reached the spick-and-span main hall directly. It was cladded with white marble and with the colorful glass mosaics telling the socialist-communist version of the history of Bulgaria under the portraits of Engel, Marx and Lenin, flanked by red flames. On the opposite side, the Bulgarian leaders were framed by red flags. This should also be seen as a reminder of the sculptures downhill with the fists and torches and flags in front of the building. In the center of the white suspended metal ceiling of the dome, a formerly golden mosaic used to show the hammer and sickle symbols. A multi-coloured light and sound show were meant to overwhelm the visitors while guides explained the mo-

▷

Fig. 4 Main Hall, inner ring, detail of the glass mosaic showing partial loss of tesserae and exposure of the black sinopia

Fig. 5 Main Hall, inner ring, detail of the head of Marx before the left side of the face fell off, June 2019





Fig. 6 Main Hall, outer ring, mosaic with natural stone tesserae and a multi-coloured sinopia

saics. Up the stairs of the hall, the outer corridor with other mosaics made out of natural and artificial stone tesserae offers a fantastic 360 degrees view over the flag tower with two ruby glass communist stars to the Shipka Monument. Although, the 1981 Buzludzha Monument or Memorial House has never been explicitly dedicated to the memory of the battles in the Shipka Pass, it, nevertheless, built up a strong sense of Bulgarian nationalism already tied to this mountaineous location. Both monuments are now co-represented by the National Park-Museum Shipka-Buzludzha. These scenographic parameters continue to be determinant despite the decay and destruction of the monumental site.

Finding a way to deal with these remaining former “images of power” is essential but also inevitable for any future use. Buzludzha is still considered a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. It is in many parts intact in its emblematic quality, also or precisely because of its state of neglect. A definite and clear break with this originally intended visual language should be achieved by finding a new use, which can only be made possible through careful and thoughtful conservation-restoration strategies. Such approach allows preserving as much as possible of what can still be read while new narratives may emerge.

Conservators-Restorers’ have developed an important know-how in this respect when working on the preservation of the Socialist Monumental Art and Architectural Surfaces in Eastern Germany.

The positive experience of the author in conserving Monumental Socialist Art in the first decade of the new millennium (e.g. the Halle/Neustadt, 1964-1967, the Dresden Pal-

ace of Culture, 1969) instilled the team with confidence in regards to architectural surfaces of 500 and up to 2000 m².⁶ The material’s catalogue elaborated in this first campaign respected not only the basic traditional art and building technologies as well as proven conservation strategies but was also open to the unknown, the unexpected and the intricate technical and material phenomena of modern materials.

As a matter of fact, the detailed description of the above-mentioned decorative apparatus in the enormous material catalogue of over five hundred pages allowed asking the right questions in respect to the materials’ changes, the processes of decay and the dynamics of degradation including the effect of deliberate acts of destruction such as vandalism and political iconoclasm.

In order to find common grounds for the discussion amongst the different stakeholders involved, the analysis of the different states of conservation and deterioration patterns the socio-cultural and political dimensions into account. In this context the wise advice of Ivo Hammer is always dearly remembered: “Surface is an interface”⁷.

We started our survey campaign by keeping the theoretical principle of “preserving the authenticity of all the existing materials by giving dignity to all the phases in history” in mind – thus, staging these as a *Palimpsest* to consider the impacts of time from the very beginnings up to the present day.

In the context of architectural surfaces, the term *Palimpsest* should be understood as the result of a sequence of deliberate acts of destruction, uncontrolled decay processes



Fig. 7 Main Hall, inner ring, “gold-like” glass mosaic with metal foils of different alloys

and unplanned consequences of a material’s specificities. Together, these factors are responsible for the unintentional aura of a ruin in the process of deterioration; indeed, they strike a precarious balance between (in)visible decay and a constant loss of material.

However, this approach is neither generally recognized as an *opus operandi* in the practice of heritage conservation – although it should indeed be taken as a starting point for further discussion – nor is its ever-present role in the ultimately inevitable steady loss of any historic substance fully accepted.

The end of the operating life of the monument and its closure to the public allowed for a new – the third – chapter of its history; most anthropogenic impact factors could thus be excluded in favor of mere environmental impacts.

With our survey and the following emergency campaign for the conservation of the mosaics in 2020 our action followed the conservation principle to “manage change”, and our informed conservation practice certainly allowed an economic, organizational and practical advantage with respect to unthoughtful activism.

A sustainable use of local materials and human resources as well as a pragmatic, low-tech attitude in respect to materials and applied techniques revealed to be effective both in terms of time and money.

Thanks to the project management of the Buzludzha Foundation and ICOMOS Germany and with further Getty funding in 2020, it was finally possible to record the inventory of materials and deterioration patterns of the Agit-Prop

mosaics. The project “Emergency measures to stabilize the mosaics of Buzludzha”, funded by the Getty Foundation, managed to install a protective shelter over the most endangered mosaics of the monument, i.e. those of the inner mosaic circle. Another main goal of the team was to preserve the most endangered mosaics of the outer ring in September 2021 before wintertime further accelerated decay processes.

Apart from some members of the former conservator-restorer’s team of the Technical University of Munich, the National Academy of Arts in Sofia, the Academy of Arts in Plovdiv, the Bern Academy of the Arts and last but not least the non-governmental organization Diadrasis (Interaction) from Athens could finally guarantee an initial conservation campaign to tackle the most urgent needed conservation and restoration works.

This campaign focused on the mapping of all the hollow and detached or otherwise damaged areas of the mosaics securing the mosaics’ edges by means of filling mortars, conserving the preparatory drawings – sinopia – in an adhesive and cohesive way, documenting and saving detached or fallen sinopia and mosaic fragments by storing them for future possible uses and to keep the detached areas of the mosaics in place by means of non-invasive mechanical means.

Regarding the roof and the missing protective effect of this due to its bad state of disrepair, the most practical way to slow down decay and to guarantee a holistic attention for all the material aspects was to introduce a continued control of the microclimate in the surrounding of the mosaics. Video cameras were installed along with a shelter that consisted

of a metal construction and the hanging of a water repellent fabric to protect from direct contact with liquids or frozen water, heavy winds and snows and, finally, to lower the risk of condensation phenomena.

After the first winter of our campaign, we realized that all these expected results were achieved!

The following chapter will illustrate, in general terms, the decision-making process and the methodology applied based on three main prioritization working steps.

Priority I: Preparations – before action

The abovementioned motto *surface is an interface* implies that any action aiming for the safety of structural parts, i.e., the refurbishment of structures, must follow the theoretical



Fig. 8 Main Hall, inner ring, detail of the head of Marx after the left side of the face fell off and during mechanical securing of the hollow mosaic, September 2019



Fig. 9 Enclosure, October 2020

principle of preserving a maximum amount of architectural surfaces, as they carry the material information and values both quantitatively and qualitatively.

In order to avoid irreversible damages to these surfaces, one should take all possible technical consequences into account that may come up in case of emergency measures. Regardless of any aesthetic considerations one should keep an eye on the technical aspects of compatibility and sustainability duly aligning with the concept of minimal intervention. Indeed, the intended project of a place for pan-generational learning and encounters might receive decisive impulses from the authenticity of the preserved material sources.

A necessary professional prerequisite in this first phase consists in pragmatism based on the professional's relevant experience gained during previous similar projects. The skills include analyzing specific points of the building to gather the highest amount of information in the shortest possible time while keeping a sense of proportion in mind given the sheer size of the building and the time constraints. This allows establishing a methodological framework for processual work involving agile and swift reactions.

The relatively small budget requires further prioritization of measures during anamnesis as to understand the construction history, the building and artistic techniques, the quality of materials and the ways of execution. The mapped phenomena were categorized according to their description and "layers" – starting with the construction and ending with the architectural surface. The result is a phenomenological catalog with text, photos and graphics, and, at the same time, a systematic inventory of the constructional and superficially relevant materials at any location of the monument.

At this point of the research, no in-depth damage description or assessment has been done as this type of mapping requires basic photographic documentation and a condition survey of the architectural surfaces.

Priority II: During the implementation

Fundamental for any working step were, on the one hand, the comparison of archival materials with the different stages of the design planning phases, and, on the other hand, the identification of changes made during the construction process. The primarily historical data were based on photo documentation, enriched by means of oral history and on-site inspections and interpreted in final interdisciplinary discussions.

"In Absentia", so to speak, i.e. the losses owing to vandalism and historical or current usage (e.g. building services, infrastructures, monumental and cultural landscapes, politics, sports and recreational purposes).

The architectural and artistic appreciation of all material phenomena in detail (artistic techniques, "pentimenti," traces of old repair and use) and their qualitative and quantitative classification as a basis for an architectural and art-historical as well as artistic and technical classification and evaluation, included the continuous recovery of representative material samples (of construction, surface and furnishing, if available) and their adequate storage.



Fig. 10 “Hammer and Sickle” mosaic in the dome 2019

The final determination and description of all the phases in the life of the monument in a timeline helped to clarify both a relative diachrony and synchronicities. At the same time, it helped to classify certain aspects such as interventions and “uses” by individual and organized “lost places” tourism (advertising stickers) and works by graffiti artists.

It should thus become clear that all historical relics were initially conceded equal importance and an equal preservation perspective for each time trace. As a matter of fact, the safeguarding of relevant relics (e.g. spray cans, stickers of tourism enterprises) are fundamental for this purpose.

Due to the aforementioned time constraints, it was also necessary to prioritize the work steps to secure the mosaics and the architectural surface. Within this context, the concept of a controlled decay played an important role, i.e. the establishment of an unstable equilibrium in view of the building’s prevailing extreme physical conditions (water balance, climate control, wind speed, rain-, snow-, and frost-load, outside-, room- and surface-temperatures: determination of ice melting events) through active and preventive conservation interventions. These encompass the (real time) control of the achieved measures through long-term data acquisition, e.g. through video-camera and data logger monitoring.

After a general scientific of the properties and aesthetics of ruins exposed to extreme weather conditions, a thorough identification of material weaknesses should be undertaken in the next future. In addition to raising awareness of the consequences of environmental exposure of materials and processing techniques that were never intended for outdoor

use, special attention should be paid to traces of vandalism (direct weakening of materials) and the absence of a roof.

So far, these phenomena could only be identified by visually describing obvious potential and actual material incompatibilities – for instance lime-based plasters covered by Portland cement ones, heterogeneous composites in the support as wood, metal, brick, in-situ concrete, reinforced concrete and concrete slabs. Clarity can still be achieved with in-depth manual and then digital mapping of representative degradation phenomena, which – for sure – need to be further specified by chemical and physical analytics.

Priority III: Next steps

Now, what is the most urgent thing to do next? – In fact, this is only a rhetorical question as we have a very clear-cut answer to it: the emergency conservation of mosaics with a second Getty Grant 2020!

Indeed, professionals with relevant experience in the practice of Preventive Conservation, such as in the field of archaeology and building conservation, have to adapt their skills to the extreme conditions the sinopia is exposed to in order to preserve the fresco mosaics in the short term.⁸

In the absence of the financial means to build a new roof, this could only be achieved by excluding the direct influence of water through a preliminary protective roof. The hope to isolate the internal climate from the external climate



Fig. 11 Main Hall, outer ring, enclosure with weather station, 2021

by means of an enclosure and to completely stop the direct exposure to abrasive and erosive factors also played a role. “Classical” conservation-restoration methods of wall paintings and mosaics – such as edging repair – had to be adapted to the special material techniques applied in the early eighties of the 20th century when these mosaics were created.

Since only a few material parameters could be determined in the short time available, the experts generally privileged principles of minimal intervention combined with preventive non-invasive mechanical conservation. An exception was made to fix the individual tesserae with acrylate or meta-acrylate (film-forming binding media) on heavily cementitious substrates (such as fiber-reinforced concrete slabs and cement mortar) trusting in a full reversibility. When clearing the contaminated building material (such as glass fiber mats roof insulation) a possible future anastylosis was prepared documenting a layer-by-layer salvage of all mosaic and sinopia parts and storing them in a deposit.

Summary and future challenges and perspectives

The international cooperation involving university training courses for conservators-restorers and young architects, has made its proofs in other projects in the past. Indeed, it allows

teaching and research at the highest theoretical level. The intense field work we came to conduct under the most difficult climatic conditions on site should stay an exception, yet, in our case we had no other option, we had to do it this way.

There is no doubt that the desirable future use of the building as a place of remembrance and learning and aiming at enhancing the physical qualities of a monument preserved as a controlled ruin poses a certain competition of possibly divergent concepts.

Next tasks and recommendations

- Clarify the question of whether the adhesive and cohesive conservation of plaster, paint layers and mosaics should be continued or not given the fact that attempts to secure the edges had renounced on injections of adhesive and filling compounds;
- Possibly develop adequate preventive measures to reduce the salt load (compresses, sacrificial plaster);
- Discuss and agree on the aesthetical treatment of defects (lacunae) in the mosaic.
- Clarify the question of preservation and presentation of architectural surfaces (floor, wall, ceiling);
- Discuss the question of possible anastylotic additions (Marx, Engels, Lenin) in an international expert group;

- Clarify the process to improve scientifically informed decision-making on the preservation of graffiti or vandalism damage;
- Clarify the question of how to deal with covered graffiti;
- Ensure that any pending constructive safeguarding activities consider these findings, including in connection with a partial opening of the monument;
- Prepare a didactic concept to explain the material, artistic and socio-political dimensions of the mosaics;
- Develop a digital format to visualize lost conditions, e.g. showing the creation, destruction and rescue of the mosaics in fast motion;
- Ensure that the conservational-restorational findings feed into the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and the utilization concept;
- Bear in mind that the conservation and restoration of the mosaics can only be completed once the building materials have dried completely!

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Fig. 12 The “Buzludzha Memorial”: view from the torch-bearing fists 2019

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¹ When I first had the pleasure to meet Dora Ivanova in February 2019, before a board meeting of ICOMOS Germany, she was striving for nothing less than the rescue of the Buzludzha Monument. I did not hesitate for a moment to offer her the support of my chair at the Technical University of Munich for her ambitious project.

The task of developing methodological foundations for practical steps in terms of conservation and restoration to ensure the material preservation of an intended monument (Alois Riegl) – a communist party monument of the late 20th century – was too stimulating to do without.

- ² LOWENTHAL, *The Past*, 1985; LOWENTHAL, *The Past – Revisited*, 2015.
- ³ MACHAT, ZIESEMER (eds.), *ICOMOS Heritage At Risk*, 2020.
- ⁴ See KRAG, *Controlled Ruin*, 2016. Although the use of the term has similar roots and concerns – especially in relation to dissonant heritage – in our case the concept is derived from a long-established practice of preventive conservation in historic building conservation and archaeology. Especially the monument care institutions in the former German Democratic Republic usually acted very subversively with this very concept in relation to churches, castles and other heritage of the so-called “Feudal Period”. As a rule, the defect roof covering and the roof structure were taken away and the upper parts of the outer walls were secured. Rarely, shelter roofs were already installed as they require more care and maintenance.
- ⁵ The members of the team were Master students and young professionals training as conservators-restorers at the University of Fine Arts in Dresden (HfBK) or as architects at the Technical University of Munich.
- ⁶ See: DANZL, *Abnahme und Übertragung von Wandmalereien*, 2019. See also DANZL, *Architekturoberflächen der Ostmoderne*, 2016.
- ⁷ HAMMER, *Surface is Interface*, 2020.
- ⁸ Cf. EMMERLING, *Toccare*, 2009; SCHÄDLER-SAUB, *Weltkulturerbe Deutschland*, 2008; EXNER, JAKOBS, *Climatic Stabilization*, 2005.

Credits

All images: Buzludzha Project Foundation

The Synthesis of Mosaics, Decorative Arts and Architecture in Buzludzha Monument – Aspects of Significance

Mariela Malamatenova

Let us explain the value of the mosaics in the Buzludzha Monument by comparing them with a work from the Louvre. You have seen the Mona Lisa painted by Leonardo. Its material value is the price of the board and the applied paints. Shortly after the pandemic crisis, the French society was called upon, half-jokingly, half-realistically, to consider parting ways with the Mona Lisa by selling it to a museum in Abu Dhabi and using the funds to support the French economy. What greater recognition of value than this? Of course, the French society was adamant that it would keep the portrait of this Italian lady shown before a hazy landscape and painted by a white-bearded man, because it expresses France's idea of value.

Unlike the Mona Lisa, sites such as the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and the Buzludzha Monument have a different interaction with humans. We recognise them as part of our lives; they influence our personal ideas; they are to blame for the passage of time, for the unrealised possibilities; they witness our ups and downs. Thus, the Reichstag building was "guilty" and set on fire. The rage of the people destroyed the Bastille, made a balefire of the gilded chairs of Louis XVI, or scraped off the image of Todor Zhivkov at Buzludzha and fired a Kalashnikov assault rifle at the 12-metre five-pointed star at the top of the pylon (Fig. 1). These are objects of pride and scorn.

Of course, a long time ago, at the dawn of the formation of our value system, long before the Mona Lisa and the Arc de Triomphe, the decorative arts served their purpose to decorate everyday life, to emphasise the importance of the one who orders and owns them. They became a symbol of greatness and prestige. However, when, in the course of the years, the name of the one who possessed them is lost, the images of people, the ornaments, the splendour, the magnificence, the expressiveness, the symbolism of the original work of art remain, capturing a moment of time with precision and comprehensiveness, as is only the case in the longest novels. Such an endless narrative is represented by the mosaics. From those with the simplest ornamentation of the flooring to the scenes with the 3rd century feast in the style of "unprejudiced eye" and those from Villa Romana del Casale from the 4th century, where in detail exotic animals are depicted brought to the crowd and intended for slaughtering. Byzantine Christian churches made extensive use of wall mosaics on curved apses and ceilings and domes. Typical is the use of gold tiles which create a brilliant, unearthly, divine background for the portraits of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, the saints and the emperors.

Historically, the value of the mosaics from the House of Monuments of the Bulgarian Communist Party on Buzludzha



Fig. 1 The twelve-metre five-pointed star from the pylon at Buzludzha, made of glass and metal, current state

Peak consists in the revival of the technology in Bulgaria from the times of Egypt, Greece, Rome, Constantinople, and Ravenna after a period of 1600 years. Stylistically, the compositions are a continuation of the traditions of European styles such as New Objectivity and Novecento and, thanks to the convergence of the policy of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and Mexico, are a continuation of the strong-

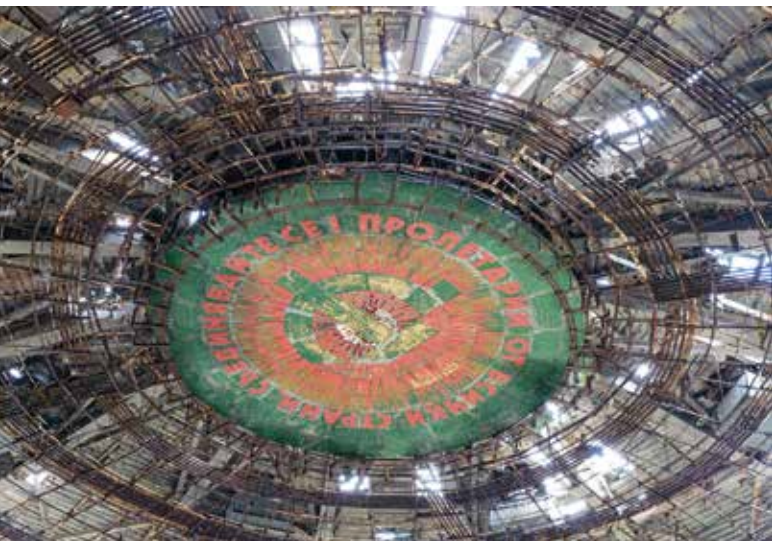


Fig. 2 The ceiling in the ceremonial hall by Vladislav Paskalev and Kancho Kanev, made of stone and smalt mosaic, current state

est manifestations of revolutionary art in Latin America. Buzludzha is a park as well as an architectural and design project. With the joint work of architects, artists, sculpturers, it is the only object in the world showing a synthesis of monumental arts, architecture and park environment on such a scale; a vivid expression of time, political system and aesthetic point of view (Fig. 2). The connection of decorative techniques, mosaics, glass panels, sculptural reliefs, floor materials, window frames is a multifaceted manifestation of sophistication and style.

Architects, engineers, contractors were facing the challenges of huge scale, unfriendly environment and short deadlines. The construction took up a huge area, and new technologies required solutions. Technically, many things were happening for the first time. Great manpower was involved in the construction of Buzludzha, new complex technologies required new specialists. The site is located on a high peak with very low temperatures and strong winds. The construction of such a technologically complex building was a real challenge. Propaganda works in favor of mythologizing the building as a “national affair”. A majority of the Bulgarians perceived the building as a symbol of pride or humiliation. This extremity of feelings is also the reason for the monument’s destruction. The socialist propaganda slogan “Art by the people, for the people” finds its brightest expression in the Buzludzha Memorial House.

Aesthetically, although implemented in the party’s policy of glorifying the existing system, many of the authors distanced themselves from the propaganda style imposed under the influence of the Soviet policy and developed their personal pursuits in the field of form and composition, continuing the achievements of plastic art. The composition of the mosaics from the inner ring is a series of scenes that has unified sounding. The portraits are the work of Hristo Stefanov and the compositions of Yoan Leviev. There is a gold background behind the relatively dark images. The gestures are tense, the shape is highly stylised, a theatrical dramat-



Fig. 3 The inner ring at Buzludzha with mosaics by Hristo Stefanov and Yoan Leviev, current state

ic effect is created (Fig. 3). The long strip of the decorative panel emphasises the height of the dome.

Scenes from the history of the Bulgarian Communist Party are located in the outer ring, intended for chronological examination and discussion on the topics of the compositions. Stylistically, some of the mosaics are major works in the development of the artists. The compliance with the architecture and the material is indicative of the works of the artist Ivan Kirkov and his attempts in the fields of abstraction and natural forms, and of Ivan Kozuharov (Fig. 4) and his rhythmic decorative compositions. Ivan B. Ivanov used symbolic images and examined the image of the woman in its diversity of Greek classics and the canonical images of the Virgin with child in a brightly decorative and harmonious, exquisitely monochrome composition.

In the socialist regime women were emancipated; they received rights, equal to those of men: equal labour rights and salary, access to education, qualification and all professions. Maternity was protected, creating conditions for combining the economic and social role of women. “With a decision of the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the State Council of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, a programme was developed to raise the role of women in building a developed socialist society to create conditions in which women/mothers combine their participation in business with its social function” (Fig. 5).¹

As Deputy Chairman of the State Commission for Monumental Arts at the Committee on Culture and Union of Bulgarian Artists and responsible for the distribution of topics, it seems that my father Ivan B. Ivanov, who was born in 1933, chose one of the most favourable topics for himself personally. On the other hand, at that time he painted in Greece with Yoan Leviev, got acquainted with the ancient works in the museums in Athens, had already made several exhibitions in which he interpreted the topics of women and motherhood, and therefore received one of the most unburdened political topics.

In this composition we see the beloved woman, the woman-mother, the demiurge-creator and the woman as powerful ruler of the world. The beloved woman was hardly a tolerated image in the art of socialist times, but she becomes decisive in this composition once at top left in a Chagall-influenced image of flying lovers and once again in running figures like the mythological Daphne, who turns into a tree as she runs away from her captor. Historically and globally, art so far had been dominated by images of the Virgin Mother. Here we see on the right a Mother of God in an almost canonical pose and another lying down and playing with her child. There is also a third one suffering, with a tragic gesture and her head caught under something like a kite or a sun, and curiously one of the few surviving details after the vandalism of Buzludzha (Fig. 6). The family is especially emphasised in an almost sculptural image. The strongest figure is the central image that I associate with the multi-armed Shiva – a role that socialism continues to impose on me to this day, forcing to do all different sorts of activities very often in opposite in directions.

The panel does not differ in quality from the artist's other murals: secco and painted ceramics "The Birth of Life" in the Dobrudja Hotel in Albena; a fresco in the library in Lovech – the only one in this technique in Bulgaria –, two panels secco in the armoured brigade building in Sliven; "Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship" in the building of the same name in Sofia, now a covered wall in a Lidl supermarket; painted ceramics in the Dobrich Cultural Centre. Neither does it differ from his paintings, graphics and drawings that are in many galleries in Europe and worldwide. The arrangement of the mosaic is of uneven quality due to the changing teams during the work. Some of the heads and hands were executed by the author himself.

Stoimen Stoilov is more lyrical and uses different sizes and structures in the arrangement of the stones, indicating the development of mosaic towards a freer and improvisational style. Dimo Zaimov expresses himself through a more even rhythm in the figurative composition "Socialist Industrialization". This rhythm will be the main motif of the metal curtain-shield of the stage of the National Palace of Culture in Sofia with the changing colours of the metal plates. On the three stairwells are the glass sculptures by Ekaterina Getsova. The composition consists of poppies and hands holding torches (Fig. 7) Made and installed by specialists from Czechoslovakia, the reliefs are a technical achievement and an aesthetically unique work that relies on the effect of lightness and transparency of the passage areas. This early work by Getsova already hints at her later works – the reliefs in the Tokyo subway, the human glass figures, the decoration of the Central Department Store and the Court House.

The design of the star makes skilful use of the perspective, which turns the strongly elongated star at a height of twelve metres into a well-proportioned form when viewed from below. The star of Buzludzha uses the technology of the star from the Party House in Sofia, but is more firmly attached due to the strong winds at the top.

The mosaics, frescoes and wood carvings in the National Palace of Culture in Sofia are later than those in Buzludzha and are more secular in nature, without propaganda and with a less theatrical effect. Artists such as Atanas Yaranov



Fig. 4 The outer ring at Buzludzha, mosaics by Ivan Kozuharov; state at the opening



Fig. 5 Ivan B. Ivanov, project for "Woman in Socialist Society" in the outer ring, tempera and paper



Fig. 6 The outer ring with mosaics by Ivan B. Ivanov, current state



Fig. 7 Ekaterina Getsova, glass relief of stair landings, detail; state at the opening

(Fig. 8) and Dimitar Kirov (Fig. 9) were given the opportunity to develop their skills on a large scale and with the possibilities of decorative techniques, and one can see the difference in effect between large-scale decorative panels in an architectural setting and exhibited in a museum.

I hope we have overcome the stage of questioning whether sites like Buzludzha should be protected. Now our main obligation is to preserve them in their authenticity. Let's not allow the replacement. No options for a transparent roof that will completely change the brutalist look of the site, illuminate the mosaics from above and change the impression. Preservation of the shape of the openings and maximum proximity to the original in the materials for glazing, floor-

ing, lighting fixtures, and railings. No interference with the original shape of the "plate" and the pylon. The site must be secured to provide the necessary comfort for tourists and workers there, but without seeking a change in function. The building is well suited to present a documentary exhibition about the time and technology, to be a place for temporary events and concerts, but it should be allowed to speak with its authentic appearance, which is expressive enough.

The existence of a strong state power, a policy of tolerating and improving artistic staff, a system for securing and guaranteeing large-scale orders led to the flourishing of culture in this period (Fig. 10). Buzludzha is, along with the National Palace of Culture in Sofia, one of the sites where the processes of the planned economy, the concentration of financial and labour resources, the synthesis of the arts, and brilliant artistic achievements are concentrated. Other examples of such large-scale projects in the world are the frescoes by Diego Rivera in the Mexican capital, and works by the architect Oscar Niemeyer and the ceramic artist Athos Bulcao in the capital Brasilia.

The vandalism of the monument in the years after 1989 is a strong symbol of the ongoing historical processes in Eastern Europe. The protection of the monument should be approached as in the protection of archaeology and existing documents and methods. Interference with the authenticity of mosaics and architecture should not be allowed. We should stop the processes of destruction, restore some iconic scenes, but preserve the traces of barbarism so that we can explain to future generations what happened during that time, what was the art of the totalitarian state. And that art, although generated by the political system, has its own means of expression, its own achievements, its own life outside the realm of politics. Let us take care to preserve the authentic appearance in its entirety – the glass reliefs, the star, the mosaics, their connection with the architecture, and the architecture in connection with the landscape. Let us recognise the value of Buzludzha as our common value – of Kazanlak, of Bulgaria, of Europe, and of the world.



Fig. 8 Atanas Yaranov, mosaic in the National Palace of Culture, Sofia



Fig. 9 Dimitar Kirov, mosaic in the National Palace of Culture, Sofia



Fig. 10 Ivan B. Ivanov, project for painted ceramics for a school in the district of Druzhba Sofia, tempera, paper

Credits

Mariela Malamatenova and photo archives of the artists
Ivan B. Ivanov and Ekaterina Getsova

¹ Decision of the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party „On raising the role of women in the construction of the developed socialist society“, dated 03/06/1973.

Curating Socialist Cold-War Art in East Berlin

York Rieffel

Due to the division of Berlin into East and West, the city has gone down in world history as an important focal point of the Cold War, which was openly fought between the USA and the Soviet Union and their respective allies from 1948 at the latest. This division is still visible today in architecture and urban development. Urban planning and architecture – and especially housing construction – developed in a unique way into central fields of competition between the systems during the Cold War in view of the massive destruction caused by the war, the requirements of reconstruction and socio-political reorientation. The eastern part of Berlin dominated by the Soviets and the western part, designed by the Western Allies, functioned as shop windows to the world to emphasise their own economic and cultural, and thus ideological, superiority.

Over a period of more than 20 years, unique residential quarters and urban ensembles were created in both East and West Berlin according to the plans of renowned architects, representing in unique conciseness, density and quality the internationally relevant trends of architecture and urban development of the post-war period. High-quality ensembles were built, each of which in itself represents an outstanding example of different guiding principles and design characteristics of modernist architecture and urban development, in which important protagonists of mid-20th century architecture such as Walter Gropius, Oscar Niemeyer, Alvar Aalto or Le Corbusier in the West and Hermann Henselmann, Richard Paulick or Josef Kaiser in the East played a decisive artistic role and formed a globally unique combination of competing urban ensembles within one city.



Fig. 1 Berlin-Friedrichshain, Frankfurter Allee (formerly Stalinallee), first construction phase, section C, block C North, photo Wolfgang Bittner, 2015



Fig. 2 Berlin Mitte, Karl-Marx-Allee, 2nd construction phase, photo Wolfgang Bittner, 2013

After initial plans for the entire city, based on Hans Scharoun's "Collective Plan" presented in 1946, which envisaged a fundamentally new, functionally organised city in place of the existing urban structure and was implemented in the following years up to 1950 at the "Wohnzelle Friedrichshain", a fundamental paradigm shift began in the eastern part of the city after the founding of the two German states in 1949. Now, following the example of the Soviet Union, a historicising monumental architecture as an expression of socialist culture was to become characteristic in the sense of a national formal language with socialist content. This was to set itself apart from modernism, which was described as "western formalism" and "cosmopolitanism". A unique example of this is the Stalinallee (today's Karl-Marx-Allee).

The two sections of the Karl-Marx-Allee built between 1951 and 1964 as well as the buildings of the international building exhibition "Interbau" of 1957 in the western part of the city show in a way that is unique worldwide this confrontational and at the same time diversely interrelated competition of systems with the means of urban planning and architecture.

In the newly founded GDR, the reorientation of urban planning and architecture that took place from 1950 onwards under considerable influence of the USSR led to the monumental expression of a regional-historicist architecture of "national tradition" ("socialist in content, national in form"),

which determined the first large construction section of the Stalinallee and showed all the characteristics of a style that became known as "Socialist Realism" (Fig. 1).

The architecture of the Stalinallee is a combination of monumental dimensions, classical architectural details and modern elements in order to meet the requirements of residential buildings as prestigious "workers' palaces", which were to provide quality living in an inner-city location for all social classes. In addition, the political content conveyed by inscriptions and sculptural works were the basis of this proven social achievement. Exhibitions of exemplary residential furnishings illustrated the high-quality standards of the neighbourhood down to the last detail. A park-like green area along the north side as well as the typological combination of apartments on the upper floors and shops and restaurants in the ground floor zones support the intended boulevard character of the street. All buildings were equipped with elevators, and the comparatively large apartments had a high standard with hot water heating and bathrooms. There were numerous communal facilities to support the intended collective spirit. This spirit was also to be expressed through the socially balanced allocation of housing.

Again a few years later, in the eastern part of the city, the hitherto unfinished connection between Strausberger Platz and Alexanderplatz was built, where the street led into the city centre, which was still to be developed (Fig. 2). In the



Fig. 3 Berlin Mitte, Café-Restaurant Moskau, photo Wolfgang Bittner, 2013



Fig. 4 Berlin Mitte, Kino International, photo Wolfgang Bittner, 2007



Fig. 5 Berlin Mitte, Kino International, detail of south facade, photo Wolfgang Bittner, 2007

course of the de-Stalinisation, the street was renamed Karl-Marx-Allee in 1961. Just as in the Hansaviertel, a new urban quarter was created here, which was now to serve as a model example of a “socialist housing complex”, exemplifying the new orientation of the GDR’s urban planning and housing policy in the post-Stalin era and following the guiding principle of “socialist modernism”. As a result, prestigious building projects of cosmopolitan elegance were created.

In contrast to the conventional masonry buildings of the first construction phase, the second construction phase with type buildings and prefabricated components was intended to embody the change in concept towards industrialised building. The new urban quarter is dominated by the Allee linking the first and second construction phases and by the set-back, separate rows of residential flats along the street with pavilions in front. By combining residential functions with representative public functions along the avenue (cinema, restaurant, bar, retail pavilions and congress hall), this section, like the first construction phase, also received city-wide relevance and international appeal.

The highlight of this urban development was the “Café Moskau” and the “Kino International” opposite. With these special buildings and the commercially used pavilions, the second construction phase continued the boulevard character of the first construction phase in its own way.

The Café-Restaurant Moskau (Fig. 3) was built in 1964; it is a document of the consistently modern attitude of the architecture of the early 1960s in the GDR. The steel-frame construction of the two-storey flat-roofed building with inner courtyard and enclosed garden allowed the walls to be completely glazed – the idea was that by day, one could see through the transparent building, by night it looked like a glowing glass cube, visible from afar also through the very artful lettering of the illumination advertisement on the roof.

It contained a nationality restaurant with typical Soviet specialities, a wine restaurant, a shop for Soviet folk art, a concert and dance café, mocha and tea rooms as well as rooms for private parties. The night bar in the basement was very popular at the time and rounded off the gastronomic range. The motifs that were supposed to signal the Russian character of Café Moskau are concentrated at the entrance, in a mixture of folksiness and enthusiasm for technology that was characteristic of the time around 1960: the entrance wall is taken up by a large-format mosaic, “From the Life of the Peoples of the Soviet Union” (designed by Bert Heller), which unites groups of figures, animals and landscape elements – including a monumental drilling rig – in a lively scene. A Sputnik satellite (the first satellite in space in 1957) on the mosaic and as a sculptural model on a corner stele proclaims the message of the technical progress of the Soviet people. The pictorial tesserae (= small-format polygonal or round plates made of stone, ceramics, ore, lead, bone, terracotta, glass or similar hard materials with which mosaics are laid) here consist of different materials, such as natural stones, different-coloured glass stones (smalt) and also broken tile fragments. The mosaic was extensively conserved and restored in 2006.

Today, Café Moskau is part of the listed business centre in the area of Schillingstraße/Karl-Marx-Allee, which also includes the Kino International and several retail pavilions.



Fig. 6 Berlin Mitte, House of the Teacher, photo Wolfgang Bittner, 2007

What they all have in common is the high aesthetic standard and the modernity of the design. This part of the former Stalinallee was deliberately and in every way set apart from the Stalinist construction section between Frankfurter Tor and Strausberger Platz which was completed in 1956.

The Kino International (Fig. 4), built in 1961–63 according to designs by Josef Kaiser, is the most striking cube in the second section of the Karl-Marx-Allee. Its prominent position in the centre of the new residential complex at the junction of Schillingstraße was effectively staged against the background of the façade of the ten-storey Hotel Berolina.

Starting from the shape of the auditorium, Kaiser developed a building structured by its functional areas, whose height of 15 metres was dictated by the urban design. The glazed foyer on the upper floor, enclosed by a protruding concrete frame and cantilevering nine metres above the ground floor without supports, allows a clear view of the busy avenue as far as Alexanderplatz and at the same time functions as a stage for the cinema-goer. The architect integrated the large billboard – which is part of the design – proportionally convincingly into the glass foyer front and the name of the large cinema.

Integrated into the three windowless fronts is a sculpture relief developed from only two forms, into which 14 white-painted concrete cast reliefs (each 1200 x 3600) with the title “From the Life of Today’s People” (1964, concept Waldemar Grzimek, Karl-Heinz Schamal, August Schievel-

bein) are integrated, whose formally abstract pictorial motifs clearly take a back seat to the abstract surface ornament in the overall effect (Fig. 5). For the exterior design, it was necessary to visualise the social content of the building in the form of realistic art close to the people. The serially produced cast reliefs, as art in construction, aimed at the fusion of architecture and sculpture. In 2019, the renovation of the outer shell and the restoration of the reliefs were completed.

Pavilions in front of the residential rows relate to the street cross-section of the first section, but remain elegantly restrained with their typified architecture, low height and large glass surfaces. Originally, nine shop pavilions of the Gesellschaftliches Zentrum (Social Centre) were planned along the entire section of Karl-Marx-Allee. However, only five were built between Schillingstraße and Strausberger Platz. Characteristic of the flat-roofed buildings are the spacious sales rooms, which are staged by extensive glazing with fine, partly anodised aluminium framing. The interior is divided only by an open gallery. The pavilions are recognisable as a cohesive group by the yellow ceramics of the exterior walls, the supports and cornices covered with coloured split clinker bricks and glass slips, and the (no longer extant) advertisement lettering.

The transition to Alexanderplatz is formed by the ensemble of the House of the Teacher (Fig. 6) and the Congress Hall. The twelve-storey building was erected in 1964 as a steel-frame construction with a façade of glass and alumin-



Fig. 7 Berlin-Lichtenberg, Nicaragua mural, photo Gabriele Senft, 1985

ium. The building owes its special effect to the surrounding mosaic frieze “Our Life”, which describes an ideal image of socialist society based on modern technology, peace, friendship between peoples, and classlessness. The design was created by the artist Walter Womacka, following the tradition of architectural monumental paintings of Mexican modernism. It extends over two floors with a total area of seven by 125 metres, making it one of the largest works of art in Europe in terms of surface area. The mosaic, consisting mainly of

glass and ceramic materials, was restored from 2001–2004. Together with the Erfurt University of Applied Sciences a preparatory system was developed to enable the artwork to be removed from the building without being damaged.

The integration of prominently placed works of fine art on the above mentioned buildings supported the politically motivated concept with their content. The monumental mural *Nicaraguan Village – Monimbó* 1978 (Fig. 7) in the Berlin district of Lichtenberg also fits perfectly into this socio-political context. The mural, commissioned by the Berlin magistrate, was painted in the summer of 1985 on the gable wall of a typical old apartment building in Berlin by the Nicaraguan artist Manuel García Moia in the style of naïve painting. The painting shows Moia’s home village, Monimbó, where almost exclusively indigenous people lived and which was destroyed in 1978 by the then ruling Somoza regime after an uprising. With a painted surface of 255 m², the anti-war painting is today one of the largest murals of naïve painting in the world.

In 2005, at the instigation of the private owner, a full-surface composite thermal insulation system was installed. On top of this, the painting was reconstructed in detail by artists using original tracings. Due to processing errors and serious structural defects, the insulation system detached from the wall in the following years and lost its functionality. As a result, the insulation panels were removed in 2013, revealing the original underneath. In 2015/16, the Berlin Monument Authority commissioned restorers to document the damage and carry out a sample restoration to assess the possibility of an overall restoration. The result was assessed by all parties involved and approved for execution. In 2020, the mural was successfully restored with funding from the district of Lichtenberg, a very committed citizens’ initiative and lottery funds. The Monument Authority provided technical support for the project, even though this did not concern a listed building.

Credits

Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: © Landesdenkmalamt Berlin

Fig. 7: © Gabriele Senft

The Conservation of the Cultural Heritage Sites of the Exhibition of Achievements of National Economy (VDNH) in Moscow: Mosaics, Paintings, Sculptures

Yulia Loginova

The Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy (VDNH) is a unique architectural and landscape ensemble that has no analogues in the world. In international practice, all major exhibition projects have a limited lifespan, whereas VDNH has retained its planning structure, the main pavilions and buildings, many elements of hard landscaping, the gardening component, fountains, and ponds over the decades, which confirms its uniqueness.

VDNH is one of the most popular public spaces in Moscow. More than 33 million visitors go there every year.

The Exhibition was inaugurated on August 1, 1939. During the Great Patriotic War, it was evacuated to Chelyabinsk City. Back then, it was called All-Union Agricultural Exhibition (VSKhV). The Exhibition once again welcomed visitors on August 1, 1954. At that time, many architectural monuments were built in the area, which changed the appearance of the complex. In terms of architectural form, most pavilions of the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition had a neo-classical basis with quite a restrained décor. The modesty of the artistic choices could only be explained by the fact that the material resources available for building the exhibition were extremely limited. In the most significant buildings, where

the budget was not so tight, the influence of the Art Deco style was palpable.

During the reconstruction of the exhibition in the early 1950s, a new main entrance was built, a triumphal arch in the spirit of the 18th and 19th centuries, with powerful fountains that recall the fountains of Versailles and Peterhof. The architectural appearance of the Exhibition which was established during this period has been largely preserved to the present day.

The Exhibition became a large-scale tool of Soviet propaganda, a representation of Soviet utopia – first agrarian, then industrial and finally scientific and technological. In the 1960s, many pavilions were rebuilt and reconstructed, and a number of pavilions were covered with false facades. At first, it was assumed that the exhibition would be able to make money out of advertising, holding competitive tendering, organising auctions for companies and selling scientific and technical information. However, the country's economic ties were rapidly disintegrating, and private trade remained the only growing sector. In the 1990s, the Exhibition (then the All-Russian Exhibition Centre) was not going through the best of times: the exhibition grounds were being split up

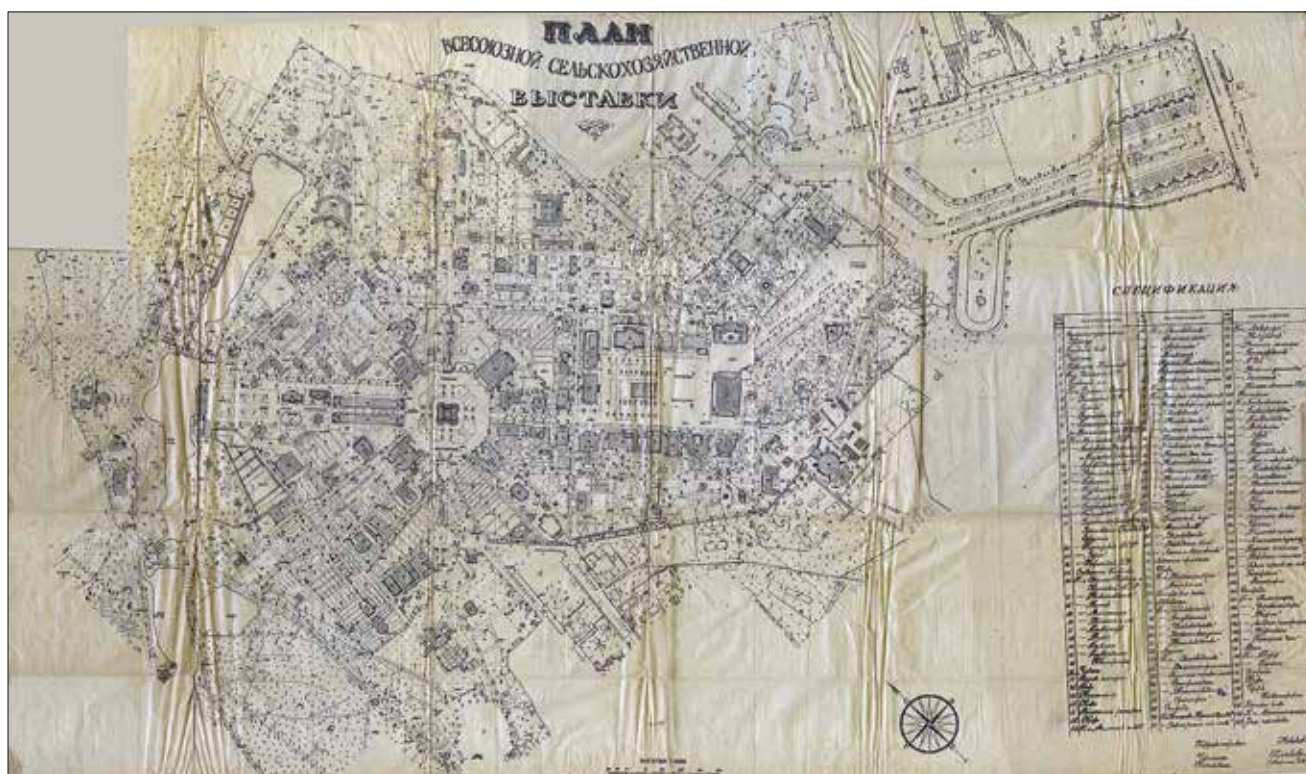


Fig. 1 General plan of the VDNH, 1939



Fig. 2 Panoramic view of the VDNH



Fig. 3 Fountain "Stone Flower"

and leased out for small commercial premises. In the 2000s, several projects were presented to further expand the area and create a huge multifunctional complex with a congress centre. Those projects proposed the demolition of the Montreal pavilion and the integration of the statue called "Worker and Collective Farm Woman" into the architecture of the new complex. All those attempts were not elaborate enough and came to nothing.

There are many architectural masterpieces located within the Exhibition area – 49 VDNH sites are recognised as cultural heritage sites. The Exhibition itself also has the status

of a protected landmark site. The total area of the VDNH and Ostankino Park is over 325 hectares.

The revival of the complex began in 2014. The exhibition was given its historical name, VDNH, and priority emergency repairs were made. Since then, the comprehensive restoration of 23 cultural heritage sites has been completed. The architectural appearance of the Exhibition is being restored to that of 1954.

A large number of professionals is involved in the restoration of the historical sites at VDNH, including not only restorers of architecture, paintings, plaster and gypsum decoration, but also parquet-floor layers and craftsmen who recreate chandeliers or work with artificial marble, ceramics, wood, and smalt.

In the 1950s, the smalt technology was used to frame the architectural décor of VDNH, which later became one of the distinctive features of the exhibition complex. Before the restoration, the sculpture "Tractor Driver and Kolkhoz Woman" was in a state of disrepair: the smalt needed to be replaced in some areas, the concrete base of the sculptures needed strengthening, and the sheaf had lost almost all its gilding. The restorers managed to preserve as much of the historical smalt on the "Tractor Driver and Kolkhoz Woman" as possible. It is also noticeable that the smalt is laid out not in a chaotic manner, but in a certain movement, so that the sculpture has a volume in the folds of the clothes and in the protrusions and recesses on the sculpture's surface, and its appearance becomes more dynamic and expressive.

Incidentally, Sergey Mikhailovich Orlov, the author of this sculptural composition, was the one who suggested this unusual technique of layering the concrete substrate with smalt – the pattern and layout are heterogeneous, the smalt being lighter in some areas and darker in others.

Soviet craftsmen used different methods of cladding: classical, Byzantine masonry was the most common, but fragments laid in a less uniform manner can also be found. A combination of different techniques was needed to give the sculptures an expressive volume. These sculptures were the starting point for the use of smalt cladding on the concrete elements at VDNH. Craftsmen call this technique "Soviet Gaudi". The author of the sculptures was also Sergey Mikhailovich Orlov.

The Stone-Flower Fountain is one of the main fountains at VDNH. It was installed in 1954; by 1990, the structure was severely dilapidated and was operated at half-capacity. The restoration began in 2018. Specialists restored the historical colour palette based on preserved mosaics. The total weight of the smalt used was around eight tons. The restorers carefully selected over 120 shades of smalt from surviving samples.

The two eight-metre sculptures "Tractor Driver" and "Kombinerka" (mistakenly called "Mechanizer" and "Tractor Woman") decorated the pylons of the main pavilion façade between 1951 and 1954. They were made of reinforced concrete and lined with gold and multi-coloured smalt. By the time restoration work began in 2017, the sculptures were in highly unsatisfactory condition. The restorers removed dirt, accretions of grime and bio-fouling from their surfaces, and repaired the loss of shapes and smalt.

The Golden Wheat Ear Fountain is the last of the “big three” fountains at VDNH, located in the middle of the upper pond. The massive ornamental Wheat Ear, 14 metres high, stands on a two-metre-high base in the form of horns of Amalthea. In the mid-1990s, the fountain stopped working. Its entire hydro-technical system was completely out of order, including the rust-eaten pipes and jet nozzles. The decorative smalt began to peel away from the concrete surface and crumble into the pond. The concrete lining of the base of the wheat ear then began to deteriorate. In order to compensate for the impression of the broken fountain, temporary fountains made of individual floating sections were installed in the centre of the pond for several years. In the summer of 2017, the long-awaited reconstruction of the fountain began. The pond was drained and cleaned. After the dismantling of the decorative elements, the entire internal structure of the fountain was completely replaced. The dismantling of the sculptural elements of the fountain lined with smalt was carried out after marking and photographing each part. 315 concrete parts were dismantled in total. All of the remaining smalt that had been removed from the original parts was cleaned and carefully inspected. The gold smalt was completely discarded (100 percent) and new, domestically produced smalt was used for the cladding. 84 percent of the coloured smalt was retained in total. A year after the restoration began, the Golden Wheat Ear Fountain was working again.

Extensive work has also been done by specialists on the restoration of the Mother Belarus sculpture, which was in a state of disrepair. During the restoration of the decorative smalt mosaic, all the newly manufactured mosaic pieces were installed on the prepared surface using a sophisticated cement-based adhesive composition. The same composition was used to directly set the mosaic when restoring local areas of the mosaic. An elastic adhesive mortar was used to locally glue the original smalt fragments together.

Painting

The Belorussian SSR was considered the third most important Soviet republic. The reconstruction of the Belarusian pavilion began in 2008, earlier than the other pavilions. The remains of the fresco “People of Belarus built Socialism” above the main entrance of the pavilion were found during the works – it had been hidden under a thick layer of plaster since the mid-1970s and was thought to have been lost. It had been clogged with plywood sheets for more than 30 years. The lost sections were restored on the basis of surviving photographs. The restoration of the mural was completed in 2015.

In Pavilion No. 71 “Nuclear Energy” (former pavilion of RSFSR) behind the portico in the loggia is a panoramic mural entitled “The Peoples of Russia Built Socialism”. In the centre of the composition is a paired portrait of Lenin and Stalin in a rich frame. After the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union the process of de-Stalinisation intensified and public images of Stalin were removed everywhere. The portrait of Stalin in the mural was retouched, retaining the rest of the subjects. The mural was restored to its original appearance in 2018.



Fig. 4 Pavilion No. 14 (former pavilion of the Azerbaijani SSR) before restoration



Fig. 5 Pavilion No. 14 (former pavilion of the Azerbaijani SSR), 1950



Fig. 6 Pavilion No. 14 (former pavilion of the Azerbaijani SSR) after restoration

In Pavilion No. 13 (former pavilion of the Armenian SSR) the restorers managed to recreate and restore the marble floor, lost portals, windows and doors. The ceiling skylights, lanterns and marble facing of pilasters and plinth were also



Fig. 7 High-relief “Hail to the standard-bearers of peace, the Soviet people!”



Fig. 8 VDNH in the 2000s

restored. The fragment of a painting on the ceiling plafond was revealed during the restoration.

In Pavilion No. 30 “Microbiological Industry”, in addition to the carved wooden frieze lost in the late 1960s, restorers are recreating ceiling paintings. In the ceiling divisions (caissons) of the first hall, paintings depicting the cotton-ripening cycle from bud to capsule as well as oil-bearing plants – poppy, mustard, flax – were found under paint. Paintings were also found in the third room.

Because of Stalin’s death, a struggle broke out within the Soviet leadership. The most ceremonial images of the leader were tacitly withdrawn from the decoration of a number of pavilions. This also affected a huge painting by the painter Aleksandr Mikhailovich Gerasimov, which depicted Stalin’s speech at the rostrum of the 2nd All-Union Conference of Collective Farm Workers in 1935. The painting had been mounted on the wall of one of the halls of the Central Pavilion, but it was removed, wound onto a shaft and hidden in the basement until the pavilion opened. The painting was only discovered at the end of July 2014.

Pavilion No. 15 “Radio Electronics and Communications” (former pavilion of the Volga Region) was decorated with sculptural compositions and stucco decorations. The main decorative theme was the history of the Volga cities. At the end of the 1950s the decorations were concealed by false façades and damaged when the pavilion was repurposed. Work is now underway to clean the paintings and recreate the lost stucco elements and sculptures. Specialists are revealing, step by step, the paintings on the ceilings, which have been hidden from view for more than 60 years. The restoration is carried out using archival photographs and original materials. These paintings adorn the ceiling plafonds framed in stucco. They can be found in the halls of the Kuibyshev, Saratov and Ulyanovsk regions, as well as in the hall dedicated to the Chuvash ASSR. The paintings were painted by an unknown artist or by a group of artists for the opening of the Volga Pavilion in 1954. It is noteworthy that they were all made on linen canvases in casein oil tempera, which were glued on plaster. The main themes are harvesting in gardens and cattle breeders with livestock.

The situation was worse in the case of the stained-glass windows. Ninety percent of the colour of the framing of the stained-glass pieces was gone – it had to be recreated. The problem is that today the method of applying paint to stained-glass metal framing is unknown and it is not always possible to obtain similar colours from modern dyes. However, a special technique has been developed to recreate the colour characteristics of these stained-glass frames.

Let us get back to Pavilion No. 71 “Nuclear Energy” (former pavilion of RSFSR). The stained-glass windows of 1958 in the Soviet cubist style have been restored here. They are located in the rotunda of the building. The stained-glass windows are almost five meters high and about two metres wide. The stained-glass windows were assembled from thick coloured blocks of chipped glass between one and five centimetres thick. These blocks were placed in a foam plastic frame, pre-painted black, and poured with epoxy resin over a six-millimetre-thick pane of supporting glass. All the elements were then assembled into a single composition in a metal frame.

The plot of the stained-glass window “Pereyaslavska Rada” in Pavilion No. 58 “Agriculture” (former pavilion of the Ukrainian SSR) was based on a painting of the same name by Mikhail Khmelko, dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the annexation of Ukraine by Russia in 1954. The restoration of the 39.5 square-metre stained glass window began in autumn 2017 and was completed in April 2018. It had never been restored in the last 70 years. In order to clarify the state of conservation of the stained-glass window, all elements and pieces of glass were examined and conservation maps were made before the restoration work began, and then all 50 large fragments were dismantled. A team of six craftsmen worked on the restoration, so the work was done in a short time, and at the end of February 2018, all 50 fragments, each containing up to 200 single elements, were transported to the pavilion and installed in phases to their historic location.

When the Central Pavilion was cleared of the commercial buildings, an unexpected surprise was the discovery of Vuchetich’s high-relief mural sculpture “Hail to the stand-



Fig. 9 Canvas “Stalin’s speech at the Second Congress of Kolkhoz Farmers and Shock Workers”



Fig. 10 Panoramic mural “The Belorussian people have built socialism”

ard-bearers of peace, the Soviet people!”), which had been obscured by a temporary partition. The sculptures and background had numerous minor mechanical damages, but overall the work was well preserved. It is the biggest and most memorable art work from the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition of 1954. The high-relief depicts a triumphal march of the Soviet people, the total number of which reaches up to 1500 people moving in a single formation towards the viewer. The high-relief is made of plaster and tinted bronze. It covers 88 square metres and is only 73 centimetres deep.

The restoration began in 2015 as an “open restoration” behind clear glass. Visitors were able to see it, in particular participants and guests of the 6th Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art. In March 2016, the restored high-relief was unveiled.

During the restoration of Pavilion No. 15 “Radio Electronics and Communications” (former pavilion of the Volga Region) specialists also found elements of high-reliefs with battle scenes which had decorated the pavilion since 1954. They were found under false facades that were installed a few years later, in the late 1950s. In addition to the high-reliefs, lost sculptural compositions (a soldier, a sailor, a worker and a collective farmer holding the coat of arms of the RSFSR) are being restored. The four columns at the entrance to the building and the high-reliefs that adorned them are also being restored, depicting tractor drivers starting tractors, collective farmers inspecting crops, fishermen admiring a huge sturgeon, farmers pouring grain into the sower, cattlemen feeding sheep, and agronomists examining the ears.

Pavilion No. 11 “Exhibition Centre of the Republic of Kazakhstan” had deteriorated badly by 2017: the façade slabs had begun to fall off in places, revealing the original 1954 façade. Therefore, it turned out that some of the bas-reliefs had not been destroyed in the reconstruction. The idea emerged to restore the Kazakh pavilion to its original form, including recreating the glass dome, façade decor and statues. After dismantling the brick wall, the restorers were convinced that the historical bas-reliefs were well preserved. They cleared and reinforced them and restored the missing fragments.

It took about half a year to recreate the sculptures of the Kazakh singer and poet Dzhabul Dzhabaev and of the Hero of Socialist Labour Shyganak Bersiyev, which are 3.5 metres high. To begin with, the specialists collected photo materials and made an enquiry to the Central State Archive of the Republic of Dagestan, from where they received additional electronic copies of photos of works by Khas-Bulat Askar-Saryji, the People’s Artist of Dagestan, of 1953 and 1957. They then developed sketch models of the sculptures, assembled life-size metal frames, moulded the models in clay and cast the monuments in concrete according to these models.

Pavilion No. 14 (former pavilion of the Azerbaijani SSR) is one of the pavilions on the left-hand side of Central Avenue which underwent “modernisation” at the end of the 1960s with the help of hinged facade boxes. After the facades were dismantled, it turned out that the modernisation of the Azerbaijan SSR pavilion had been carried out relatively gently – its original appearance was virtually unaffected. During documentary research and consultations with the National Museum of Art in Baku, experts found the preserved original plaster casts and later copies of sculptures cast in bronze. Based on the available original plaster casts, plaster moulds were made to make copies of sculptures. The original sculptures were made by the Azerbaijani sculptor F. Abdurakhmanov for the official opening of the Azerbaijan pavilion in 1954.

Gradually, the former greatness of the VDNH ensemble is being revived and its pavilions are being filled with life. Rare archive footage takes us back to the past of the Exhibition. Contemporary photographs depict the laborious process of restoring the famous monuments. Under the later layers and false façades, restorers are finding sculptures, reliefs, fragments of original paintings and even unique showpieces once exhibited at the VDNH. Restoration works are continuing at the main exhibition of the country. VDNH has long been an essential part of Moscow’s identity, a point of attraction for city residents and tourists. In Russian society, there is a strong perception that the VDNH is a major historical asset and part of the collective memory and cultural code of the inhabitants of our country.



Fig. 11 Stained glass “Pereyaslavska Rada” in Pavilion No. 58 Agriculture (former pavilion of the Ukrainian SSR)

Credits

Figs. 1–11: Archive of the Department of Cultural Heritage of the City of Moscow, VDNH archive

II
**Interventions and Interpretations –
Heritage Acceptance and Heritage Appropriation
through Contextualisation and Commenting**

БЛАГОТВОРИТЕЛЕН ФЕСТИВАЛ НА ПОЛЯНАТА ПРИ ПАМЕТНИКА БУЗЛУДЖА

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The New Buzludzha/Buzludzha Nova

Uwe R. Brückner

In collaboration with the Buzludzha Foundation and E-House Architects, our ambition was to create a vision for Buzludzha, a feasibility concept to convert Buzludzha, a former communist monument, into a venue for local culture and a conference center for (young) European democrats. Our proposal has been inspired by the unique architecture of the building and the beauty of the surroundings. We were impressed by the exceptional charisma and intrigued by the mysterious spirit of the monument sitting ufo-like on top of the mountain ridge (Fig. 1). It is a spectacular brutalist concrete structure with great potential to become part of modern Bulgaria. We weighed the options of creating a new Buzludzha while preserving its historic heritage by giving the monumental impression a new spin. We had to consider the controversial legacy and the dissonant perception of what to keep and what to take down or alter. We even thought about whether to preserve Buzludzha as a “controlled ruin”, or let it just disappear. As we played through the various options, we experienced the monument’s extreme spatial and artistic power: A theatrical stage with dignity even in its degrading fragility. It is important to us to preserve the character of Buzludzha and at the same time implement a new charisma by transforming the ruin of a former political symbol into the opposite, from a communist spaceship into a democratic venue as a statement for the next generation and the one after that.

The result is an ambitious feasibility study which is based on the deep conviction that Buzludzha has a promising future ahead of it. It is an exciting transformation from terminal abandonment to a lively meeting place for European democrats, with a venue in symbiotic balance with its social and natural environment. We want to invite people to meet in a dissonant building and fill it with new energetic purpose – without neglecting the painful past, but by accepting it as a part of local and national heritage. There is no better and more appropriate location to be reminded of the past and be aware of the future. Or as German politician Richard von Weizsäcker said: „Seeking to forget makes exile all the longer; the secret of redemption lies in remembrance.”

This study seeks to invite the audience to make a new and progressive journey, to explore the New Buzludzha. The tour of the visitors will start in the welcome area (Fig. 2). This foyer will prepare the visitors for what they may expect to see and experience in the main hall, the galleries, the meeting points and the tower. A reception desk gives the opportunity to pick up information or accompanying media such as flyers or audio equipment. The surrounding walls show indentations where sculptures of the communist party once protruded. In these niches, several synchronised pro-



Fig. 1 Buzludzha building concept sketch, Uwe R. Brückner

jectors can be used to visually present the history around Buzludzha, its possible future and the conversion efforts. At a certain point, visitors have the feeling that the wall dematerializes and a virtual window opens announcing events or current activities in and around Buzludzha, such as upcoming conferences or concerts.

From the foyer, visitors proceed to the main hall with its impressive domed ceiling featuring its historic, panoramic mosaic. The central circular hall could be used as a multi-functional event-space. The ceiling is fitted with thin panels that can be used to dim the entire space or just parts of the roof, as required. Both the seating and the combination of stage, backdrops and screens should be as dynamic and adaptable as possible. Several rows of translucent/semi-transparent smart screens can be lowered from the ceiling when needed and disappear into the ceiling when not in use, giving the main hall a completely sober appearance (Fig. 3). This allows Buzludzha to provide a rich variety of new and different experiences for smaller or larger groups. The smart screens can serve as backdrops for cultural performances or presentations (Figs. 4 and 5), or divide the space for exhibitions, seminars or forums (Fig. 6). With a system of projectors, Buzludzha can offer unlimited possibilities to fully immerse its visitors in the different events and experiences, show versatile content and tell many different stories in this multi-faceted hall.

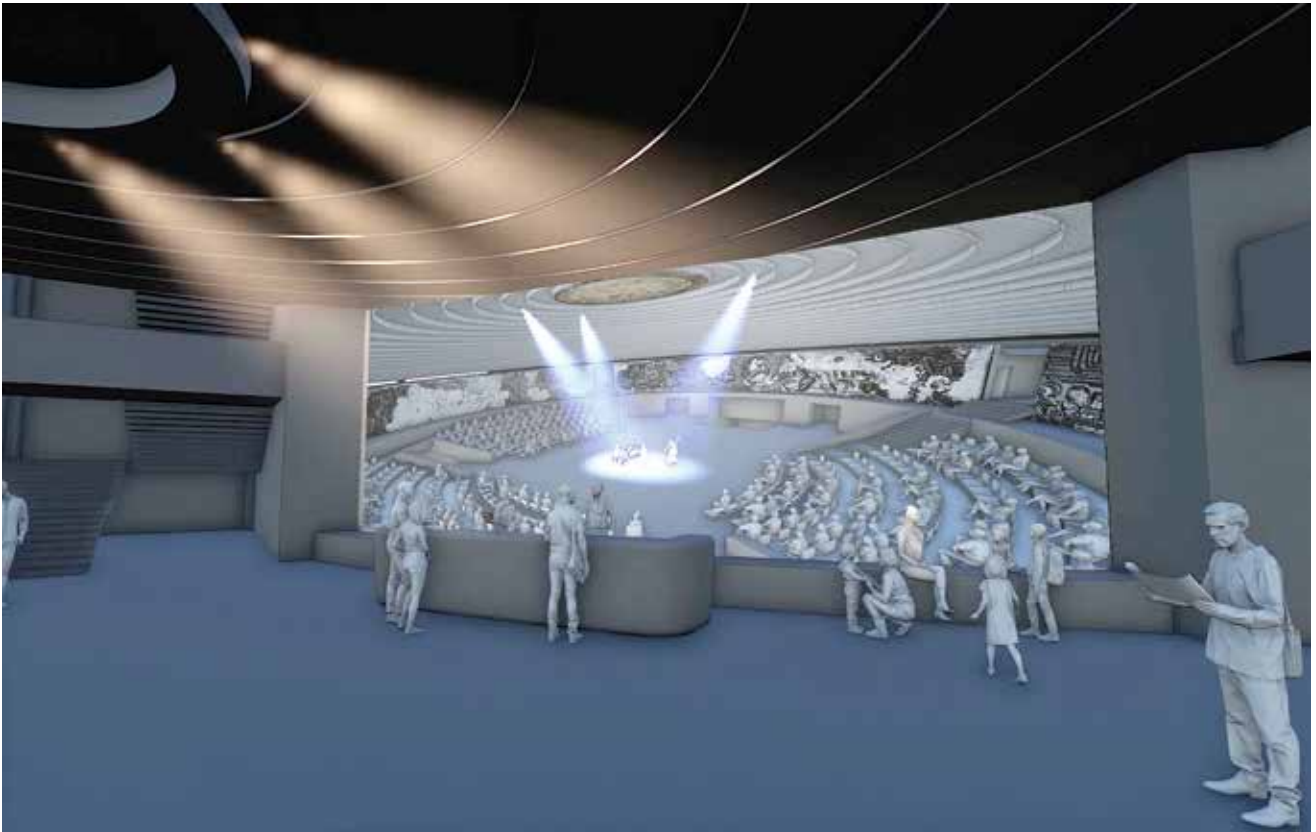


Fig. 2 Foyer, reception, concept rendering, E House Architects



Fig. 3 Main hall, panels, translucent, concept rendering, E House Architects



Fig. 4 Main hall, performance, concept rendering, E House Architects

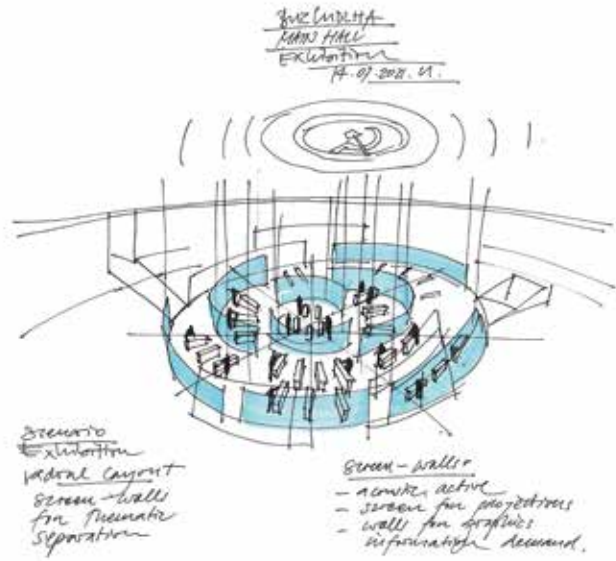


Fig. 6 Main hall, exhibition, forum, concept sketch, Uwe R. Brückner

Storytelling is an art form that has stood the test of time as a way to bring people together and pass on knowledge to the next generation. One of the stories Buzludzha will tell is its own. And who would be better to tell it than Buzludzha itself? For example, by staging its history from the late 1970s when it was designed and planned by architect Georgi Stoilov, to the opening in 1981, and the abandonment after the Cold War ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall. And finally, there are the conservation efforts to preserve the famous mosaics and the plans for the future of Buzludzha. The Gallery allows a fascinating 360-degree view that sweeps from the building over the equally spectacular landscape and gives a feeling as one from a timeless spaceship – Buzludzha.

As a first step, and to stabilise the building in view of the harsh weather conditions, we propose to close the exposed window openings with smart multipurpose panels that

transform the couloirs into galleries and provide safe experiences every day of the year (Fig. 7). The windows are to be installed from the inside to preserve the unique character of the building from the outside. If weather conditions permit, the windows can be moved to the side to provide the most unobstructed view of the surrounding mountain landscape. To make the light conditions controllable, we propose to provide an additional second row of sliding, opaque lamellas, which allow seamless shading or dimming of the galleries. These slats also act as screens onto which content can be projected (Fig. 8). Thus, the landscape behind the slats could be digitally projected and augmented, allowing the recipient to travel back in history and visualise the battle of Hadzhi Dimitar and Stefan Karadzha against the Ottomans. They can offer a virtual journey on rainy days, such as a balloon flight over the National Park, or show



Fig. 5 Main hall, panels, backdrop, conference, concept rendering, E House Architects

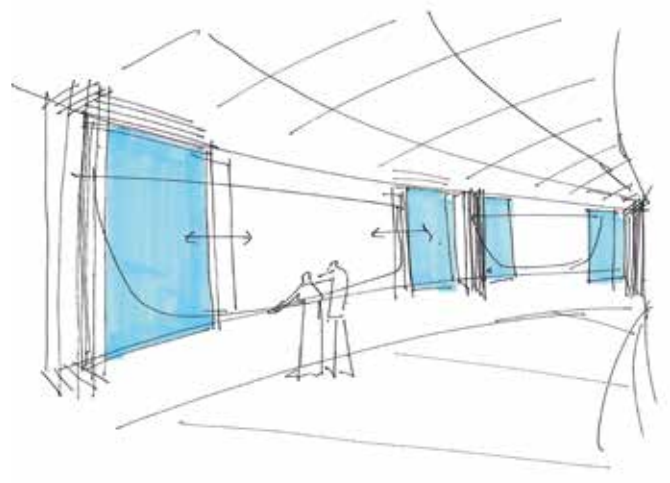


Fig. 7 Gallery, windows, concept sketch, Uwe R. Brückner



Fig. 8 Gallery, projection, concept rendering, E House Architects



Fig. 9 Café, concept rendering, E House Architects

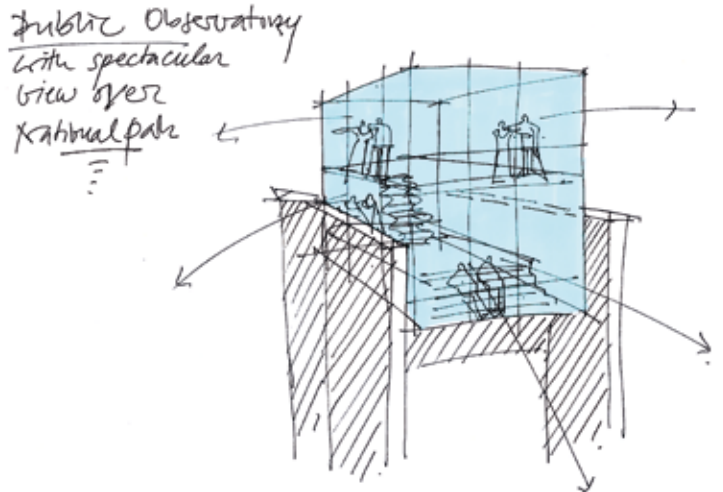


Fig. 10 Tower, observatory, concept sketch, Uwe R. Brückner



Fig. 11 Tower, smart screens, concept rendering, E House Architects

images that complement the content displayed, e.g. in an exhibition staged at Buzludzha. The galleries can also be divided into segments by temporary curtain walls lowered from the ceiling to allow independent staging of content or objects.

From the main building, visitors can access the terrace. In the former service-building of the tower, we propose a small café where visitors can have a cup of coffee or a meal (Fig. 9). The café can also be used as a meeting place during hiking tours, conferences, for a reception before a performance or simply as a place to rest. Open glass surfaces acting as membranes between the landscape and the architecture offer surprising new views onto the building and the tower. If the weather allows, the seating on the terrace invites people to admire the impressive mountain landscape.

The literal highlight of Buzludzha is the 60-meter-high tower at the end of the café. In a waiting lounge and ticket office with a panoramic window facade, visitors can wait for the elevator that will take them to the top of the tower,

to the final thrill – a place to meet and rest with the same quality of visual access to both the building and the nature. To ensure a 360-degree view over the Buzludzha ridge all year round, we propose a glass box at the top of the pylon – the “Observatory” (Fig. 10). This spectacular two-storey vantage point will be accessible via the glass cabins of the elevator, which will hover freely above the mountain ridge. Or visitors can ascend via the interior staircase that leads past the gigantic “Ruby Star”, where several panoramic screens (Fig. 11) allow an extended journey through the local flora and fauna in the area around Buzludzha over the past centuries.

We expect the new Buzludzha to become a prestigious regional, national and European place to meet, debate and send democratising signals to the international community. We deeply believe in a successful and profitable future for the New Buzludzha and that it will become a venue for (young) European democrats. Possibly in a biannual course, like-minded people could meet in Buzludzha and discuss the future of democracy, Europe and the world. We are sure that

a meaningful and impactful revitalisation and repurposing of Buzludzha and the preservation will make Buzludzha a hub for Europeans that shape modern democracy for future generations. The preservation of a unique and iconic piece of architecture, the transformation of a communist monument into a living cultural site, and the transformation of an ideologically contaminated place into a think-tank for interna-

tional democrats is not only a sign, but a binding statement with radiant power.

Credits

Figs. 2–5, 8, 9, 11: E House Architects

Figs. 1, 6, 7, 10: Uwe R. Brückner

Contextualising Buzludzha: Dissonance, Rejection and Cultural Appropriation of Bulgarian Postwar Heritage¹

Aneta Vasileva

Buzludzha is a special piece of architecture. It is a memorial, a sculpture and a building (Fig. 1). Therefore, it should be analysed both within the architectural context and within the context of the grand memorial construction efforts of late socialism in Bulgaria.

In 1975, a major shift in the cultural policies of the People's Republic of Bulgaria occurred. On July 1st, Lyudmila Zhivkova, daughter of Bulgarian communist party leader Todor Zhivkov, was elected as Chairman of the Committee for Art and Culture (CAC). The CAC served as the socialist equivalent of a ministry of culture and under Zhivkova emancipated from the general policies of the Eastern Bloc to form a specific line concentrated on rapid national cultural development, seeking to prove ancient cultural roots and both nationalising and deliberately internationalising Bulgarian culture to define an influential national identity in a global context.

This was the period when socialist monuments started to intervene more in their surroundings and in space in general – regardless of whether they were urban or suburban

monuments. The late 1970s and the 1980s were the period when the largest monuments in Bulgarian history were constructed. The importance of architecture rose drastically. These new socialist memorials were often placed outside the city centre, beyond the usual intimacy of the small sculptural monuments, and reached the scale of fully grown architectural-sculptural ensembles.

The process had also been stimulated by several important anniversaries which were enthusiastically celebrated by socialist Bulgaria at the time and which were key for the national self-identification at the time – the centenary of the April Uprising against the rule of the Ottoman empire (1976), the 800th anniversary of the Uprising of Assen and Petar against the rule of the Byzantine Empire (1985), and, of course, the 90th anniversary of the Bulgarian Communist Party or of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party founded at the 1891 Buzludzha Congress, which conveniently coincided with the 1300th anniversary of the foundation of the Bulgarian state in 1981 (Figs. 2a and 2b).



Fig. 1 Memorial House of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Buzludzha peak, postcard from the 1980s

All the monuments and memorials of this sub-period are total spatial gestures and function as highly visible architectural and urban elements. They all undoubtedly predefined what contemporary Bulgarian public spaces look like to this day. And they all suffered from the changing moods of public reception and evaluation in the turbulent years of early post-socialism.

After 1989, political power and cultural priorities changed, which necessitated a reassessment of all public spaces of socialism, including the monuments. Visible transformations took place in all ideologically charged public spaces – they were domesticated, desacralised, vandalised, and sprayed with graffiti. The Mausoleum of Georgi Dimitrov, the first communist leader of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, was even demolished in 1999 as an act of public demonstration of new power, and so on. All those places became arenas of the clash of memories, irreconcilable culture wars and neglect. This is the post-socialist context within which we find Buzludzha around 2019 when the Getty Foundation included it in the 2019 Keeping It Modern initiative.

Contested heritage

Cultural heritage is generally accepted as a universal good which is indispensable for the development of human civilisation and is connected to primary values and indisputable human rights – the “right to heritage”.² Yet there are cultural areas where we have failed to reach mutual understanding on their “universal value”; on the contrary, neutral acceptance is non-existent and social unrest prevails. These are the areas where conflicts arise and the so-called “dissonant heritage”³ (or “contested heritage”) claims its presence.

Contested heritage is presumably accompanied by a conflict (or many conflicts overlapping and creating chaos in definitions). In this case, we usually have one or all of the following circumstances:

- Different assessment of cultural values;
- Problems defining its social significance (especially when confronted with wide public disagreement);
- Refusal to accept as heritage (that is refusal to accept it as an indisputable good);
- Refusal to accept as “worth existing” at all, let alone “worth preserving”.⁴

A lack of objectivity when assessing this type of heritage is one of its main companions. This means that even if subjected to the standard criteria for heritage assessment and passing the test of value definition and need for conservation, the underlying conflicts nullify all these normally powerful tools for objectification. Experts tend to define this heritage in many ways – as “dark”, “inconvenient”, “shameful”, but still as heritage. Its preservation is important, difficult, hard to explain, easy to mislead and is impossible without active public discussion and serious interdisciplinary efforts.

The heritage of Nazism is contested heritage par excellence; yet to focus on that heritage only would be to simplify matters. Of course, all regimes which have committed crimes against humanity have managed to produce

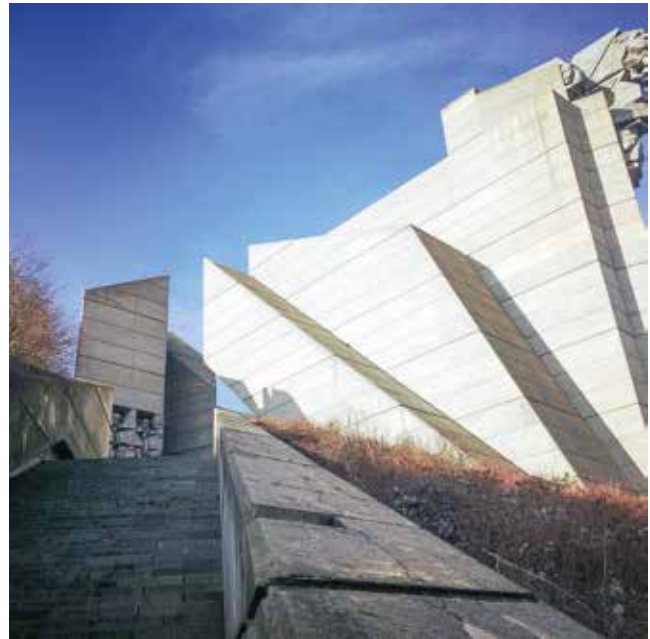


Fig. 2a Monument “Founders of the Bulgarian State”, Shumen 1981, overview

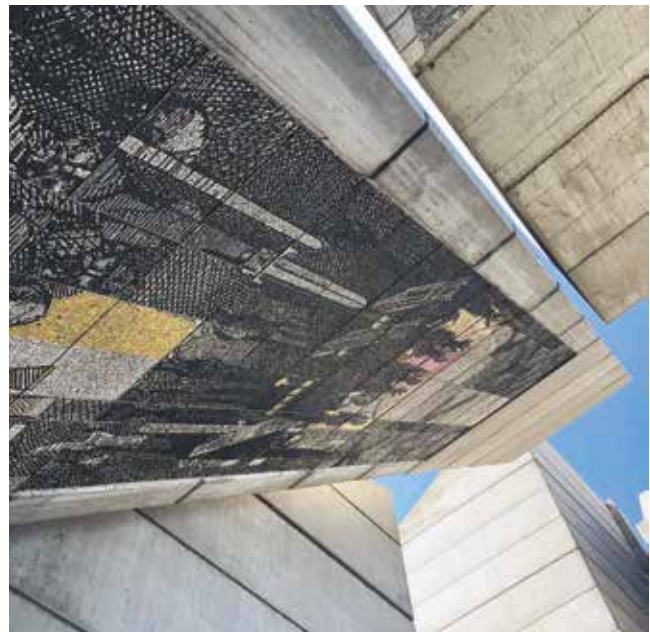


Fig. 2b Monument “Founders of the Bulgarian State”, Shumen 1981, mosaics

dissonant heritage – labour camps, totalitarian monuments, fascist stadiums, Stalinist boulevards and skyscrapers, etc. For example, political contestation is almost always connected to problems of memory and issues of self-identification. Therefore, the cultural aspect here is powerful and inescapable. We also have socially and economically contested heritage. This undoubtedly includes all the utopian efforts of modernism – post-war housing projects, prefabs, microraisons, banlieue. In this case architectural contestation is closely linked to contemporary economic interests – new and cheaper construction, appe-



Fig. 3 Buzludzha Monument today

tites for increased density and thus profits, privatisation of large public areas and social housing terrains, free market-based solutions to housing crises. We can also find aesthetically contested heritage which for one reason or another has been labelled as “ugly”. This category varies depending on the cultural climate of different historical periods and has over time included or excluded pre-modern architectural traditions, the architectural eclecticism of the bourgeoisie, the aspirations of modernism, and the egalitarian efforts of post-war art and architecture. The never-ending story of appreciation of brutalism and society’s love/hate relationship with bare concrete, combined with the necessity for energy-efficient buildings and sustainable construction, points the path to another, still vague but imminent type of contested heritage – the ecologically controversial.

Beyond pure examples, a contested object is very often associated with more than one and often with all three basic groups. It can be politically burdened and subject to contemporary populism. It may be expensive and hard to maintain, may be in various stages of decay and self-destruction, and may be habitually labelled “ugly”.

In a post-1989 world, from the perspective of a post-socialist European country, the quickest and easiest example of such a complex contested architectural heritage that comes to mind in Bulgaria is the legacy of the great construction efforts of the former socialist People’s Republic. The most

striking and notorious example is the Memorial House of the Bulgarian Communist Party on Mount Buzludzha.

Buzludzha as contested heritage: meanings and associations

The ideological burden

“The Memorial House on Mount Buzludzha must be regarded as a national sanctuary. It is designed to develop unwavering faith in the victory of communism” reads Protocol 10 of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party (7 February 1976). Ideology is clearly discernible and fundamental for all levels of the Memorial House – its chosen location, its visual and functional characteristics. The site was deliberately chosen for its rich and multi-layered historical symbolism, legitimising the Party and its history as the final and concluding stage of a millennial Bulgaria. Only the Party has the right to the peak – both in history and on the mountain.

Leading architect Georgi Stoilov (3 April 1929–14 December 2022) masterfully accomplished the task of building a national sanctuary – overshadowing all preceding monuments, including the Shipka Monument to Freedom nearby, which had always been a beacon of Bulgarian national pride. Buzludzha owes much to its scale and its symbolic power is



Fig. 4 Buzludzha Monument today, as seen from Shipka Memorial

immense. The huge concrete composition, cut out like a logo against its natural background is visible from afar and has become a symbol of its era (Fig. 4). When one gets closer, the masterfully orchestrated synthesis of the arts tells a rich story which gradually unfolds to complete the overall impression.

Public reaction

Of course, public reaction before 1989 was ecstatic. People were waiting in line to enter the newly built Memorial House and for more than a year after its inauguration it had been open daily all the year round. Buzludzha was a collective effort, the pride of the nation. In total, more than 6,000 people contributed to the creation of the Buzludzha monument. This included engineers, artists, designers, sculptors, a large number of volunteer labourers and soldiers from the construction corps under general Delcho Delchev (Fig. 5). Therefore, it was an immense honour and once-in-a-lifetime experience to be among the “chosen” to attend an official party ceremony there.

Strong symbols usually end up with strong nicknames. Buzludzha makes no exception. Still during construction and even more afterwards the monument was aesthetically charged, and workers started calling it “The Saucer”. Afterwards the building was called many names, “the flying saucer of Buzludzha” being the most popular of all.

Politically contested

Buzludzha is a complex architectural object which includes all basic groups of contested heritage mentioned before. First of all, it is undoubtedly politically contested. The building is indeed a symbol of its era, with all its controversies. It has been regularly evaluated as a product of a failed regime, an inconvenient, though unpleasantly indestructible sign of the past.

The heavy ideological burden of the Memorial House is the main reason for its fate after 1989. The negative public attitude towards the failed political system was most naturally demonstrated first by decay and then by devastation of its most opulent icon. Mass public opinion in those early years of the transition period and long afterwards was distinctly emotional, playing with the totalitarian paradigm and balancing between soc nostalgia and soc hate. Whenever a shift in attitude towards this recent period of our history has been available, it has always been combined with a shift in the evaluation of its heritage. Thus, Buzludzha monument – as a symbol of the era – becomes double-coded: both good and bad and distinctly dissonant (Fig. 6).

Another issue of contestation is the identity problem of the Bulgarian socialist party, successor of the Communist party. The party wants this building back from the state as legal property (Buzludzha changed its ownership in 1990). But the socialists are also torn between their aspiration for



Fig. 5 Construction works, photographed by Artin Azinyan, source: Regional Museum of History, Stara Zagora



Fig. 6 Buzludzha Monument today

the memorial and their fear that this will link them to an inconvenient past that contradicts their modern European left ideas.

Socially and economically contested

Then we can add the social and economic issues of contestations which are directly linked to Buzludzha's double-staged existence – a short-lived period of opulence and a prolonged period of dereliction.

Buzludzha is a symbol of left collectivism, goes the story. Like in the early days of socialism, it was only natural for a monument dedicated to an anniversary of the communist party to be the result of collective, even volunteer work. Each summer young volunteers from the region did visit and help the military construction units on Buzludzha peak. It was a monument from the people to the people. Was it really? (Fig. 7).

In 2013 Nedyalka Vasileva wrote: “Georgi Stoilov claims that the money came entirely from donations, turning the building site into a nationwide enterprise. The stamps exist, though minutes and government decrees reveal official funding given”.⁵ Indeed, in 1973 the Buzludzha project was estimated to cost just under nine million leva in total and the sum was approved as state expense by the Council of Ministers. In 1978 it was already clear that the building would be much more expensive. It was estimated to cost 20 million Bulgarian leva for construction and landscaping. And the stamps and the volunteers' work were never enough. Without substantial state funding this “collective effort” would never have borne fruit, metaphorically speaking.

After 1989 it proved far too expensive to maintain – as most grand socialist structures appear to be in the post-socialist, fragmented, neoliberal market economy. Abandoned, looted, devastated, the structure quickly deteriorated and remained just an empty shell of its former glory, robbed of its former function and purpose.

Aesthetically contested

And finally, we end up with the aesthetic contestation. Buzludzha has often been defined as “ugly”, thus disguising a political accusation – of it being totalitarian – with an aesthetic definition. In other words, the building belongs to a certain period and symbolises a certain ideology. At a certain moment both the period and its ideology were rejected. This immediately transformed the building from a “national sanctuary” of immense grandeur into an aesthetically unacceptable remnant of an uncomfortable past.

The form was the first to be attacked. It has always provoked commentaries anyway. Stoilov, very much in the spirit of the cultural policies of the late 1970s, explained the circular shape as being inspired by the Thracian tombs (situated in the valley below the peak). In various articles and interviews before 1989 he attributed the impressive spherical body to the harsh natural location and the importance of a visible and clear symbol. “A monument must be laconic, sculptural, to make a strong impression; in other words – to



Fig. 7 Children in front of Buzludzha Monument, 1980s, archive photo, source: Bulgarian News Agency (BTA)



Fig. 8 Buzludzha as photographed by Nikola Mihov, 2012

be a symbol”, he used to say.⁶ True to the socialist-realist paradigm and the cultural fashions of Lyudmila Zhivkova’s era, Stoilov named as his sources of inspiration Bulgarian vernacular traditions, the ancient roots of the country and classical Antiquity – mentioning the UNESCO-listed Thracian tomb in nearby Kazanlak, the Pantheon in Rome, the domes of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul and Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. 30 years later, however, he changed the narrative, referring to influences from the space age.

Stoilov has long been unofficially accused of plagiarism for Buzludzha – whether the form is truly unique, inspired or directly copied from Oscar Niemeyer, from Frank Lloyd Wright and his Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin (1961), from the Bulgarian architect Eroslav Stankov and his building for the National Circus in Sofia, or from the Soviet “flying saucers”, e.g. the Kazan Circus (1967). It should be noted that such accusations appeared in the non-professional media and intensified after 2000 along with the growing international popularity of the monument and the post-socialist ousting of Stoilov himself.

Nobody dared question the “ancient” symbolism and “unique” architectural achievement of Buzludzha in the 1980s. It seems irrelevant even today. The question is not whether Buzludzha is unique as form or architecture, but why it has managed to achieve such ever-lasting power of expression, still providing a unique experience – a combination of dramatic natural setting, grand construction efforts and huge architectural ego.

(Never) Forget Your Past

This famous graffito (Fig. 8) could be seen at the entrance of the Buzludzha Monument until the mid-2010s. It was used for the cover of a photobook with the same title by the Bulgarian photographer Nikola Mihov⁷ and is one of the most

telling images of the monument today. It marked the beginning of its world fame with more and more urbex tourists coming to visit and photograph the abandoned structure.

In July 2019, Bulgaria’s most famous building was given international recognition as a threatened heritage site. The Getty Foundation included it in the 2019 Keeping It Modern list intended to support conservation of modern architecture. Buzludzha was awarded a grant of 185,000 USD for a conservation management plan to be prepared by an international team. In 2020, it received a second grant (of 60,000 USD) for the protection of the vast interior mosaics which have been considered at great risk of being destroyed by the elements.

There is something else. When suddenly one international organisation officially recognised the architectural and artistic value of one of the most contested buildings in Bulgaria regularly labelled as totalitarian, local debates somehow quietened down. No one wanted to destroy Buzludzha anymore, nobody called the Americans “bloody communists”. It turns out that when the evaluation of their own heritage comes from the outside, well packaged as a “foreign product”, Eastern Europeans readily come to terms with their own past, even the contested one, and even allow for multiple interpretations.

Cultural heritage needs public consensus to be preserved successfully. Therefore, institutional preservation considers opposite opinions as an obstacle to nurturing an impartial public attitude, neutral acceptance and justification as an “indisputable universal good”. Contested heritage, however, is strongly disputable – it is politically, economically, socially, even aesthetically contested. It is like no other. But there lies its prime cultural value.

That’s the advantage of sites like Buzludzha – they can tell many stories. And embracing contestation might be the most natural and probably also the most successful way to effectively preserve them.

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Credits

- Figs. 1, 5, 7: ATRIUM Archive
 Figs. 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 6: photo A. Vasileva
 Fig. 8: N. Mihov

¹ This paper is based on the research I have done as a member of the Bulgarian team responsible for the "History and Context" part of the Getty Foundation's "Keeping It Modern"-funded conservation and management plan (CMP) for the Buzludzha Monument. Strongly revised for publication, this paper is based on the findings and analyses done together with Emilia Kaleva and co-ordinated with EHouse Architects, ICOMOS Germany, ICOMOS Bulgaria, and the Buzludzha Project Foundation during the work on the CMP.

² SILVERMAN/FAIRCHAILD RUGGLES, *Cultural Heritage*, 2007.

³ TUNBRIDGE/ASHWORTH, *Dissonant Heritage*, 1996.

⁴ PETROVA-KORUDZIEVA, *Use and Management*, 2015.

⁵ VASILEVA, *Instability of Monuments*, 2013.

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***Nonument* – a Research-Based, Curatorial and Performative Approach to Controversial Memorabilia of the Recent Past**

Margarita Dorovska

Nonument is a neologism, a hybrid word that means a monument that has lost or changed its original meaning or value as a result of political, economic and cultural changes. From a place of honour and praise in the past, the *nonument* turns into an abandoned object, sinking into ruin and oblivion. Similar examples from Eastern and Central Europe are presented on the online platform www.nonument.org, which collects a freely accessible and constantly updated archive. It also includes a database of scholarly publications, journalistic texts, excerpts from historically significant documents, visual materials, drawings, photographs, and more.

On 13 September 2019, a thematic exhibition entitled *Nonument* opened at the Museum of Humor and Satire in Gabrovo. Special attention was paid to the monument on Mount Buzludzha, conceived as the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party, also referred to as the BKP, whose architectural plan was created by a team led by Architect Georgi Stoilov. A day later, on 14 September, an unusual performance took place around the Buzludzha Monument, organized by the group LIGNA (Germany) and Stefan A. Shterev. The event, a co-production of the Museum of Humor and the Informburo Association, involving the audience as a performer, was accompanied by the music of Emilian Gatsov – “Elbi”.

The exhibition includes documentary materials, photographs and films from the design to the closing of the BKP Memorial House. Among the exhibits are also cartoons and jokes with familiar metaphors and political events illustrating the processes of looting and the ruin of the monument. In the exhibition hall, besides the curatorial narrative, the public can also study the complete research material the exhibition is based on, including all archival source documents.

The *Nonument* performance is an audio piece that is played by the audience itself during a walk around the monument. Participants “experience” and rethink architecture and history while being instructed to perform common, everyday gestures. In their discretion, they resemble the protest performances in Prague from 1976 by Czech conceptual artist Jiri Kovanda or the “standing man” in Gezi Park in Istanbul from 2013 by choreographer Erdem Gündüz.

The *Nonument* exhibition and performance are realized within the framework of a partnership project supported by the Creative Europe Program of the European Commission. The leading organizations in the project are M.A.P.S. (Mapping and Archiving Public Spaces) and MoTA (Museum of Transitory Art). MoTA is the brainchild of the creative collective Neja Tomšić and Martin Baraga, who are doing a research project on the McKeldin Fountain in Baltimore, USA, which turns out to be the number one *nonument* in



Fig. 1 Buzludzha made of chocolate, a souvenir from the Museum of Humor and Satire, created within the framework of the Nonument project

the history of our project. The fountain was eventually destroyed, despite the advocacy of local activists. All that remains of it are the memories, the video recordings, the documentation of the protests, and the 3D model made by Tomšić and Baraga, in which one can now walk virtually.

In 2016 MoTA approached the Museum of Humor in Gabrovo with a proposal to jointly develop a project aimed at mapping such controversial, abandoned, and forgotten monuments, one in which Buzludzha would be an object with a special focus, a case study. On the one hand, Buzludzha is perfectly visible from almost every point in Gabrovo, and on the other hand, the partners consider that we have become too serious in the polarized conversation about these ideological *nonuments*. A little humor is always helpful in dealing with the traumas of history.

The activities in the project are divided into four groups – research, documentation and archiving, production, and presentation.

First of all, the researcher with whom the Museum works on the project, Ani Ivanova, selected and presented 20 objects to be included in the www.nonument.org platform.

After that, an international team led by the Austrian partner and including specialists from the Cyprus Institute of Science carried out laser and photogrammetric surveying of Buzludzha, resulting in a 3D point cloud-based model that represents the Memorial House of BKP as it was captured and archived by the machines in the beginning of April 2019.

After that, detailed documentary research was carried out on Buzludzha’s “saucer” – both in archives and through in-



Fig. 2 *The Nonument performance is a co-production of the Museum of Humor and Satire and the Informburo Association*

interviews with various people. As a result of the research and of the list of *nonuments*, the exhibition *Nonument* came into being and was presented at the Museum until the end of January 2020. And last, but by no means least, all this research activity is further complemented by another study, this time with the means of art – this is the performance *Nonument* by the group LIGNA (Germany), Stefan A. Shterev and with the music of Emilian Gatsov – “Elbi”. It is a dramatic text, recorded as a radio play and performed up on the mountain top, in front of the “saucer”. The format is characteristic of the LIGNA group, who calls it “radio ballet”. Each of the participants listens alone, through headphones, at the same time yet to different instructions, so that a group choreography of movements and gestures arises, which the participants perform according to the instructions they hear. It is a very special and very strong experience – both collective and extremely personal.

The best way to deal with the past is to destroy the myths it is shrouded in. *Nonument* achieves this in a two-fold way: first of all, by clarifying and presenting the facts through the study and the exhibition, and second, through the extremely powerful impact of art. Only in this way can we free ourselves from the ghosts of past ideologies.

NONUMENT is part of the M.A.P.S. project (Mapping & Archiving Public Spaces) and is implemented in partnership between the Museum of Humor and Satire, Association Informburo, MoTA (Slovenia), WHMEDIA (Austria), Tačka komunikacije (Serbia), Center for Central European Architecture (Czech Republic), ArtOS Foundation (Cyprus), and with the support of the Creative Europe program, the National Culture Fund and the assistance of the Stara Zagora District Administration.

Photographs of the performance can be downloaded here:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1hwrzbZ-10NW-tOVq-XHj1O9QfKY1oaHyI?usp=sharing>

Photographs of the exhibition can be downloaded here:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bHO9y_mark-TIZpsl6yHclnLijajOrD4j?usp=sharing
 All photographs by Rosina Pencheva

Credits

Figs. 1 and 2: photos by Rosina Pencheva

III
**Dissonant Monuments of Art and Architecture
in Citizen Dialogue and Tourist Marketing**

EMBURY



Buzludzha Monument Sustainable Cultural Tourism Plan. Acknowledging the Past – Embracing the Future

Fergus T. Maclaren, Jonathan Karkut, Sanjin Mihelić

Project premises

The goal of this sustainable cultural tourism plan is to provide destination planning and development recommendations based on the assessment of the future tourism potential and opportunities for the Buzludzha Monument. One of the priorities at this stage is to outline appropriate and sustainable tourism development options that may enhance the visitor exploration, understanding and appreciation of the Buzludzha Monument including its multi-layered cultural and natural heritage values. Given the extensive stabilisation and restoration work already undertaken on the site, the proposed tourism development approach will, in terms of built structures, focus on maintaining the existing integrity and authenticity of the Buzludzha Monument itself.

The principal objective is to ensure long-term operational and economic viability, while reconnecting the site back into the social fabric of the community in Kazanlak. Instead of its current status as a misunderstood or contested oddity at the fringes of Kazanlak's tourism offer, the site could become an integrated layer within the broader tourism framework and provide local stakeholders with further opportunities to generate lasting, consistent revenues and interest in the destination.

Background

Every destination's attraction is not created equal. It has to instill in potential visitors inspiration and determination that it is a place worth experiencing, even the controversial sites. For example,

- Paris was not immediately enamoured with the Eiffel Tower when it was constructed as the centerpiece of the Exposition Universelle (World's Fair) in 1889, to commemorate the French Revolution's centennial. Today, the landmark welcomes almost 7 million people a year, making it the most visited paid-for monument in the world.
- The Taj Mahal was constructed by Shah Jahan to honour his wife Mumtaz in the 17th century. In 1830, it faced destruction when a crew led by the British governor of India, Lord William Bentinck, was ready to begin demolition and auction off the structure's marble. This masterpiece was saved eventually by the restoration intervention by Lord Curzon, and there is still controversy around maintaining the site with its connection to India's Mughal conquerors.
- Auschwitz was regarded as one of the Nazis' deadliest

concentration camps, with over 1.1 million people exterminated. As a 40 square kilometre compound that was not meant to last, there had even been the possibility of Allied forces bombing it to obliterate its murderous operations. Auschwitz is now a potent symbol, most famous for its infamy, and now visited by tourists and pilgrims alike.

All of these well-known places, despite their contentious pasts and issues that sometimes still resonate today, have stood the test of time and forged a strong profile that have evoked interest and generated visitors from a transverse range of interests and platforms.

The Buzludzha Monument is such a venue. Built in 1981 as a formal gathering place and tribute to Bulgarian communism, it was abandoned in the 1990s, with the end of the socialist regime. In the intervening years, it has been neglected and looted, as have many other Communist era buildings part of the vast unloved heritage of the 20th century. It transformed over a short period of time from one of the most important structures in Bulgaria to one of its least significant, reflecting the transformation in national values and society. Today, Buzludzha is a symbol of conflicting ideas and perspectives between people holding different views about the recent Communist past and those who view it as a symbol of free will, art and curiosity including the new generation of Bulgarians and interested foreigners.

On a structural basis, Buzludzha is a masterpiece of architecture, engineering and art, and one of the most iconic and significant buildings of post-war modernism in Europe. Buzludzha is also one of the most dissonant and controversial sites from the socialist period, which is also the reason for its neglect. This dissonance narrative, however, is also its unrevealed, exceptional asset, and has the power to provoke dialogue, allow open discussion, enhance education and tolerance, and foster mutual understanding.

The monument represents not only an opportunity to learn from the past, but also an invitation to inspire and encourage new inclusive visions for the future. The primary intention of the Buzludzha Monument Project is to convert the site into a multi-purpose venue free from any political agenda. A team consisting of both experts and stakeholders has been created to support this initiative and identify future uses to make it a financially viable and operationally sustainable destination. The Getty project's recommendation regarding the economic analysis and site potential noted that a more specific study was needed to evaluate the unique tourism potential of the Buzludzha Monument.



Fig. 1 Buzludzha Monument

The sustainable cultural tourism approach

Plan Methodology

The document at hand represents an approach by the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC) team to develop a sustainable cultural tourism plan for Buzludzha, incorporating its multi-layered cultural and natural heritage values based on the recommendations of the site's Getty project report, focusing on the structure and its immediate surrounding area, and how it fits into the overall regional tourism plan for Kazanlak municipality.

The plan's development methodology involved a site visit and field research, collecting information from visitors about the purpose of visit, attitudes and expectations and also including demographic and social data. This research further involved the participation of other stakeholders, experts and the local community through individual and group meetings. To ensure research around the Monument is integrated at different levels, additional information was added from a wide range of sources, such as state statistics, company reports, online tourism destination review sites, international and national electronic and print media, archives.

Hence, the intention of this plan is to outline appropriate and sustainable cultural tourism development options that may enhance the visitor exploration, understanding and appreciation of the Buzludzha Monument.

Defining terms: sustainable cultural tourism and visitor economy

According to the definition adopted by the United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) General Assembly, at its 22nd session in September 2017, Cultural Tourism implies "A type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions".

In 2017, the United Nations commemorated the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, tied to initiatives in support of all of the seventeen United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This special year was championed by the UNWTO in recognition of the tremendous potential of the tourism industry, to contribute to the fight against poverty and foster mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue. The International Year was aimed at supporting change in policies, business practices and consumer behavior towards a more sustainable tourism sector than can contribute effectively to the SDGs in the following five key areas:



Fig. 2 Interior of the monument in disrepair

- Inclusive and sustainable economic growth;
- Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction;
- Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change;
- Cultural values, diversity and heritage; and
- Mutual understanding, peace and security

The UN's 2030 SDGs provide a useful framework to outline how communities can benefit from sustainable forms of tourism. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) defines the visitor economy as any direct, indirect, and induced economic activity resulting from visitors' interactions with their destination. This sustainable cultural tourism plan for Buzludzha integrates these different aspects and findings to adopt an appropriately focused sustainable cultural tourism development approach for Buzludzha.

Tourism development at dissonant and communist-era sites

The sensitivity to the hardships endured under communism in Eastern Europe enables emotions to be readily manipulated for political and/or economic gain. Many examples of dissonant built heritage from this era during the 20th century still exist across Central and Eastern Europe. As in Bulgaria, the features that remain standing hold mixed feelings, but a lively debate and considerations of how to treat or re-use these is spread across academic platforms, desti-

nation management organizations and municipal planning departments.

Two case examples are worth reflecting upon when dealing with sensitive repurposing of these sites. Definitive solutions are still not easily forthcoming, but the thought and exchange of ideas on destination development and planning for these types of structures can be useful to help place the situation around Buzludzha in a wider European context.

Yugoslavian 'Spomeniks'

The 'Spomeniks' of former Yugoslavia are presented in a vast online resource that is centred around the website: <https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/>. This project was in turn stimulated by the 2006–2009 exhibition titled "spomenik" by Belgian artist Jan Kempnaers. The catalogue that comes together on the Spomenik Database explores:

- the structures;
- their designers;
- the history and narratives behind them;
- their current physical state; and
- the geographical locations of what still runs into thousands of individual sites.

Some are damaged, some repaired, some neglected, some lost entirely since the end of the Yugoslav era. What stands out, however, as explained by the website's author, Donald Niebyl, is how once introduced to them, the visitor is drawn to move and travel between sites that are individual



Fig. 3 Perched on top of Mount Stara Planina, Buzludzha Monument dominates the landscape above Kazanlak

and common to a theme both at once. The Spomeniks can complement a journey through the landscapes. Where they are sited, they prompt visitors to pause, contemplate, look around, to connect and experience a destination.

Albanian “concrete mushrooms”

Concrete military bunkers (shaped like mushrooms) are a ubiquitous sight in Albania, with an average of 5.7 bunkers for every square kilometre. The bunkers were constructed of concrete, steel and iron and ranged in size from one- or two-person pillboxes with gun slits to large underground nuclear bomb shelters intended for use by the Party leadership and bureaucrats. The cost of constructing them was a drain on Albania’s resources, diverting them away from more pressing needs, such as dealing with the country’s housing shortage and poor roads.

Today, there are over 750,000 reinforced concrete bunkers in Albania, in different stages of use and disrepair. Their solidity has made it difficult to get rid of them, yet many have been removed, particularly in cities. In the countryside, however, most bunkers have simply been abandoned. Some have been reused as housing for animals or as storehouses; others have been abandoned to lie derelict due to the cost of removing them.

There have been various suggestions for what to do with them. Ideas have included pizza ovens, solar heaters, beehives, mushroom farms, projection rooms for drive-in cinemas, beach huts, flower planters, youth hostels, and kiosks. Many of these examples have been fully researched and cu-

rated in a project and book by Italian architects Elian Stefa and Gyler Mydyti.

Albania’s bunkers have even become a symbol of sorts for the country. Pencil holders and ashtrays in the shape of concrete bunkers have become one of the country’s most popular tourist souvenirs. One such line of bunker souvenirs was promoted with a message to buyers: “Greetings to the land of the bunkers. We assumed that you could not afford to buy a big one.”

Buzludzha destination planning and development assessment

Initial input, visitor and site assessment

In an initial discussion on repurposing the structure, Buzludzha Foundation staff ruminated over the following question: “What could Buzludzha become?”. The responses were as follows, citing its role as an open stage for storytelling, applying the following lenses:

- **Stories through ART.** Could Buzludzha host the works of the most famous artists of our time? Art changes the perspective and leads to a new way of perceiving reality. A place where art raises new questions and gives new answers.
- **Stories through HISTORY.** Could it be a place where we learn about our past to make sure we don’t repeat the same mistakes again? Could it take us all the way back to communist times and show them from different perspec-

tives? A personal journey filled with interracial emotional experiences.

- **Stories through NATURE.** Could it be a place to educate, encourage and initiate nature friendly and sustainable practices? A place to explore and appreciate the beauty and variety of Buzludzha’s environment in the Central Balkans.
- **Stories of the YOUTH.** Could it be a place for young Europeans to gather and forge the future? A place to form new global strategies, discuss important matters of the present and the future through performances, workshops, lectures and conferences.

Moreover, visitor surveys were conducted in May 2021 to better understand the drivers, needs and wants of people who had travelled to Buzludzha, and to identify where the positive aspects could be enhanced and the expressed gaps in services, infrastructure and amenities be filled.

Key and potential visitor origin markets

Buzludzha is already benefiting from being visible and actively sought out by curious audiences both online and in person on site. These consist of a healthy combination of domestic and international tourists. One of the biggest challenges to growing visitation and expanding markets is the remoteness of the site which will continue to deter long-haul visitors. However, the multi-faceted natural and cultural elements in the region around Buzludzha will help counteract seasonality and allow sustainable expansion of local, regional and international markets through year-round visitation.

Communication infrastructure

A low-key circulation of information and visibility through social media already exists. The communication difficulty, in terms of cultural tourism to the site and region, is that the Monument is not yet joined into other contemporary tourism and heritage narratives. The dissonant message of the site as a crumbling communist era folly, dominates. The interest, however, and the different perspectives on the site and its possible future uses, offer a real opportunity for a successful communication. For this purpose, narratives and diverse communication platforms should be linked up to inform those growing audiences that seek to find out more about the site and make plans to visit the Buzludzha.

Financing and development With regards to raising additional funds to support development, Buzludzha does have the advantage of being an inspiring and unique feature. In the short to medium term, the extent of structural damage alongside the continuing dissonance surrounding its original construction restricts the likelihood of major public funds being secured. Nonetheless, the visual strength of the site continues to generate interest. Equally, the wider emergence of attention to dissonant heritage Europe-wide brings in opportunities for collaborative programmes bridging local and international funding support. If cultural tourism continues to grow and be a priority in Bulgaria, then Buzludzha will be

an ideal layer to blend in together with other heritage assets in Kazanlak municipality.

Marketing and promotion

Cultural tourism is being pursued as a strong driving force for future development in Bulgaria. What has to be overcome, however, is the continuing dominance of promoting the Black Sea coast. The strong image and profile of the Monument, together with the natural and cultural heritage features around Buzludzha, provides some real impetus to become an important tourism destination of broad interest. Its rural situation will mean for the foreseeable future that it cannot be considered as a mass tourism site. Yet, it may benefit from that position as a slow, quirky and sustainable destination with many different layers of interest. Taking advantage also of its futuristic science fiction image can contribute to promoting an alternative prospect for the site that does not look back over its shoulder to what was intended as its original meaning.

Community involvement, employment and participation

The emergence of the Buzludzha Foundation, the growth of its passionate volunteer force and the interest generated through the Getty project, all demonstrate a real grassroots connection to the Monument. A general understanding of the different stakeholder groups that are pertinent to the site already exists. However, a more detailed assessment is required. In particular, one should look for approaches that allow bringing together disparate voices and healing some of the tensions that obviously continue to split feelings in regards to the site’s future evolution. Restricting the situation to countering arguments has limited benefit. To fully engage and promote ongoing participation and exchange, the most effective way ahead will be to demonstrate it through actions and events. These can highlight the potential of Buzludzha “by doing” while, simultaneously, also providing additional economic and employment benefits.

Education and training

The standard of Bulgarian tourism training and education is recognized by international authorities. The greatest challenge, however, is to present how vocational prospects exist beyond the country’s dominant coastal tourism model. For this to occur, there is a need to align the positioning of cultural tourism as mentioned in the National Strategy with training opportunities.

In the case of Buzludzha, it is important to mention the different skills and prospects that come along with a growing cultural tourism. The types of employment within the visitor economy are particularly broad and flexible in view of the continuum between cultural and natural heritage creating jobs around museums, attractions, hospitality and tourism services, interpretation and guiding, to name but a few. Additionally, the direct external connection to Europe through the development of such cultural or dissonant heritage routes in Bulgaria, is an important asset. This wider connectivity, including the potential for collaborations, exchanges and

Plan recommendations

IMPLEMENT SITE GOVERNANCE POLICY and OVERSIGHT

Recommendation In cooperation with local communities co-create operational guidelines for the site capturing potential operational uses (e.g. events, promotion, carrying capacity, etc.) that are both sensitive to sentiments about Buzludzha's past and, simultaneously, provide functional parameters for site management. This endeavor would be supported by the creation of a Buzludzha Oversight Committee.

INCLUDE RESTORATION in the TOURISM OFFER

Recommendation Make the restoration activities part of the Buzludzha story, where visitors are clamouring to get a sense of how the site is evolving, and how they may be able to gain a more informed, substantive interpretation during their visits.

GENERATE DIVERSE REVENUES

Recommendation Establish revenue centres that can build upon and connect with existing tourism activities and resources in regards to promotion and economic funding of the Buzludzha.

ENCOURAGE YEAR-ROUND VISITATION

Recommendation Bypass the typical tourism seasonality issues through the utilisation of Buzludzha's multi-layered setting and product offer, thereby enabling visitors to visit and experience the site's geography, culture, nature and heritage year round.

ENCOURAGE SCALABILITY to ADDRESS VISITOR SURGES

Recommendation Encourage scalability of services and amenities at Buzludzha's during visitors surge periods to foster a more welcoming and accessible tourism environment, while lessening the fixed costs associated with more permanent forms of service infrastructure and amenities.

linkages on a European level, requires further skills, training and capacity building locally, particularly around crossroad sites like Buzludzha.

Conclusions

The Buzludzha monument clearly challenges tourism planning as it can evoke a range of emotions and experiences. The research and consultations conducted by ICOMOS ICTC identify five significant recommendations:

- Embed a site governance policy
- Incorporate the monument restoration process within the tourism offer
- Ensure diverse revenue streams are generated
- Facilitate year-round visitation
- Provide scalable visitor management options to adapt to surges of visitation

The study further presents steps required to enact or implement those recommendations. Above and beyond those recommendations, the perspectives, information, and broader situational analysis points to three overarching takeaways:

- A. The Buzludzha Monument is a quirky, attention-grabbing site for the visitor. It draws people in as it is, and with the right support and encouragement it can also act as a nexus to help introduce many more aspects of culture and heritage in the area. Coordination, connectivity and collaboration are now essential to facilitate an integrated multi-layered and engaging destination.
- B. The site is neither static nor one-dimensional. The ways in which tourists have already experienced and inspired others to visit the Monument, highlight the potential to stimulate the imagination and provoke responses. These multiple opportunities for individuals and groups to visit Buzludzha should be encouraged all year round.
- C. On a purely economic level, the depth, diversity and prominence online of the hashtag #Buzludzha has already created huge savings on potential marketing, awareness or promotional budgets. Many destinations would envy that situation – the key now is to take full advantage of that impetus. Local and international stakeholders will help to refine and strengthen the branding of Buzludzha.

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Europ’Raid – <https://www.europraid.fr/>

Sofia Adventures – <https://sofiaadventures.com/how-to-get-to-buzludzha-day-trip-communist-ufo-bulgaria/>

Spomenik Database – <https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/>

Trip Hackr, travel blogger and agency – <https://triphackr.com/bulgarias-buzludzha-monument/>

Credits

All photos by Sanjin Mihelić, ICOMOS ICTC

¹ UNWTO, 2021.

² UNWTO, 2017.

³ WTTC, 2020.

⁴ MYDYTI and STEFA, Concrete Mushrooms, 2009.

Dissonant Post-World War II Heritage in the Urban Context of Bulgaria: Space, Time and Building a Culture of Public Debate

Elena Dimitrova

Culture, dissonant heritage and public urban space

At the beginning of the 21st century, the cultural dimensions of development are increasingly becoming the focus of social attention.¹ Culture, regarded as society's capacity for self-reflection and behaviour under changing historical conditions, influences the ways of life and interaction in the city; it leaves both visible and invisible impacts on the material urban structures. In today's democratic societies, urban culture, equally sensitive to development challenges and the preservation of values, evolves through continuous debate. Cultural heritage is an important factor in this debate as it materialises the memories of the past, adding wisdom to the pragmatic considerations about the future. The Namur Declaration of 2015² asserts that cultural heritage is a key component of the European identity, "a unique resource, fragile, non-renewable and non-relocatable". The role of cultural heritage for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals is explicitly acknowledged in Goal 11, sub-target 11.4.² The ICOMOS Quality Principles document asserts that "[u]sing cultural assets in respectful ways safeguards their meanings, values and inspiration for local communities and future generations".³ The continually evolving urban public space – enabling and sheltering public life, changing while keeping traces of the past – is today broadly acknowledged as part of the living cultural heritage to be respected and preserved. The concept of dissonant cultural heritage, introduced in the late 20th century,⁴ is today widely used in the debate on the public policy challenges posed by conflicting memories of the past and their material traces in public space,⁵ as well as in the call for necessary people-centred approaches to cultural heritage.⁶ The societal transition in Eastern Europe in the late 20th century brought the need for self-reflection on memories and identities while making choices for the future. Preservation versus demolition clashes concerning urban heritage of the socialist period are still going on in countries of South-East Europe, also often fuelled by political and economic considerations.

Post-World War II dissonant heritage in Sofia city centre

The city of Sofia preserves the memory of numerous transformations in multiple historic layers (Fig. 1). Within the seven decades between the late 1940s and the early 2020s, the city centre experienced fast spatial changes twice – im-



Fig. 1 Sofia city centre, view of the early 21st century

portant historic layers were demolished and new ones added in the urban fabric because of societal transformations.

In the course of the post-World War II recovery of the historic city centre in the mid-20th century socialist urban planning took the opportunity to change the utilitarian functions but also the overall spatial structure of the core city area. The planning interventions retained the two historic urban axes inherited from the ancient Roman city, but added symbols of the new ideology in the restructured public space. The west-east city axis with an existing north-east/south-east bifurcation was strongly emphasised; a couple of ancient buildings were integrated into the new urban structures but several quarters from the early 20th century were destroyed in favour of a new symmetric urban composition, with the Communist Party headquarters as a central visual landmark at the point of bifurcation. New cultural functions – the National Art Gallery and the National Ethnographic Museum – were attributed to the building of the former royal palace and the large green area of the previously gated palace garden was opened to the public. The accomplishment of the north-south urban axis, linking Sofia's central railway station to the city centre and then going south to a panoramic view of the Vitosha mountain, was left in the post-war period as a task for the future. The task was accomplished nine years before the end of the socialist period through a large-scale urban intervention in the late 1970s, meant to celebrate the 1300th anniversary of the Bulgarian State in 1981.

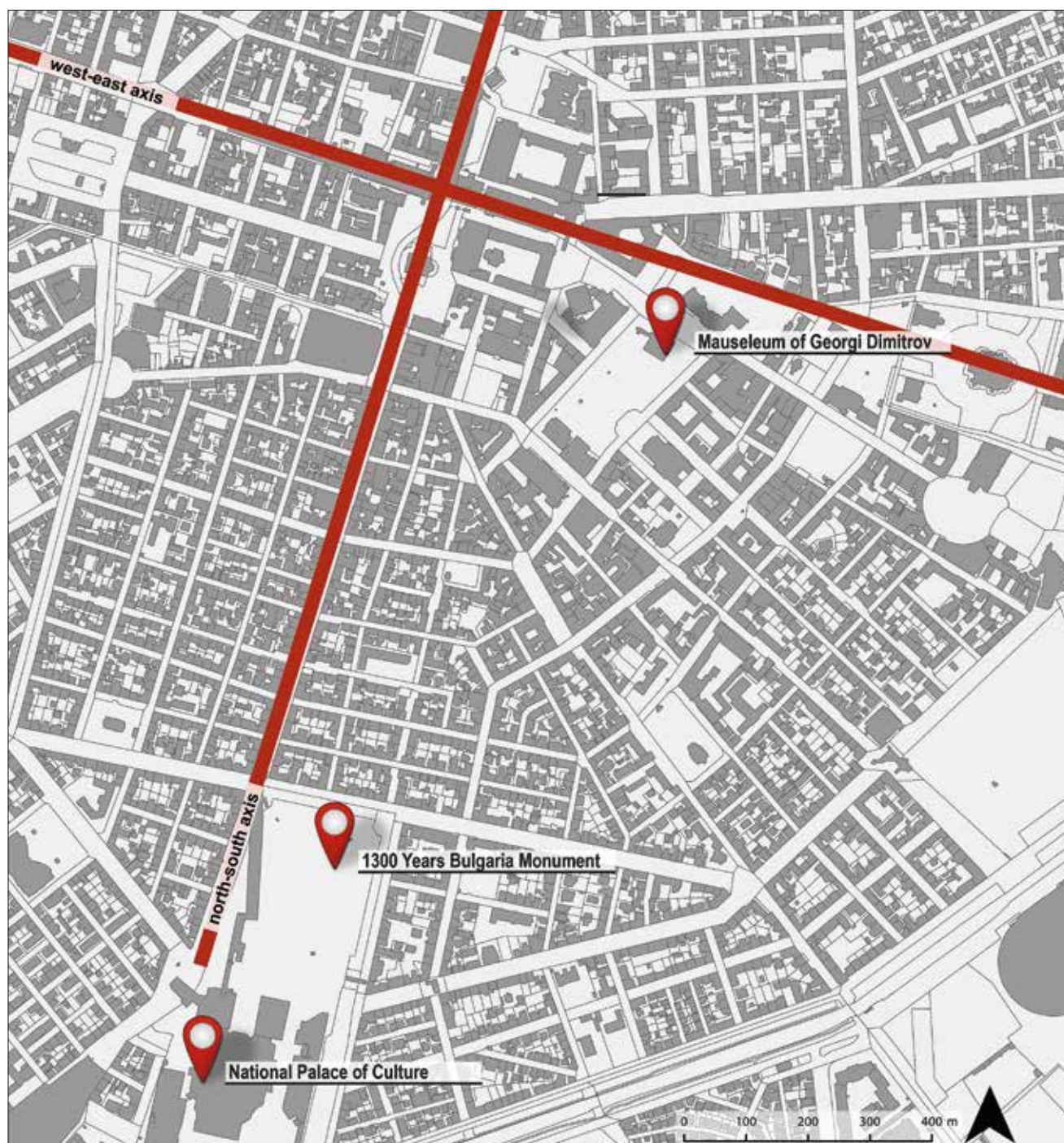


Fig. 2. Sofia city centre, main urban axes

The societal transformation initiated in 1990 provoked a new questioning of the values of the past and the search for a new development paradigm. The undertaken urban changes were motivated by political as well as economic reasons. Efforts to reclaim and ‘desacralise’ public urban space were accompanied by the creation of public green areas and the demolition of late 19th/early 20th century heritage to enable intensive new high-rise development. Growing public concern about the cultural consequences of losing layers of urban memory motivated citizens’ initiatives and expert organisations to campaign for protection of public green spaces and monuments from the early 20th century. Post-World-

War-II monuments, however, evoked strongly polarised opinions and emotions in society.

Heated political clashes in the early 1990s addressed two key monuments in the centre of Sofia – the Mausoleum of Georgi Dimitrov and the 1300-years-Bulgaria Monument, the first built at the very beginning of the socialist period, and the second at its very end (Fig. 2). Despite the voices insisting on public debate about their future, both monuments were demolished within 18 years – the mausoleum in 1999 and the 1300-years-Bulgaria Monument in 2017. A look at the historic context of their appearance and the efforts made after 1990 to reinterpret their importance for urban memory



Fig. 3 Sofia central city square with mausoleum, 1960s

could provide some understanding of the deficiencies of the evolving urban culture, but also of the existing potential for an effective debate on the urban value of post-World War-II dissonant heritage before a cultural layer of modern urban history is irretrievably lost.

The Mausoleum of Georgi Dimitrov, designed by the prominent Bulgarian architect Georgi Ovcharov and built in only six days in 1949 after the death of Bulgarian Communist Party leader Georgi Dimitrov, was erected on a site opposite the former royal palace (Fig. 3) as a key element of the central ritual site for the party-led mass rallies during national celebrations in the period of socialism. The building was additionally reinforced and decorated with unique mosaics in the 1970s. After it was abandoned in 1990, several initiatives and civil society organisations tried to raise public awareness about possible steps to ‘desacralise’ and reuse the building, while preserving the historic memory of place. Architects and art designers shared creative ideas on reinterpreting the dissonant monument and art events were organised in the square until the late 1990s. The mausoleum was, however, demolished in 1999, nine years after the start of the political changes. Sofia municipality undertook several attempts afterwards to utilise the empty urban space for festivities, bazaars, and art exhibitions, yet with no meaningful cultural message. Currently, a car park occupies part of the square, and a huge abstract human figure rises on the site (Fig. 4).

In November 2018, the municipality announced the intention to organise an international competition for turning

the underground premises of the demolished mausoleum into a gallery for contemporary art. Critical comments from citizens and experts pointed out that neither a holistic concept for the urban space in the heart of the city nor considerations of the cultural and spatial context were mentioned; also, no competition brief was announced until late 2021.

The 1300-years-Bulgaria Monument was designed, alongside the National Palace of Culture and the surrounding open public space, as part of a large-scale urban complex, a work of synthesis between architecture, landscape architecture, and monumental sculpture. The complex was estimated to be the largest and most ambitious urban renewal intervention of the socialist period (Figs. 5 and 6). It was realised within a couple of years in place of a public garden, abandoned military barracks with memorial walls dedicated to the soldiers killed in the wars of the early 20th century, and several empty plots south of the city centre. The multifunctional congress-and-concert building was located at the end of the main compositional axis of a public area of greenery and fountains and framed by the Vitosha mountain to the south. The huge monument at the beginning of the axis symbolised Bulgaria’s development along a steep historic path (Fig. 7). After the changes in 1990, the public space around the monument became vibrant and full of public life (Fig. 8); yet the low quality of the stone cladding, the total lack of maintenance and the tolerated vandalism on the site resulted in a considerable deterioration and misuse of the monument in the early 21st century (Fig. 9).

In the meantime, heritage experts undertook international action to protect the monument. The complex was listed as one of the Bulgarian sites on the European cultural routes of totalitarian heritage of the 20th century by the ATRIUM project.⁷ A heritage alert to the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on 20th century heritage (ISC20C) claimed that the monument with its entire urban environment was part of the cultural memory of Sofia. The French-Bulgarian Trace project⁸ initiated public and expert debate on its historic value in 2008. An online student competition for urban and architectural design ideas about the future of the monument and the surrounding park area was organised in 2012.⁹ Experts and citizens posted their positions and arguments in personal blogs and virtual media. In its official declaration ICOMOS Bulgaria drew the institutions' attention to the profound destructive consequences of erasing historic memory and insisted on a transparent public discussion, respect for expert opinion and strict compliance with the national legal provisions.¹⁰ In 2017, the remnants of the ruined monument were finally removed after on-site protests and official declarations by several national unions of creative professionals opposing the act. A statue reminiscent of an earlier period and expected to be broadly acceptable for the public replaced the demolished monument (Fig. 10).

Dissonant heritage as an opportunity for building a culture of debate

The synthesis of architecture and monumental arts was largely promoted by the socialist state as an artistic instrument for ideological influence. Urban planning and design strongly emphasised the importance of these complexes in public space. The artistic value of this heritage was never fully estimated as the expert analyses were largely influenced by ideological considerations in the socialist period and after that the rejection of socialism dominated the public and professional discourse.¹¹ An official recommendation after 1990 that universities should refrain from entering the political debate also hampered critical academic reflection on the role of post-World War II dissonant monumental complexes in the life of society and their value as urban heritage. A diploma project by Emilia Kaleva and two PhD theses by Emilia Kaleva and Aneta Vasileva, defended at the Faculty of Architecture at UACEG, and one, by Mitko Zlatanov, at the Academy of Arts in Sofia were among several successful attempts of a younger generation to engage in the debate through academic education and research. A couple of course and diploma projects, developed within the programme of urbanism at UACEG and addressing issues of socialist and post-socialist urban development, regrettably remained unpublished and unknown to a broader professional community. The Trace project seminar¹² in October 2008 enabled an exchange of professional positions and arguments on Bulgarian dissonant heritage from socialism. It also provided an opportunity for a team of five students, 23–24 years old, from the MSc programme in Urbanism at UACEG, to share their perceptions about life under socialism, their appreciation of the ongoing societal changes, and their ideas about the future action of the 1300-years-Bulgarian



Fig. 4. Art installation, former site of the mausoleum, 2021



Fig. 5 National Palace of Culture complex, Sofia, 1978

monument in a five-minute video presentation.¹³ Thus, a message from a younger generation with no personal experience of socialism entered the debate. The students' video started with an explicit statement that the team members did not recommend the demolition of the monument but wished to provoke reflection on its possible futures in line with people's changing lifestyles, demands and expectations. The students described their perception of 'the communist past' as "one epoch, one power, one idea", in contrast to a new world of "creativity, spontaneity, initiative, performance, music, games, etc." The team perceived the monument itself and the public place around it as "isolated, static and degraded", lacking "vitality, socialisation, dynamics and tolerance". Several collages illustrated the authors' hints about re-integrating the monument aimed at transforming the place into a lively and attractive one, responsive to contemporary lifestyles and needs. The students were largely criticised by the experienced participants in the forum – for 'preserving the socialist monument', on the one hand, and for 'abusing' it, on the other. The audience was provoked by the images in the collages and scarcely sensitive to the shared perceptions. Thus, a chance to discuss with future urban planning experts from a younger generation their perceptions of the cultural messages of dissonant heritage was, regrettably, missed.



Fig.6 The National Palace of Culture complex in the urban environment of Sofia, late 1990s

The online student competition about architectural and urban design ideas for re-interpreting the 1300-years-Bulgaria monument was another important step towards encouraging young people to join in the debate on dissonant heritage. A critical analysis of the conceptual design proposals submitted for the competition would be a relevant starting point for understanding the next generations' points of view on the legacy of the past.

The broad public accessibility of objective information about facts and events but also of diverse memories from the previous historic period is essential for public debate. It needs to be complemented by expert analyses on the artistic value of the monuments but also on the cultural value of dissonance for the continuity of societal development. Relevant knowledge about the ongoing regional and global processes for re-conceptualising dissonant heritage in the life of today's societies is also important to enter the educational process. The enhanced opportunities to share and spread ideas in virtual space already largely contributes to the publicity of personal and collective positions on dis-



Fig. 7 1300-years-Bulgaria Monument, mid-1980s



Fig. 8 1300-years-Bulgaria monument, adjacent public space, late 1990s

sonant cultural heritage. People from different generations stand for preserving dissonant heritage as part of urban memory but also for the democratic value of public debate; they insist on respecting intellectual rights and on listening to expert arguments. The experience from the recent three decades however has proved that traces of debate and action in virtual space are often inaccessible or irreversibly lost for a future audience.

Conclusion

It seems that the debate on dissonant heritage and its meaning for the city still has a long way to go in Bulgarian society. Filling in the existing information and interpretation gaps alongside building capacity for self-reflection and developing a culture of debate are, however, issues of pressing priority today. Encouraging the debate could be expected to enable a more mature understanding of the past but could also be a step towards enhancing the transformative capacity of Bulgarian cities in a way that respects and preserves their spatial and cultural identity. The multidisciplinary international expert dialogue on dissonant heritage already proved to be immensely important in supporting, yet not substituting a broad national, regional, and local process. Younger generations need to be trusted and continually encouraged to take their responsibility as experts and citizens in the reflection and collective action to defend cultural and democratic values. The inter-generational dialogue built upon mutual respect and empathy appears to be crucial for the communication on values and principles, tested in practice but also continually questioned and re-confirmed through debate.



Fig. 9 Ruined 1300-years-Bulgaria monument, 2013



Fig. 10 Site of the demolished 1300-years-Bulgaria monument, replaced and marked by a lion monument to commemorate fallen soldiers of the military division barracks formerly stationed at this site, spring 2021

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Credits

- Figs. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10: author’s personal archive
 Figs. 3, 6, 7: courtesy of lostbulgaria.com
 Fig. 5: courtesy of ATRIUM project archive, National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage, Sofia

¹ UNESCO, *Culture: Urban future*, 2016.
² Namur Declaration, 2015, Section 1, item 2.
³ UN SDGs, 2015.
⁴ ICOMOS, *Quality Principles*, Principle 3, 2021.
⁵ TUNBRIDGE/ASHWORTH, *Dissonant Heritage*, 1996.
⁶ LÄHDESMÄKI et al, *Dissonant Heritages in Europe*, 2019.
⁷ ICOMOS 2020.
⁸ ATRIUM project.
⁹ TRACE project (2007–2010).

¹⁰ Transformatori Association, *Architectural competition*, 2012.
¹¹ ICOMOS Bulgaria, *Position*, 2017.
¹² ZLATANOV, 2015, p. 18.
¹³ TRACE project seminar, “The monuments from socialism: a future in question”, The Red House, Sofia, 2008.
¹⁴ DIMOVA et al, *Monumental Socialist Complexes*, 2008.

The Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club: an Example of Preserving Late Soviet Modernist Architecture

Manana Tevzadze

This contribution is something like a project report, detailing the intentions and goals of the project and the specific outcomes it has achieved. The project “Conservation of Modernist Architecture and Its Sustainable Use in Georgia” was funded by the Getty Foundation *Keeping it Modern* initiative and was implemented by the Georgian National Committee of the Blue Shield.¹ The article shares the project team’s experience gained while implementing the project and hopes to encourage further initiatives to protect modernist architecture. It presents an example of a specific site, namely the Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club (Figs. 1 and 2), and describes the actions taken to preserve and promote its values.

Background

Before detailing the goals and activities of the project, the following is a brief overview of the various previous attempts to protect the building and their tangible results. Nini Palavandishvili, researcher and curator, started to research the building back in 2015; soon after, this was followed by the visit of three international artists as part of the GeoAir art residency and the joint creation of sculptural artworks on the theme of Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club.² Nini Palavandishvili’s research was presented in 2017 at an exhibition in Berlin³ and was also reflected in two different European articles and in the book named “The War of Perception” that was published in a single printed edition as an art book.⁴

Challenges

The challenges that the team has envisaged to overcome through this project were largely connected to the conservation of the Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club, but at the same time they concerned the general problem of inadequate respect towards the architectural buildings of that particular era. Despite the fact, that the building has preserved its initial functions and is fully utilised, the building has experienced several interventions and losses. All of these are reflected in the degree of its authenticity and integrity. There have been several threats of expropriation throughout the history of the building. And in recent years, there have been several unsuccessful attempts to grant the building the status of cultural heritage monument. These problems have become even more acute in relation to the general context and the current situation in the city. There are cases of listed buildings being demolished, severely altered in the name of adaptation, or



Fig. 1 The Main Hall of the Chess Palace and Alpine Club

expropriated without any obligation to maintain the values of the building, and so on. Thus, this is the context in which the project idea and its detailed implementation plan were elaborated.

The project *Conservation of Modernist Architecture and Its Sustainable Use in Georgia*

The project proposal for the Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club building, to be submitted to the grant competition announced as part of the Getty Foundation’s “Keeping It Modern” initiative, was prepared in early 2018. The aim of the authors was to identify a building that had universal artistic and historical value, held an important role in public life and at the same time required a conservation management plan. As a result of the research, a late soviet modernism building dating back to the 1970s, the Tbilisi Chess Palace and the Alpine Club, was selected. Designed by architects Lado Alexi-Meskhishvili and Germane Ghudushauri and built for two sports, the building played an important role in the development of both sports and public life over the years.

The existing research of the building was a solid foundation for creating the proposal, followed by the study of its current condition and an action plan for its conservation and promotion. During the preparation of the grant proposal the team met with representatives of the owner of the building – all the relevant department heads of the Tbilisi City Hall – and representatives of usufructuary organisations, the users of the building, in order to inform them about the proposal and to explore their positions.



Fig. 2 Chess Palace and Alpine Club, exterior

The main goals of the project were identified as follows:

- To develop a first-ever conservation plan for a Late Soviet Modernism building in Tbilisi which will serve as a prototype for other similar period buildings,
- To facilitate future proper restoration, conservation and continued maintenance of a Late Soviet Modernism style building;
- To increase the awareness of the values of Late Soviet Modernism architecture among city authorities and the wider Georgian public through listing of the site and carrying out public awareness activities with the help of international experts and the use of various types of media.
- To train young architects and heritage professionals in documentation, conservation planning processes etc. of buildings of the same period.

In May 2018, the project proposal *Conservation of Modernist Architecture and its Sustainable Use in Georgia* was announced as one of the winners of the grant competition. Since the start of the project, multidisciplinary research for the study of the state of conservation of the building, archival and art historical studies, measured architectural surveys, and regular meetings with the building users and the owner were carried out simultaneously.

Conservation plan

The process

The conservation plan is the result of numerous studies, such as: archival research, an art historical study, documentation and study of the building's current physical state, study of the building materials, engineering study, studies of the communication systems (including: water supply and wastewater disposal system, electric network, heating and ventilation), study of the stakeholders, sociological research, and initial study of the economic potential of the building.

As part of the art historical study, a video interview was recorded with Germane Ghudushauri, one of the architects of the building. Also, Alexander Slovinski (Fig. 3), one of the members of the interior designer's creative group "Sameuli", was recorded. The videos were integrated into the video story of the project that is accessible on the project website: https://chesspalaceandalpineclub.ge/https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JD6OeVjdvv88htkpU5oAiMX4qz_BD-JmU/view?usp=share_link.

During the process of analysis and decision-making, the project team arranged several meetings with the stakeholders. The team presented the proposal and facilitated the discussion. The key principles of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) were discussed and agreed with the owner of the building – Tbilisi City Hall – and with two main users of the building: the Chess Federation and the Alpine Club.

A significant part of the CMP is dedicated to the investigation and description of the current structural condition of the building, which served as a basis for providing separate conservation recommendations for each space. For certain parts of the building a specific concept for its adaptive reuse was proposed, which is also justified with research results. A one-year maintenance plan for the building was prepared, which also includes the recommendations for the building users. The Conservation Management Plan is the only document of its kind designed for the modernist architectural monument of Georgia. The CMP document of the Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club can be accessed on the website, both in English and Georgian: www.chesspalaceandalpine-club.ge. An English version of the document can also be accessed on the Getty Foundation website under the *Keeping It Modern* initiative's report library: https://www.getty.edu/foundation/initiatives/current/keeping_it_modern/report_library/index.html. In addition to developing a CMP, the project team worked in two main areas: raising public awareness and capacity building of field specialists, young professionals in preservation of the modernist heritage.

Raising awareness of the architectural values of late Soviet modernism

The goal of raising public awareness regarding late Soviet modernist architecture was fulfilled in two different directions. The immediate target audience of the first direction was architecture and restoration professionals and students. Another target audience was the general public. Therefore, those activities can be divided into two directions: capacity building and public campaign.

1. Capacity Building

Below is the list of activities targeting different audiences:

A. Heritage documentation winter school⁵

The four-day workshop in Tbilisi united 15 Georgian participants, students from three different universities in Tbilisi and young specialists working in the preservation of architectural heritage. The workshops were led by four international experts as well as representatives of Blue Shield Georgia. During the workshop the participants covered three relevant topics for heritage documentation:

- photography;
- photogrammetry; and
- laser scanning.

B. Adaptive reuse workshop – finding compatible uses for modern icons

The workshop was held in the Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club and aimed to reconsider the spaces of the building, including the Main Hall (Fig. 4). The workshop was led by the international expert Rand Eppich. Among the participants were young architects and restorers as well as graduates of economics faculties. Their mission was to propose ideas for the adaptive reuse of parts of the structure that



Fig. 3 Video interview with Alexander Slovinski, November 2018

would be in line with the financial needs of the Chess Federation and the Alpine Club and, most importantly, would help preserve the values of the building.

Over the course of five days, the participants explored concepts of adaptive reuse and documentation of the current functions of the building, anticipating the future needs of the building's users and making an innovative and financially sustainable decision. The project team provided the workshop participants with the necessary information regarding the building; they explored its values and mapped out the current uses of the building. During the second stage of the workshop, participants held interviews with the current owner and the stakeholders to discuss future plans for the use of the building. Participants also analysed the key financial issues of the building in mixed groups, such as the future financial prospects for maintenance and the financial stability of the building and its users. As a result, the groups came up with plans for potential alternative projects of adaptive reuse of the building that were based on financial analysis and consistent with its values.

C. Seminar on preserving modernist architectural heritage and importance of its adaptation

The seminar was led by Riin Alatalu, an Estonian cultural heritage preservation expert, who presented the experience and best practices of conserving modernist architectural heritage and its adaptation (Fig. 5). The participants were familiarised with the technical characteristics of Soviet modernist architectural heritage, its importance and the means of its safeguarding, as well as with some of the endangered buildings and successful examples of their preservation in Esto-



Fig. 4 “Adaptive Reuse Workshop – Finding Compatible Uses for Modern Icons”, June 3–7, 2019

nia and other countries. The invited expert also spoke about sustainable use and adaptation of this type of architecture.

The aim of the seminar was to raise awareness for the safeguarding of the architectural heritage of modernism. Among the participants were public officials from the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, Tbilisi City Hall and specialists from the Georgian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport.

D. Workshop: creation of the concept of an interpretation centre for Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club

This workshop aimed to improve the skills of graduates from the faculties of design, digital communication or museum studies and to create a concept for an interpretation centre for the Chess Palace and Alpine Club. During a one-day workshop, students analysed various historical aspects of the building and its current challenges. In a special lecture, they learned about interpretation centres and in the following days worked in groups to create a concept for a museum interpretation centre for this building. Some of the selected works were displayed at the exhibition as part of the European Museum Night initiative (Fig. 6).

2. Public Campaign

A. Listing as a cultural heritage monument

The proposal for the nomination of listing the Chess Palace and Alpine Club as an immovable cultural heritage was prepared and submitted to the National Agency for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage of Georgia. As the building is situated in the Vera Park, which is listed as cultural heritage, the National Agency was hesitant to grant a separate status to the building. The official nomination submitted by Blue Shield went through all the instances required

by the law, and after a few months, by decree of the Georgian Government, the Chess Palace and Alpine Club was granted the status of an immovable cultural heritage site.

B. Media campaign

Considering that nowadays it is a challenge to attract media attention to cultural topics, the project team carried out an excellent media campaign for the monument and to draw the attention of the general public to the architecture of this period in general. As a result, more than ten media features have been produced, including: video blogs and appearances in digital publications, interviews and visits to TV shows.

C. Website

In order to give the general public, individuals or groups an opportunity to become familiar with the results of the project, even after its completion, a special website was created (<https://chesspalaceandalpineclub.ge>). It combines all the materials created during the project and also the archival materials regarding the Chess Palace and Alpine Club.

D. Videos

For the purpose of attracting the interest of a local as well as international audience in the Chess Palace and Alpine Club building, two separate videos were produced. The videos are in Georgian with English subtitles. The first video is of an introductory character and informs about the history and values of the building. The second video was produced towards the end of the project and is more comprehensive, reflecting the results of the entire project.

E. Manual⁶

A manual entitled *How and Why Should We Conserve Late Modernist Architecture* was created. One of the goals of the

manual is to raise public awareness, but at the same time it serves as an educational resource. It communicates the project implementation experience and compiles valuable recommendations for potential initiative groups that might decide to be involved in similar activities in future. It is hoped that it will be useful to the Tbilisi City Hall, students and young professionals in the field of cultural heritage conservation and management, and that it will help to raise public awareness of the late Soviet architectural heritage and change societal attitudes towards the architecture of this period, at least a little.

F. Public lecture on importance of safeguarding late Soviet modernist architecture

A public lecture dedicated to the importance of preserving the late Soviet modernist architectural heritage was held in the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia. Riin Alatalu, cultural heritage preservation expert from Estonia, spoke about the importance of preserving Soviet modernist heritage and common challenges faced by former Soviet countries in conserving and adapting architectural masterpieces of the Soviet era. During the lecture she presented best practices of conservation in Estonia, Finland and Russia. Up to 50 visitors attended the lecture and all of them were actively involved in the discussions.

G. Round-table meeting with stakeholders

Several round-table meetings with stakeholders were held throughout the project. Most important was the one during which all parties were present, discussed, and agreed on the final version of the conservation management plan. The main users and the owner of the building expressed their positions and eventually agreed upon the concepts and proposals offered by the project team in the draft conservation management plan.

H. Exhibition

The Chess Palace and Alpine Club hosted a photo exhibition organised by the project team in the framework of the museums' week celebrating the International Day of Museums. The exhibition displayed digital photos and videos of late Soviet modernist architecture in Georgia. Visitors had a chance to take a tour in the main hall of the building which is currently unused and not accessible for the public. The audience also had an opportunity to visit the Museum of Alpinism, which is not open regularly, either. On this day the venue also hosted an exhibition of interpretation centre concepts created by students. Furthermore, several thematic posters and stickers were printed and distributed.

The exhibition and the building itself attracted several visitors on that day, which confirms that there is an interest in this monument and in Soviet modernist architecture (Figs. 7 and 8).

I. Thematic cards – late modernist architecture in Tbilisi

In an effort to promote late modernist architectural heritage in Tbilisi, special thematic cards were created. Each of the 45 cards shows a unique architectural monument created between 1960 and 1989. The graphic illustration of the archi-



Fig. 5 Seminar “Preserving Modernist Architectural Heritage and the Importance of its Adaptation – Examples of Best Practice”. September 24, 2019

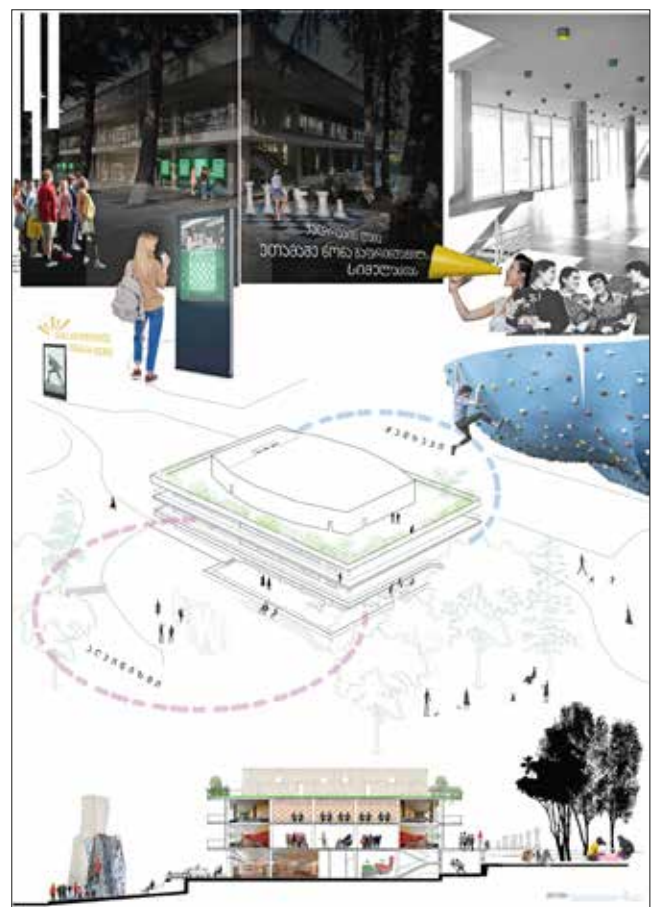
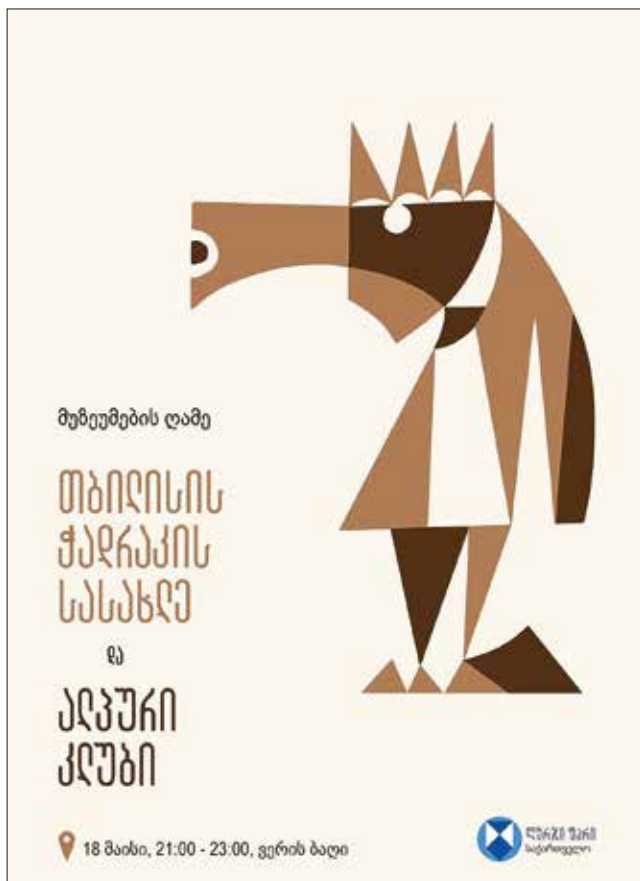


Fig. 6 One of the concepts created by participants of the workshop “Creation of a Concept for an Interpretation Centre for Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club”



Fig. 7 Exhibition of digital photos and videos about Soviet modernism, European Museum Night initiative, May 18, 2019



tectural heritage is followed by the year of its creation and the name of the architect. On the other side of the card is a QR code that leads to an online map with exact location of the site. These cards were distributed at the Architecture Biennale in Tbilisi, and in architecture schools, their libraries and thematic exhibitions and galleries.

Conclusion

In conclusion, all objectives envisaged by the project were achieved. In addition to the planned activities, several additional events were implemented by the project team. Later on, a number of indirect results became visible, such as helping groups to plan campaigns for heritage listing of monuments of the same period. All the initiatives carried out with the aim of raising public awareness and the tangible resources created, which remain accessible online, will continue to support and facilitate the preservation of modernist architecture.

Moreover, the project further revealed society's inadequate attitude towards Soviet architecture. The authors are confident that the project succeeded in demonstrating the real potential of Soviet architecture to relevant stakeholders, including representatives of the municipality.

Apart from the mission of raising public awareness, which was successfully accomplished, the authors expect that the CMP will help the owner and the users of the Chess Palace and Alpine Club to conserve the building and present its values accordingly.

Credits

Figs. 1, 2: photo Davit Gurgendidze

Figs. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8: © Blue Shield Georgia

Fig. 8 Poster created for the exhibition of digital photos and video about Soviet modernism, May 18, 2019

¹ <http://www.blueshield.ge>

² More information about their works can be found on the GeoAir website: <http://geoair.ge/project/iza-tarase-wicz> <http://geoair.ge/project/david-berg%C3%A9> <http://geoair.ge/project/yip-kai-chun>

³ <http://geoair.ge/project/pop-chess-palace>; https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Ausstellung_uber_Architektur_und_Ideologie_5076403.html

⁴ Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club, in: Adolph STILLER (ed.), *Between Caucasus and the Black Sea. Architecture in Georgia*, Vienna 2018 and *Long Live the Queen*, in: N. PALAVANDISHVILI, D. CHIGHOLASHVILI, M. SPLINT (eds.), *Tbilisi – It's Complicated*, Eindhoven 2019.

⁵ <https://chesspalaceandalpineclub.ge/2020/01/21/winter-school/>

⁶ <https://chesspalaceandalpineclub.ge/manual/>

Connecting Urban Post-War Heritage of Totalitarian Regimes in Europe: the ATRIUM Cultural Route

Patrick Leech and Laure Marique

Introduction

A number of European cities bear the marks of the dictatorships and totalitarian regimes of the 20th century. The difficulty of dealing with this difficult material legacy and the debates generated around these sensitive and controversial material witnesses of traumatic events has been conceived of in terms of “dissonant heritage”, defined in Tunbridge and Ashworth’s work (1995) as a heritage which contains “messages that are dissonant in the context of the prevailing norms and objectives or in terms of the dominant ideology”.¹ The ATRIUM project (2011–2013) and the subsequent cultural route “Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes in Europe’s Urban Memory” which emerged from the project, with its specific focus on the architectural and built heritage of these regimes, is an example of the application of this general interest in dissonant heritage to a concrete situation. Its strong roots in local contexts and activity within the framework of the Council of Europe may enable it to be a useful example of the way in which local citizens can connect with this dissonant heritage within a transnational, European context.

This article will try to illustrate the ways in which ATRIUM has approached this dissonant heritage since 2011. It will begin by giving a general presentation of ATRIUM, followed by a brief history and overview of ATRIUM’s origins as the result of a funded European project. It will then explain the importance of the involvement of local citizens in the management of this particular heritage and the “bottom-up” and integrated approach which ATRIUM has encouraged. Lastly, it will discuss the importance of the transnational framework in which the route operates.

I. What is ATRIUM?

ATRIUM is a cultural route certified by the Council of Europe through the Enlarged Partial Agreement and its Cultural Routes programme. This programme aims at developing mutual understanding between European citizens by supporting cultural routes which focus on topics of cultural heritage that operate in a European framework. Following an application for certification, a cultural route can be awarded the “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” label. Although there is an emphasis on sustainable and ethical cultural tourism, the primary function of the programme is to promote certain shared European values, such as democracy, human rights, and cultural exchange. The routes, then, function above all as *cultural* routes, connecting different European towns and cities within a single cultural frame, and not primarily as

tourist routes. Since 2014, ATRIUM has been a recognised Cultural Route of the Council of Europe,² one of the 45 such routes in 2021.³

ATRIUM’s focus is on the built architectural and urban heritage of totalitarian or dictatorial regimes.⁴ From Fascist Italy in the period 1922 to 1945, to the socialist societies of Eastern Europe from 1945 to 1989, it brings together different European experiences with the aim of uncovering shared historical elements and enabling citizens to come to terms with the material heritage of these oppressive regimes and their related traumatic stories. The novelty of ATRIUM is that this legacy is recognised as a part of a shared European heritage with a strong dialectical relation to the construction of democratic Europe as we know it. To reflect on this legacy, both local and transnational, the ATRIUM Cultural Route promotes critical discussions and multi-perspective approaches in the local communities around the themes of architecture and memory. The objective is thus not only a reflection on architecture or memory, but on the connections that can be made between these two terms.

Examples of material legacy of the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century in terms of built urban and architectural heritage can be found in each of the 18 member cities or towns of the route. At the time of writing, these are located in five different European countries in southern and eastern Europe: in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy and Romania. ATRIUM therefore focuses on the legacy of Fascism, as in the case of the Italian municipalities (Bertinoro, Carbonia, Castrocaro Terme, Cervia, Cesenatico, Ferrara, Forlì, Forlimpopoli, Merano, Predappio, Torviscosa and Tresignana) as well as in Croatia given the Italian expansion in the Fascist period (Labin and Rasa); and on the legacy of Communism or Socialism, as in the case of Bulgaria (Dimitrovgrad and Sofia) and Romania (Iași and Ștei). Albania, with its built heritage from both the period under Italian fascist domination and from the post-war socialist period, presents legacies from both types of regimes.

To understand ATRIUM’s democratic position and its vehement opposition to any positive reassessment of any totalitarian or anti-democratic regime, the statute of the association states in article 2 that its activity “is inspired by the principle of the promotion of the values of democracy and cooperation between peoples as the foundation for peaceful and civil coexistence. In no case and in no way does the Association accept expressions and forms of exculpation for totalitarian, dictatorial, authoritarian or non-democratic governments”.⁵ This article in its statute has been considered necessary in order to make its political and ethical position clear. This is particularly important in a context in which



Fig. 1 Ceramic on the town hall in Dimitrovgrad (Bulgaria)

some political nostalgia could interpret ATRIUM as a way of rehabilitating the regimes.

The management of the architectural and urban heritage of regimes can represent a significant challenge for any local administrators looking for new solutions to transform this heritage into an asset for the democratic and sustainable development of their communities. It should be pointed out, however, that ATRIUM does not manage directly any of the sites and has responsibility only for the running of the transnational association. ATRIUM is thus principally concerned with promoting and encouraging a critical reflection on the processes regarding the management of this complicated and dissonant material heritage, encouraging at the same time its preservation rather than destruction.

II. ATRIUM as a European project

As a European cultural route, ATRIUM has an important transnational dimension, but the original ATRIUM project had local origins, in Forlì in Italy. From 1922, with the rise to power of Benito Mussolini, this medium-sized provincial city underwent an important process of urban transformation and expansion. Indeed, Mussolini intended to build a new

Fascist city, a “*città del Duce*”, conceived as a showcase for the regime, a stopping place for pilgrims on their way to his birthplace in Predappio, a small town in the hills outside Forlì. This city has therefore a very particular dissonant heritage.⁶ After the end of the Second World War, the difficult nature of the architectural legacy of the Fascist regime was repressed and not openly discussed.⁷ In the early 21st century, when the question of what to do with this recent and unexplored heritage was raised, the response was mixed, with a rejection of the Fascist regime on the one hand, and the desire to promote critically this historical past and architectural heritage on the other. These two influences led to the formulation of the ATRIUM project, born as a European project with a significant European dimension. The project involved a wide partnership made up of 18 different institutions from eleven countries – Italy, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, and the Slovak Republic – involving nine local or city governments, two tourism development agencies, universities and research centres, two information technology experts and one National Ministry (the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture). The creation of this network led to the presentation of the original ATRIUM project in September 2010 in response to a call entitled “Development of transnational synergies for



Fig. 2 Former Casa del Fascio e dell'Ospitalità in Predappio (Italy)

sustainable growth area”, part of the South East Europe Programme of the European Union. From January 2011 to June 2013, the ATRIUM-SEE project had as its specific objective the foundation of a cultural route, with outputs including the establishment of a knowledge base, the construction of an institutional framework to manage the network, and three experimental pilot events. The objective of the project was to give birth to a cultural route which could approach the legacy of totalitarian regimes from a new perspective. In this way there could be a move away from the framework of traumatic memory towards a multi-faceted approach to the heritage as dissonant in which the material traces of regimes could be examined thoroughly and interpreted in diverse and complex ways.

One of the particular strengths of the original project lay in the multiplicity of stakeholders, who joined forces to provide a sound knowledge base. This was particularly important in a field as perfidious as dissonant heritage which necessarily treats a topic that was experienced differently in different cultures. This work resulted in two extensive research reports: the *ATRIUM Transnational Survey of architectural case studies* with 71 case studies in ten different countries, and a *Manual of Wise Management, Preservation, Reuse and Economic Valorisation of Architecture of Totalitarian*

Regimes of the 20th Century.⁸ These documents framed the field of study of ATRIUM and demonstrated the importance and need for critical research on individual architects, buildings or urban developments on a case-by-case basis. The construction of this knowledge base, as well as the institutional framework and the pilot events that concluded the project, were made possible through the financial support given by the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme of the European Union. In this way, European institutions, and in particular the programmes working towards transnational cohesion,⁹ demonstrated their support for a project which was, and continues to be, delicate, complex and controversial from a political and historical point of view.

The particular constraints of project funding, however, entailed some significant weaknesses. One of these was geographical limitation: the programme funding was restricted to the 16 countries eligible for funding under the South East Europe programme,¹⁰ and there was thus no possibility of including in the project partners from, for example, Germany, Poland or Spain. Another, naturally, was the finite temporal scope of funding, limited to the period 2011–2014, covering start-up costs but with no further financing to guarantee sustainability.



Fig. 3 Former Enver Hoxha Museum in Tirana (Albania)

We may add a further comment on the integrated approach to dissonant heritage. The original project, as has been mentioned, brought together a variety of different actors, including universities, research centres, local associations, tourism agencies, and local authorities. This variety was crucial to the constitution of an appropriate knowledge base for the route. But the different perspectives and interests of these actors made it very difficult to integrate them into a single workable governing body that could subsequently manage the route. Thus, the statute of the transnational association, the institutional framework which was chosen to govern the route, laid down that full membership was to be limited to municipalities and local governments, with other actors being involved only with subsidiary status as part of a ‘University and Research Centre Network’ or as ‘Friends of the Route’. Addressing the question of how to include different actors in the strategic running of the route, and in general their inclusion in the development of the management of dissonant heritage sites, remains a pressing concern.¹¹

III. Integrating local citizens

Since 2014, the ATRIUM cultural route and its members, mainly local municipalities, have been committed to the integration of communities in their work. Indeed, it is felt that active citizen participation and involvement is of paramount importance to ATRIUM: citizens can be the best interpreters or ambassadors of their own heritage. Local communities are therefore integrated as principal actors in the co-construction of new meanings and the reinterpretation of their heritage. Many of the projects carried out by ATRIUM in Forlì, for example, have invited citizens to contribute to a reflection on the issues raised. In particular, ATRIUM has funded and promoted a series of plays, exhibitions and short films on themes related to totalitarianism or non-democratic regimes and in particular their relation to architecture and urban structures.¹² ATRIUM has thus demonstrated its willingness to offer a variety of approaches to the dissonant heritage of the totalitarian regimes, especially through collaboration with artists, actors and video art professionals. A good example is the play *Il Muro/Die Mauer*, which tells the stories of the individuals who struggled to cross the Berlin Wall and

those who eventually brought it down. The play, the result of two years of research including numerous interviews, was presented to 500 high school students from Forlì.¹³

Another example is the “Totally Lost” project, a European competition launched by a local association from the Forlì area, *Spazi Indecisi* (undecided spaces). Professional and amateur photographers and videographers were asked to send in photographs or videos of abandoned architecture relating to a totalitarian or non-democratic past with the aim of discovering and mapping this heritage. The competition received a huge response from citizens, and a large number of photos and videos were submitted. The selected images were then exhibited in Forlì but also subsequently in Luxembourg and Gyor (Hungary) as part of an ongoing, open project.¹⁴

This example of an activity supported by ATRIUM shows that its focus is not only on new knowledge but also and perhaps above all on the promotion of a new awareness among local cultural associations and young people. In this, the Route adheres to the principles and procedures of the *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*,¹⁵ otherwise known as the Faro Convention, formulated in 2005. This convention follows a bottom-up approach by giving importance to “the role of civil society and communities in heritage governance as a way to promote human rights and democracy (...), people-centred, inclusive, forward-looking, more integrated, sustainable and cross-sectorial approaches to cultural heritage, and (...) innovative models of participatory governance and management of heritage”.¹⁶ In accordance with the Faro Convention, ATRIUM aims to involve local communities in the appropriation and creation of their own heritage. The purpose is to help to establish new relationships between local authorities, local associations and, of course, citizens, in order to stimulate the development of projects for the benefits of local communities.

IV. ATRIUM as a European cultural route

In 2013, the network involved in the original transnational cooperation project created the ATRIUM Association, a non-profit association under Italian law, and in 2014, ATRIUM was officially awarded the “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” label. Recognition on the part of the Council of Europe is subject to a re-certification process that all certificated Cultural Routes have to undergo every three years in order to verify the extent to which they still comply with the values and the development criteria the Council itself lays down.

The European framework for ATRIUM is significant in three main ways. First, recognition and certification on the part of the Council of Europe provide ATRIUM with crucial international legitimacy. The Council of Europe has its roots in rights-based international jurisprudence, and its recognition of the work of ATRIUM gives it precisely the international, institutional and scientific authority which is crucial to its success. It is only too easy to misunderstand the intent of ATRIUM and interpret it as an organisation whose intentions are to reappraise positively non-democratic regimes. Its intent, instead, as we have pointed out, is to constitute a valid scientific and cultural frame within which to be able to

critically assess and evaluate the enormous physical impact of non-democratic regimes in 20th century Europe. But the positioning of ATRIUM on a knife-edge between this critical historical viewpoint and revisionism is always a balancing act, and international recognition of the Council of Europe is crucial to this positioning.

Second, the European framework enables ATRIUM to work with other institutions and associations with common objectives. The support and encouragement of the European Institute for Cultural Routes based in Luxembourg has been crucial in this respect, offering the opportunity to work alongside other cultural routes in a variety of activities. Collaboration with other routes enables them all to benefit from particular synergies and the development of managerial competences through the systematic sharing of best practices. The European framework has also allowed ATRIUM to collaborate successfully with other informal groups such as the Urban Agenda for the EU Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage, and in particular with the Action 10 ‘Dissonant Heritage’ group.¹⁷

Third, the cultural routes programme and the ‘quality control’ exercised by the Council of Europe helps the route identify and follow paths of development which are in line with overall international criteria for cohesion and development. For recertification, for example, the routes have to demonstrate activity and strategic planning in five key areas: research and development; European memory, history and heritage; cultural exchange for young people; contemporary cultural and artistic practice; and sustainable tourism. The Council of Europe, then, functions not only to certify and legitimate the individual cultural routes (particularly important regarding a route such as ATRIUM which deals with contested and difficult heritage), but also to give overall orientation in terms of the activities and strategic development of the route.

Conclusion

The European framework within which ATRIUM operates enables local municipalities and citizens to collocate the particular dissonance of their local heritage within a wider

geographical and historical framework. The construction of a common European perspective regarding the dissonant heritage of its totalitarian or authoritarian regimes will be slow and laborious. But the European perspective which the cultural routes programme has offered to ATRIUM may be a significant step in this construction.

ATRIUM has enabled a number of European cities with their own particular dissonances to come together to promote a common heritage built out of these individual experiences. The cities that make up the network include, at the time of writing, Forlì, the *città del Duce*; Carbonia and Tresigallo, foundation towns of Fascism, along with Labin and Rasa in present-day Croatia; Merano, a city impacted by the Italianisation of the Alto Adige region under Fascism; Tirana in Albania, with its architectural heritage from both the fascist and Enver Hoxa regimes; Ştei and Iaşi in Romania, with their traces of the Ceaucescu regime; and Dimitrovgrad, a city whose name inevitably recalls the leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party. These cities may at times have tried to forget parts of their history, but the past has a habit of coming back. ATRIUM has thus created a space, a forum in which these contested heritages can be discussed beyond local and national borders. In this way, dissonance can be embraced as an essential value and a key interpretive tool. Heritage is a relation between past and present, and must be constructed by local communities themselves through the participation of local citizens. Through the process of appropriation and heritage-creation proposed by ATRIUM, the legacy of totalitarian and dictatorial regimes can become a cultural heritage, something which cannot take place before this process of appropriation. Following the methodological approach of the Faro Convention, which provides the framework for its activities, this process of heritage-creation with local communities, in a European framework, can be seen as the key to the activity of the ATRIUM cultural route.

Credits

Fig. 1: © ATRIUM Archives

Fig. 2: © Luca Massari

Fig. 3: © Hélène Veilleux (*Spazi Indecisi* Archive)

¹ J. E. TUNBRIDGE and G. J. ASHWORTH, *Dissonant Heritage. The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*, New York 1995, p. 30. See also T. LÄHDESMÄKI, L. PASSERINI, S. KAASIK-KROGERUS and I. VAN HUIS (eds.), *Dissonant Heritages and Memories in Contemporary Europe*, Basingstoke 2019.

² See Council of Europe, *Cultural Routes Management: from Theory to Practice. Step-by-step Guide to the Council of Europe Cultural Routes*, 2015.

³ Council of Europe, *Explore all Cultural Routes by Theme*, 2021 [Online <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/by-theme>. Accessed 08/10/2021].

⁴ The association was established for the purpose of “disseminating knowledge, protecting and promoting the European heritage both tangible and intangible – associated with the architecture and history of the 20th century, with special focus on periods marked by dictatorial and totalitarian regimes in Europe” (ATRIUM, “Art. 3 Purpose” in: *ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th Century in Europe’s Urban Memory Interpreted to Promote Human Rights and Democracy*, Association STATUTE – 2nd amendment approved on 16th May 2019 [General Assembly, Lastovo-Ubli HR], 2019, p. 2 [Online <https://www>.

- atriumroute.eu/about-us/atrium-association. Accessed 08/10/2021].
- ⁵ ATRIUM, “Art. 2 Principles” in: see footnote 4.
 - ⁶ See in particular Ulisse TRAMONTI and Luciana PRATI, *La città progettata: Forlì, Predappio, Castrocaro. Urbanistica e architettura fra le due guerre*, Forlì 1999.
 - ⁷ For this ‘minimalist’ approach to dissonance in the case of Forlì and Predappio, see Patrizia BATTILANI, Cristina BERNINI and Alessia MARIOTTI, *How to Cope with Dissonant Heritage: a Way towards Sustainable Tourism Development*, in: *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2018. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2018.1458856.
 - ⁸ Both these publications can be consulted on the ATRIUM website (<https://www.atriumroute.eu/library/online-publications>). Accessed 08/10/2021.
 - ⁹ The overall objective of the South East Europe programme, which ran from 2007 to 2013, was to improve “the territorial, economic and social integration process and contribute to cohesion, stability and competitiveness” of the countries eligible for financial support through the development of transnational partnerships [Online https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/programmes/2007-2013/crossborder/operational-programme-south-east-europe-see, accessed 08/10/2021].
 - ¹⁰ These countries were Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. In the case of Italy and the Ukraine, only some regions of the countries were eligible for funding (*ibid.*).
 - ¹¹ A modification to the ATRIUM statute in 2019 allowed for the possibility that universities and research centres become full members of the Association.
 - ¹² See the initiatives listed on the ATRIUM website under “Practices of Contemporary Art” <https://www.atriumroute.eu/about-us/chi-siamo/411-practices-of-contemporary-art>). Accessed 08/10/2021.
 - ¹³ See ATRIUM, *ATRIUM and the 30th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall, 2021* [Online <https://www.atriumroute.eu/events-tourism/events/359-atrium-and-the-30th-anniversary-of-the-fall-of-the-berlin-wall>. Accessed 08/10/2021].
 - ¹⁴ See Spazi Indecisi, *Totally Lost, 2021* [Online <https://www.totallylost.eu/>. Accessed 08/10/2021].
 - ¹⁵ Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, 2005* [Online <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746>. Accessed 08/10/2021].
 - ¹⁶ Council of Europe, *Enhanced Participation in Cultural Heritage: the Faro Way*, in: *Council of Europe Culture and Cultural Heritage* [Online <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/the-faro-way>. Accessed 08/10/2021].
 - ¹⁷ See the website Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, *Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Heritage in Europe* [Online: <https://www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/EN/research/programs/ExWoSt/FieldsOfResearch/dissonant-heritage/01-start.html>]

IV
Listing and Budgeting Dissonant Heritage.
Legal and Funding Tools



A Business Plan for the Buzludzha Monument

Mario Aymerich

Foreword

The Preamble to the Treaty on European Union states that the signatories draw “inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe” and requires the EU “to ensure that Europe’s Cultural Heritage is safeguarded and enhanced”. Europe’s cultural heritage is the world’s most diverse and rich patrimony that attracts millions of visitors every year to monuments, historical city centres, archaeological sites and museums. Moreover, this heritage is an important component of individual and collective identity. In both its tangible and intangible forms, it contributes to the cohesion of the European Union and plays a fundamental role in European integration by creating links between citizens.

Nevertheless, the rehabilitation and restoration of monuments and sites still has considerable potential for creating new jobs, and greater demand for nature and cultural tourism may create new markets. Sustainable tourism also creates locally based enterprises. At the same time, it is of vital importance to protect and secure the cultural and natural heritage from being damaged by conflicting commercial development.

The “7 Most Endangered” programme was launched in 2013 by Europa Nostra with the European Investment Bank Institute as founding partner and the Council of Europe Development Bank as associated partner. It is supported by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. Regularly (every year nowadays) a new list of 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe is published for their assessment, which is carried out by multidisciplinary teams of heritage and financial experts that undertake rescue missions to the selected sites and help formulate a feasible action plan for each of them.

Under this programme, the technical report corresponding to the assessment of the Buzludzha Monument was issued in November 2018. Among the most relevant conclusions, the report mentions:

- The Monument is currently in very bad condition. The purpose of this project is the recovery of the Monument: first, to return it to a safe condition, and then to bring it back to life by offering the possibility to organise different types of events.
- The primary target of the project is to convert the Monument into a multi-purpose venue free from any political agenda. It is very important that a team consisting of both experts and stakeholders is created in order to confirm this target and identify future uses.

- A feasibility study and several technical studies need to be carried out in order to fine-tune the final design to be implemented, as well as to estimate the investment costs required for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Monument.
- A complete Environmental Impact Assessment should be carried out. The recommendations generated by this process then need to be put into action under the responsibility of the corresponding authority.
- A comprehensive business plan should be developed in order to assess future sustainability. It should be carried out with the participation of international experts and involve a multidisciplinary team.

The business plan

In order to verify the viability of the project, the report states that it is necessary to prepare a sound business plan, which should incorporate the participation of diverse international experts and should cover, at least, the following elements:

Feasibility analysis, consisting of:

- Technical studies on the status of the Monument and identification of technical solutions to be adopted for its recovery
- Final design of the adopted technical solution
- Preparation of an environmental impact analysis, including mitigation measures during construction and best-practice actions during operation
- Strategy for carrying out the procurement of the works
- Strategy for implementation of the project, following the specifications of the final design and the environmental impact conditions
- Assessment of the necessary investment costs for the construction of the project
- Assessment of the annual costs for the operation and maintenance of the Monument, including the identification of all required personnel
- Technical risks assessment, both during the preparation and the construction phases of the project, in order to minimise cost overruns and unexpected delays; and including the identification of major possible mitigation and rectification measures
- Preparation of a marketing study, including:
- Analysis of potential demand, including tourists and local visitors

- Definition of tariffs and identification of potential subsidies
- Characterisation of main types of potential events to be organised
- Preparation of dissemination materials using different physical or digital/electronic support and the media
- Inclusion of the Monument in national and international cultural databases and networks
- Marketing campaign

Economic and financial analysis

In order to assess the economic/financial viability of the project, it is necessary to carry out an economic and financial analysis, which should result in the preparation of a cash-flow model covering at least 25 years (five for preparation and implementation; 20 for operation).

The main costs to be considered (per each year) in the economic cost/benefit analysis are:

- Preparation and supervision costs (project design, management and quality control)
- Investment costs related to urgent intervention
- Investment costs for the main works (the core of the project)
- Operation and maintenance costs
- Major repairs, renewals and/or improvements over the asset's life

In contrast, the main economic (intangible) benefits are basically related to: (i) the generation of employment (both during construction and during operation), (ii) environmental benefits (e.g. improvement of natural resources and/or reduction of environmental negative impacts), (iii) tourism attraction of the region and creation of indirect new business, and (iv) visibility of the importance of the Monument and its surrounding environment.

The costs to be considered for the financial analysis should include all those forming part of the economic analysis, plus the reimbursement of loans and other financial products (i.e. interest and capital; guarantees; insurances and taxes). In terms of financial analysis, the tangible benefits the project would generate are: (i) revenues from tariffs paid by visitors, (ii) incomes generated by the organisation of special events, (iii) revenues produced by other directly related activities (e.g. exhibitions merchandising), and (iv) subsidies and grants.

Finally, the identification of potential sources for financing the project (fundraising) should complete the final project preparation studies. In this sense, the report mentions that it is foreseen that the project would be eligible under the regulations of one of the European Cohesion Funds, most likely the European Regional Development Fund. Eligibility criteria would be justified by the fact that they contribute to regional development, cultural tourism promotion, environmental protection and rural development in deprived areas. It has to be noted that, if Bulgarian authorities are interested in managing and completing the funding of the project, the EIB Technical Assistance facility should be explored to provide technical support for the preparation of the application form necessary to obtain European funds. On top of that, the possibility of obtaining funds from different

international organizations (e.g. loans from the EIB or other IFI; grants from donors or other foundations) should also be explored.

Current situation

Since the report was issued, the Buzludzha Foundation has been managing the preparation of a high number of activities related to the above-mentioned elements. The most relevant of them have been explained during this seminar and, in summary, it should be highlighted: (i) the works carried out in relation to the conservation of the mosaics; (ii) the detailed digitalisation of the monument and some public advertising campaigns in order to obtain opinions/feedback from civil society; (iii) the preparation of many technical studies in order to identify the final architectural solution for the monument (in particular concerning the roof); (iv) the preparation of the marketing/tourism study; and (v) establishing contacts/discussing with relevant authorities about the future of the monument and its inclusion in the future Kazanlak comprehensive tourism plan.

Therefore, after the near completion of the Feasibility Analysis, the main component to be carried out in the near future is the Economic and Financial Analysis, which will be launched immediately. Within this context, two elements have to be taken into consideration: the nature of Buzudzha as a “dissonant heritage” monument and the opportunities that new EU funds are going to offer for the period 2021–2027.

The EU Urban Agenda and EU Funds

The Urban Agenda's Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage (of which the EIB and its Institute are active members) stems from the conviction that culture and cultural heritage can be important drivers for strengthening the social and economic assets of European cities and territories. Forming part of the action to be carried out under this partnership, the “Financial Sustainability and Funding” topic deals with the financial aspects related to investments in the field of culture and cultural heritage aimed at conserving and enhancing buildings, monuments and structures, setting up “cultural infrastructures” as well as rehabilitating public spaces, including interventions made in the framework of complex processes of urban regeneration. In summary, according to the objectives of the new EC regulations, the main objective is to find sound financial instruments for funding cultural and heritage actions. Sources of these funds may be either the EU Funds, international/national financing institutions or even private donors.

New regulations applicable to EU Funds 2021–2027

On 2 May 2018, the Commission adopted a proposal for the next multi-annual financial framework for the period 2021–2027. It is stated that these funds shall support, among other objectives, “Europe closer to citizens by fostering the

sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives”.

Under these regulations, “Cohesion Policy further supports locally-led development strategies and empowers local authorities in the management of the funds. The urban dimension of Cohesion Policy is strengthened, with 6% of the ERDF dedicated to sustainable urban development, and a new networking and capacity-building program for urban authorities, the European Urban Initiative”, a new tool for city-to-city cooperation, innovation and capacity-building across all the priorities of the Urban Agenda for the EU.

A key element is the incremental use of financial instruments. In this sense it is stated that “Grants alone cannot address the significant investment gaps. They can be efficiently complemented by financial instruments, which have a leverage effect and are closer to the market. On a voluntary basis, Member States will be able to transfer a part of their Cohesion Policy resources to the new, centrally managed InvestEU fund, to access the guarantee provided by the EU budget. Combining grants and financial instruments is made easier and the new framework also includes special provisions to attract more private capital”.

Buzludzha, a dissonant heritage monument

In the context of the Urban Agenda/Culture partnership, the Dissonant Heritage Action focuses primarily on the often controversially discussed cultural heritage of the 20th century, which is part of Europe’s recent history and identity today and is constitutive for 21st century Europe. The Action explores, for instance, tragic places and testimonies of war and genocide, persecution and resistance, escape and displacement, as well as monuments erected by dictatorship regimes.

“Dissonant Heritage”, often referred to as “uncomfortable”, “undesirable” or even “dark” cultural heritage, generally stands for parts of the built heritage and excerpts from history that presently associate society or social groups with unpleasant memories or even with horror. Thus, the concept of “dissonant heritage” not only describes the material legacy of history and defines the properties of monuments and historic sites, but also describes today’s perspectives on the past and its legacy. Moreover, it can also be understood and

used as a kind of umbrella to characterise the revitalisation of difficult elements of heritage that are socially controversial.

In addition, the Action promotes an integrated approach to develop places and objects of dissonant heritage by integrating them into urban, regional and tourism development. By following this approach, the dissonant heritage’s substantial material and immaterial potentials can be unleashed on various levels (e.g. to cultural education and to the communication of history, which both nurture democracy-building in Europe).

Strategies to successfully deal with uncomfortable heritage can only be developed in an open public dialogue rooted in the local context, which often contains an irreplaceable repository of knowledge and memories: Thus, the involvement of citizens and community initiatives as well as the municipal/communal engagement will serve as a backbone for implementing the Action.

Of particular interest are those sites and places that do not (yet) have a specific use or function as a museum or memorial, but are open to new, future-oriented uses. Planning and negotiation processes in this context are a highly complex and delicate matter, since meanings and interpretations associated with those sites and buildings might be contested among different actors and stakeholders.

Logically, Buzludzha has been identified as a relevant monument to be considered by this Action and, on top of that, the Municipality of Kazanlak is giving strong support in order to create a sound, comprehensive tourism plan, which would include other monuments in the area (e.g. the Ancient Thracian Kings Tombs or the Shipka Museum and Monument).

In summary, as mentioned in the technical assessment report, this is a very challenging project dealing with the recovery of a masterpiece of architecture and crafts, with evident European interest due to its historic significance, its peculiar characteristics and its numerous potential uses, and offering great future opportunities from the cultural, tourism and socio-economic points of view. Overall, so far, the path has been successfully paved but some interesting challenges still need to be overcome (namely the preparation of the Business Plan) in order to achieve the final splendid result that the Buzludzha Monument deserves.

The Undisputed in Disputed Heritage – Tracking, Assessing and Protecting Dissonant Heritage

Emilia Kaleva

This paper is directly linked to Aneta Vasileva's text and is based on the analyses and findings of our work on the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) of Buzludzha, more specifically the "Cultural Significance Assessment" part, co-ordinated with EHouse Architects, ICOMOS Germany, ICOMOS Bulgaria, and the Buzludzha Project Foundation. The following lines are about three stories of analytical challenges and intense working discussions but also about three stories that ended with a consensus of the team. It was precisely this consensus that gave rise to the notion of non-controversy versus the dissonant nature of the heritage in question.

1. Dissonance as heritage value

The first story and the first message are that dissonance can be a cultural value. The arguments for this claim are rooted first and foremost in the evolution of the concept of cultural heritage itself and the path of dissonant heritage as part of cultural heritage.

Negative and dissonant in cultural heritage discourse

The beginning of the 21st century witnessed a real evolution of the concept of cultural heritage:¹

- It included not only material but also immaterial resources (like traditions, customs, local cuisine, etc.);
- Its territorial scope expanded and today we deal not only with separate buildings or sites but with entire areas such as historic cities, for example;
- The heritage concept included whole new types, such as cultural routes and cultural landscapes;
- In recent decades, heritage expanded its temporal scope as well to include even recent historic traces, such as the Berlin wall for example.

At the end of the turbulent 20th century there was already another, very curious tendency. The expansion of the cultural heritage concept went so far as to include even such types that come into conflict with the core „classical“ idea of cultural heritage as an indisputable public good and a positive testimony to cultural achievements. The world realised that heritage can also have different negative forms. The traces of the atrocities and destruction of World War Two are such an example par excellence, kept as anti-achievements and warnings for the future. Exactly with this purpose, the Nazi Concentration Camp Auschwitz is protected at the highest

level – it is inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The same goes for the half-destroyed exhibition building that was the only surviving structure in Hiroshima after the nuclear bomb explosion. It is also recognised as globally important and was made into a peace memorial. In support of the symbolic idea, it was decided to preserve and maintain the remains exactly as they were right after the explosion.

Both examples represent the dominant European cosmopolitan approach to memory² that has been prevalent in recent decades, attempting to create an overarching narrative of the past that strives for a shared sense of identity after the Second World War. As Shauna Robertson says, the cosmopolitan memory represents the past as a moral struggle between abstract ideals or systems (such as democracy versus dictatorship), reaching out to 'the others' as fellow human beings and sufferers of evil. This approach is often proposed as the best way to deal with a traumatic past, using storytelling and sites of remembrance to focus on 'recasting social memory as a peace strategy'.³

The Auschwitz Concentration Camp and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, alongside the Berlin Wall, mark a relatively new group in the cultural heritage concept – the group of traces with negative connotations, associated with indisputable human mistakes, which we want to preserve just as much as the ones of indisputable human achievements. These same traces were once controversial – the Wall, the Camp and the building in Hiroshima were all debated as unwanted reminders of a traumatic past that should be destroyed. Today, however, they are indisputably important documents of a negative past, and it is exactly their acknowledged indisputability that is the common thread linking this new group of 'negatives' to the commonly accepted positive view of cultural heritage.

And then there is the emerging new group of dissonant heritage that is even more interesting because it is still at odds with the principal notion of cultural heritage.⁴ This is a type of legacy that evokes not simply different but highly contradictory attitudes and can be compared to the mental stress one experiences when listening to musical disharmony, as explained by Tunbridge and Ashworth.⁵ Today's post-colonial England gives the example of existing heritage (statues of slave traders, until recently revered as benefactors) that becomes controversial due to a change in public opinion about its significance. Completely different is the situation with the „fresh“ traces of the recent 20th century, especially its second half. They are seriously questioned whether they should be recognised as cultural heritage at all, and as a result, they also come into dissonance. These



Fig. 1 Views of the Buzludzha complex on the way to the monument at the top

are mostly representatives of post-war architectural modernism, socialist realism and socialist monuments which are denounced as ugly, utopian, or totalitarian, and sometimes more than one of the three at a time. The latter is particularly characteristic of the former Eastern bloc countries, including Bulgaria with its socialist monuments, which are among the most vivid examples of controversial heritage in the country.

Dissonance as a new type of cultural value

Is it possible to regard dissonance as a new type of cultural value, specific of the times we live in now? Our answer is YES and we believe that such cultural heritage approach finds its grounds in three key sources:

First, the ICOMOS Declaration on Human Rights and Cultural Heritage, adopted on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration (Stockholm, 1998), underlines that “the right to cultural heritage is an integral part of human rights” and that part of this right to cultural heritage is “the right to better understand one’s heritage and that of others”.

Second, the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005) points out that Europe’s common heritage consists both of “ideals, principles and values, derived from the experience gained through progress”, but also of “past conflicts, which foster the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law”.

Third come the principles of the agonistic memory approach which in contrast to the antagonistic and cosmopolitan modes, represents the past as a socio-political struggle for dominance in which ‘the other’ is seen as an adversary rather than an enemy.⁶ Agonistic memory aims to bridge the divide between different viewpoints by allowing for the possibility of conflict without fixing the lines between friends and foes. It does not try to create a single overarching narrative of the past but instead acknowledges a variety of contrasting memories, allows multiple perspectives, and promotes a dialogue in open-ended terms without a binding aspiration for consensus.

Applying the principles of agonistic memory to heritage conservation, together with the messages of the key international heritage doctrines, transforms dissonance in heritage from an unwanted memory to be deleted into a valuable

source of self-awareness and evolution advice. Preservation of cultural heritage is based on the perspective of future generations, for whom we are choosing what to preserve today. That is why it is a very responsible choice. And exactly from such a future perspective today’s controversial sites acquire a particularly high cognitive value for those who will treat today as history tomorrow.

Significance assessment of dissonant heritage: the Buzludzha case study

The challenge we set ourselves in this case was not only to contextualise and bring out the dissonance of the monumental complex (see Aneta Vasileva’s paper), but also to defend this specificity as a value asset through the standard national criteria for built heritage assessment. So far dissonance has been the biggest obstacle to a traditionally conflict-free narrative of cultural heritage and it is not present in the Bulgarian set of criteria for the assessment of cultural significance. Nevertheless, in our view it was important to apply the national criteria system to Buzludzha because at the time of the CMP work process the monument was in the process but did not yet have final protection status under the Bulgarian Cultural Heritage Act. The plan set out to assist this process by demonstrating that the site met the national requirements for cultural significance, including its controversy.

What did we do? We started with undisputed merits analysed within the conflict-free frame set by the national criteria, including cultural and scientific value (with indicators for architecture and construction value, historic, artistic, urban and cognitive value), innovation, social significance, and of course authenticity.

First of all, we examined the role of Buzludzha in the wider local context with high natural and cultural potential, as most of the existing cultural heritage sites there are of the highest national importance. These are for example the Thracian tombs, the Monument of Freedom on Shipka peak and the Shipka-Buzludzha National Park-Museum itself. In this context, Buzludzha takes the logical place of a next, most recent cultural-historical benchmark with spatial and visual relations to the others. It becomes a new layer, enriching the existing cultural heritage system.

Next, Buzludzha should not be regarded as a single architectural object but as a complex with its adjacent park,

specially built for the purpose. This is a memorial complex of high urbanistic and architectural value. It stands out with comprehensively conducted landscape and architectural treatment of the area, combining existing elements with newly designed ones. The intervention is laconic, gentle on the natural characteristics of the environment, with discreet but clearly distinguishable character. The monument is the architectural culmination of a successfully created scenario with great emotional impact, as was the project idea (Fig. 1).

The building itself has a very specific architectural image, influenced by both „lessons from the classics“ (as the author himself claims) and modern architecture – clean forms, memorable large volumes, exposed concrete. Our historical and architectural analysis showed that it is extremely difficult to fit this building into any familiar definitions and typologies or to connect it with a single architectural style or trend. It is rather an exception to the degree of uniqueness for Bulgaria, both at the time of its creation and today.

Innovation is another undisputable feature of the monument. It represents a rare architectural phenomenon – a monument with a function. The specific rounded form is a direct consequence of the idea for a hall for solemn events. The monument was meant not only for memorial purposes with a strong emotional impact on the masses, but also aimed at their active engagement during the visit through specific political rituals performed in the building at local, regional, national, and high international levels. Also, for its time and given the difficult working conditions, the site demonstrates a high degree of complexity, quality of design and construction solutions. There are novelties registered as patents such as the new red shpritz carpet material for walls and stairs or the golden enamel produced for the first time in Bulgaria.

The next fundamental valuable feature of the entire complex is the high level of artistic synthesis applied comprehensively. All elements in the architectural and artistic system are semantically and aesthetically connected, creating a complete, highly influential whole, as the initial task actually demanded. The complex as we see it today is a result of a multidisciplinary effort, combining architecture, art, and landscape in one harmonious composition.

All undisputed valuable features of the Buzludzha complex prove undoubtedly that it deserves a place alongside the traditional conflict-free cultural heritage. Only in each of them, like a thin red line, that multi-layered dissonance creeps in, explained by Vasileva. So, it is absolutely obvious that the dissonance is deeply rooted even in the positive evaluations. This leads to the conclusion that Buzludzha is significant not in spite of, but because of its multi-layered story-telling dissonance.

Thus, dissonance came to the very front, even in a leading position in the cultural significance assessment of the site. How did that fact affect the assessment?

The history of the monument is divided into two major distinctly different periods – before and after 1989, the period of its non-functionality becoming as valuable for its complex assessment as the previous one with the active original function. This is because the two periods stand for two equally important pieces of cultural knowledge – knowledge about the consecutive eras of socialism and post-socialism in Bulgarian history. Both their extremes are sealed in the

site and especially in the monument's image where the destruction has as much value as the original. In our view, this specific double coding gives high historical and cognitive significance to the monument as a double document (Fig. 2).

In this way, dissonance turns from an obstacle into a positive factor, increasing the cognitive potential, and thus also the present and future social significance of the complex. And social significance is one of the key assessment criteria for cultural heritage in Bulgaria. The controversy in Buzludzha provides material for reflection – important reflection that needs to be stimulated. Exactly with its inherent controversy the site becomes that valuable source of self-awareness and evolution advice, a tool for better understanding of our historical development with the whole palette of social contradictions and conflicts – just as ICOMOS advises in its Stockholm Declaration and also the Council of Europe in its Faro Framework Convention.

That is why the recognition of dissonance as a type of cultural value and including it in the assessment of cultural significance is, in our opinion, the key to the necessary public consensus for the successful preservation of the Buzludzha complex as cultural heritage.

2. Dissonance and authenticity

The Buzludzha case study showed that including dissonance as a value asset in the cultural significance assessment may affect the concept of authenticity and the approach for its conservation as well. This was our next challenge: introducing equal significance to the two different periods in the site's history reflected in the evaluation approach of its authenticity. The layer of the authentic pre-1989 structure became equally valuable as the authentic traces of its destruction (especially the deliberate actions to obliterate the mosaic head of the communist leader Todor Zhivkov). As with the Hiroshima memorial, it turns out that also in the Buzludzha monument cultural significance is revealed precisely through the state of ruin. This leads us to the next very interesting reflection: in order to highlight the composite cultural value of the monument we have to deliberately accept, even tolerate the destroyed authenticity of part of this same value – the one of the first period. This contradicts a fundamental principle in cultural heritage conservation – maximum preservation of authenticity, as stated in the Venice Charter and all subsequent international documents, including the Nara Document on Authenticity. The destruction of authenticity is generally unacceptable, as it has always been regarded as main evidence of the truthfulness of cultural heritage and the main focus for its preservation.⁷ However, let us think for a moment how unacceptable the very idea of regarding Buzludzha monument as cultural heritage sounded years ago – just as unthinkable as the idea of protecting the Berlin Wall at the time of its fall (Fig. 3).

In this sense, the proposed approach to the conservation and exhibition of ruins should not be regarded as an extreme idea that rejects the basic rules of the authenticity approach, but rather as an outcome of the immense development of the concept of cultural heritage in general, which we summarised at the beginning. The approach attempts in particu-



Fig. 2 Visitors at Buzludzha Monument

lar to develop both an adequate attitude and specific tools for conservation and interpretation of dissonant sites. If it is time to accept dissonant heritage as cultural heritage, we should also accept disturbed authenticity as permissible – of course, if this constitutes part of the value. It should be noted that in the Buzludzha case we are not talking about allowing further destruction, but only about preserving existing destroyed parts. These parts we should not aim to restore even if we have indisputable archive data (Fig. 4).

The question of authenticity and layering in the Buzludzha case becomes even more interesting and challenging if we look deeper into the periodisation of the monument's history. The second major period can be further divided into several sub-periods: The first – that of deliberate destruction, opposing and rejecting the luxurious glamour of the functional period. The second – that of gradual rethinking, represented by the popular graffiti sequence “Forget your past”, its repainted version “Never forget your past” and the ironic “Enjoy Communism”. And the third one, the current one – that of in-depth studies and multi-aspect analysis. It is also the time when a decision for the legal protection of the Buzludzha complex is being formulated.

There will probably be further periods. Despite its rigid concrete shell, the monument continues to evolve and provoke various modes of public perception, which makes the efforts of its preservation all the more intriguing.

3. Dissonance and the law

The question of what the legal protection of dissonant sites should look like is the focus of our third conclusion.

In Bulgaria the beginning was set by Daniela Korudzhieva and her important conclusion in 2015 that the Bulgarian Cultural Heritage Act does not recognise dissonance as an issue in the field of heritage conservation.⁸ Accordingly, the law does not provide for working mechanisms or procedures to take into account and deal with the real, albeit potentially conflicting, public opinion. Korudzhieva made a proposal to introduce a special status for dissonant cultural heritage with corresponding special regimes and procedures.

Reflections were taken further by our proposal for a new form of legal protection called “preventive protection”.⁹



Fig. 3 The missing mosaic head of Todor Zhivkov next to other communist leaders

This is a temporary protection to be applied when a lack of public consensus on the cultural significance (presence of dissonance) prevents the application of standard listing procedures. Preventive protection treats a dissonant site as a potential (future) cultural value, which is subject to confirmation or rejection, unlike standard legal protection or listing where the cultural significance is unquestioned. In order to allow proper conditions for this choice to be made, preventive protection tries to preserve the current state of the site without further deterioration of the material fabric by imposing the temporary prohibition of any intervention. The aim is to gain time for debate, for rethinking and reaching a shared public position, which in turn can argue for or against permanent legal protection – something like a moratorium on the site until its dissonance is exhausted.

However, the work on the analysis and cultural significance assessment of the Buzludzha complex brought us to the conclusion that dissonance should not actually be exhausted. We should not seek to remove it or wait to overcome it, but on the contrary to preserve and manifest it in its integrity and diversity as an important part of the complex cultural significance of the site. Dissonant heritage is the perfect tool for that agonistic dialogue that does not seek reconciliation but accepts that conflicts are constitutive and constructive for democracy.¹⁰ From this perspective, paraphrasing Leszek Koczanowicz¹¹, understanding, not consensus, is the point of desired convergence of different contradictory narratives and heritage perceptions. And to have a chance of understanding we need to keep the discussion going. To keep the discussion going, we need to have its object present.

Thus, gradually, through various stages in recent years, including the work on the Buzludzha case study, we have come to the view that dissonant heritage should be treated before the law in the same way as the other cultural heritage sites, both in terms of assessment and protection.



Fig. 4 Destroyed mosaic, revealing the preparatory drawing underneath

Let us hope that the evolutionary path of heritage theories will soon result in effective preservation of dissonant heritage. Because if we succeed, we have a chance to preserve the diversity of the post-socialist Bulgarian city and to enrich its identity, which in turn is a trump card in the context of the globalised world (as was the global trend until recently, before the refugee crisis in Europe and the Covid pandemic). We'll keep you posted.

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Credits

All photos by the author

¹ KRESTEV, *Heritage Perception*, 2005.

² See BULL and HANSEN, *On Agonistic Memory*, 2016.

³ ROBERTSON, *Agonistic Memory*, 2020.

⁴ This is discussed in more detail in Aneta Vasileva's paper in this publication.

⁵ TUNBRIDGE and ASHWORTH, *Dissonant Heritage*, 1996, p. 27.

⁶ See BULL, *Agonistic Memory*, 2016; 2020 cited in Robertson, 2020.

⁷ KANDULKOVA, *Authenticity*, 2015 and *The Original*, 2021.

⁸ KORUDZHIEVA, *Dissonant Heritage*, 2016.

⁹ KALEVA, *Contested Heritage*, 2019.

¹⁰ BULL, *Agonistic Memory*, 2020.

¹¹ KOCZANOWICZ, *Beyond Dialogue and Antagonism*, 2011.

Dissonant Heritage versus Consonant Heritage: All Equal before the Law?

Gregor Hitzfeld

People are usually happy to affirm their support for the preservation of historic monuments when they think of castles and palaces, picturesque old towns, splendid town halls, or an old flat in the chic turn-of-the-century neighbourhood of their city. They probably have in mind power and splendour, spaciousness and elegance, or the simplicity and solidity of past and better times. This heritage quite naturally has its place in our urban spaces and cultural landscapes, as well as in our collective perception and acceptance.

However, if you point out to people that the heritage of our ancestors, the history and self-image of our country and possibly the foundations of our social prosperity also include inconvenient layers of history that have left traces everywhere and which, at least from the point of view of monument conservators and historians, also have a right to exist and to be preserved, then these people usually show irritation, if not even rejection: “But that’s ugly!” “Is that what you want people to be reminded of?” “What if the wrong people misuse these historic testimonies for their unsavoury present-day goals?” What are we supposed to do with testimonies of wars and dictatorships, with walls, fences, bunkers and labour camps? With memorials and sites of self-representation of fascist regimes, colonial oppression, or socialist fraternisation?

Obviously, we have monuments that are loved or at least appreciated by our society, and monuments that are unloved or even rejected. These are two categories of monuments, if we want to call them that, which are perceived and valued differently. Nonetheless, both categories have their *raison d’être*, at least among experts. From the point of view of these experts, but of course also in the eyes of many people, we as a society, as heirs, as enlightened citizens, have the duty to protect both heritages and both categories of monuments.

However, despite this insight and this commitment to an inconvenient history, our monument inventories almost exclusively contain monuments on whose heritage status the public agrees, while there are only a few in the monument lists that our societies reject. Moreover, these controversial monuments, even if they have made it into the inventories, are mostly neglected, damaged or left to decay.

On the basis of this knowledge, this article will explore the question of whether this obvious discrepancy between dissonant and consonant monuments, both in the total number of listed monuments and in their state of preservation, is based on legal grounds that justify such a distinction. Are there gaps in our heritage protection legislation that do not even allow an appropriate equal treatment of convenient and inconvenient monuments? Or is the unequal treatment ulti-

mately based on the decision-making scope of the responsible authorities or the directives of political decision-makers?

To answer these questions, I would like to briefly illustrate that the international legal foundations, which are intended to ensure a minimum level of protection for our common cultural heritage, are formulated in such a way that they bind the nation states and require them to grant the same protection to their national heritage, without any distinction. I would then like to demonstrate how these international obligations can be implemented, or have been implemented, at the national or regional level, using the example of the Berlin Monument Protection Act.

The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict – UNESCO 1954

As the earliest international agreement of some acceptance concerning the protection of cultural property and monuments, I would like to begin by discussing the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which has been signed so far by over 130 states.

In Article 1 of the Hague Convention, we find a definition of cultural property. According to this definition, cultural property is movable or immovable cultural property which is of *great importance* for the cultural heritage of every people, such as architectural, artistic or historic monuments of a religious or secular nature, archaeological sites, groups of buildings which as a whole are of historic or artistic interest.

Depending on one’s perspective and open-mindedness, this definition may also include inconvenient heritage that has historic or artistic significance only for a minority. However, the inclusion of cultural heritage understood in this way in the scope of protection of the Convention is not mandatory. Depending on the sovereignty of interpretation, the “great importance for the cultural heritage of every people” can also be denied to the individual dissonant heritage without further justification.

I conclude from this that although the Hague Convention laid an early, international foundation for cultural heritage protection in the signatory states, the wording of the Convention is not so precise that this would sufficiently secure protection of dissonant heritage in our countries. Due to the barrier of “great importance for the cultural heritage of every people”, the Convention does not guarantee the protection of less outstanding monuments at regional and local levels.



Fig. 1 Berlin, Olympic Stadium, photo Matthias Suessen, 2020

International Charter on the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites – the Venice Charter of 1964

According to the 1964 Venice Charter, the concept of a historic monument, as defined in Article 1, “embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event. This applies not only to *great* works of art but also to more *modest* works of the past which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.”

The primary aim of the authors of the Venice Charter was to lay down generally applicable rules for the conservation of monuments. They focused less on a selection of what was worth preserving and defining the cultural heritage to be handed down. Nonetheless, according to the wording of the Charter, the authors explicitly refer their demands not only to cultural property of the highest value or outstanding significance, but also to “modest works” that have acquired cultural or historic significance “with the passing of time”. Thus, the Charter seems to include monuments that are unattractive, controversial, rejected, but draw their claim to be preserved from a significance that bears witness to a “significant development or historical event”; therefore, also for developments and events that are still stressful, that still divide or still are contested.

However, it must be summarised that the Venice Charter was “only” written by participants of an international con-

gress of architects and monument conservators. It does not constitute a binding agreement that obliges states to also adequately protect modest works and testimonies.

Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) – UNESCO 1972

The 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which more than 190 states have declared binding, refers to monuments, ensembles and sites “of *outstanding universal value*”. I dare to say that such universal value can only be attributed in exceptional cases to the dissonant heritage discussed at this conference. For the less significant monuments, the World Heritage Convention therefore offers no legal basis to demand protection and conservation from the competent authorities.

European Charter of the Architectural Heritage – Council of Europe 1975

With the European Architectural Heritage Charter of 1975, the Council of Europe proclaimed in the “European Heritage Year” that “Europe’s architectural heritage includes not only our *most important* monuments”. However, even if we want to derive from this definition that the Council of Europe also demands the protection of dissonant monuments, the Coun-



Fig. 2 Berlin Wall, East German border guard watching the clearing of the Kubat Triangle, photo: Neptuul, before 1989

cil only formulates a recommendation to governments that is not binding.

Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage in Europe (Convention of Granada) – Council of Europe 1985

In 1985, the ministers responsible for architectural heritage within the Council of Europe concluded the “Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage in Europe”, the so-called “Granada Convention”. Here, for the first time, the signatory states are obliged to comply with certain minimum standards in the legal, financial and personnel resources for the preservation of monuments and to take joint precautions for the protection of the cultural heritage: the monuments to be protected are to be recorded and maintained in inventories (Art. 2). The parties undertake to implement appropriate supervision and authorisation procedures to ensure the legal protection of the properties concerned and to prevent protected properties from being defaced, destroyed, or left to deteriorate (Art. 4).

However, according to Art. 1, the obligations of the Granada Convention explicitly refer only to “all structures of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, etc... importance [...]”. Provided that not only undisputed landmarks and icons can claim the rank of conspicuous importance, the Convention does not seem to make any distinction between dissonant and consonant heritage, but requires protection for both categories.

Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) – Council of Europe 2005

The Faro Convention extends the Council of Europe’s existing conventions on cultural heritage. It was presented to the Council of Europe member states in 2005: While the previous conventions deal with how to protect and conserve cultural heritage, the Faro Framework Convention deals with the value that cultural heritage has for society.

The Faro Framework Convention is not legally binding in the sense that it imposes obligations and requirements on the



Fig. 3 Berlin, State Security prison in Keibelstrasse, photo Bimarz

parties. Instead, it is a “cultural policy guide” that formulates recommendations and goals for the implementation of concrete measures and activities to be incorporated into national legislation in the longer term.

The Faro Convention also does not explicitly deal with our historic monuments and the cultural property to be inventoried. It takes a much broader view of the entire European cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it may serve as a basis for interpreting what we in Europe, or in the area of application of the Convention, may, but also must or at least should include in our common cultural heritage.

The Convention defines in Article 3 “The common heritage of Europe”: “The Parties agree to promote an understanding of the common heritage of Europe, which consists of: a) all forms of cultural heritage in Europe which together constitute a shared source of remembrance, understanding, identity, cohesion and creativity, and b) the ideals, principles and values, derived from the experience gained through progress and past conflicts, which foster the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law”.



Fig. 4 Berlin, buildings in Karl-Marx-Allee (formerly Stalinallee), photo Hitzfeld, 2018



Fig. 5 Berlin, former wiretapping installations on Teufelsberg, photo A. Savin, 2013

This definition of common European cultural heritage points out two things: Cultural heritage does not only include works of outstanding historic or artistic value as formulated in the Granada Convention, but also works that simply constitute a source of remembrance, understanding or identity. And this source of remembrance may be based on experiences made through progress, but also through conflict.

In my view, the Convention makes it clear that even dissonant heritage recalling conflict-ridden experiences has its justification!

And, the Convention continues in Art. 4: “The parties recognize that: ... (b) everyone, alone or collectively, has the responsibility to respect the cultural heritage of others as much as their own heritage, and consequently the common heritage of Europe (...)”.

The Convention thus declares it to be a general obligation for everyone, for all of us: even if the cultural heritage does not speak for us personally, does not reflect our own history, our understanding of nation, our taste in architecture, or our perception of the value of a monument. Even monuments



Fig. 6 Berlin, Palace of the Republic, photo Dietmar Rabich, around 1990

that mean something to others are to be respected! Or, in summary, even dissonant heritage has its justification!

And, through Articles 7 and 12 it becomes clear that cultural heritage to which different stakeholders attach different or even contradictory values has its justification and that the authorities and responsible offices must work towards a rapprochement, or at least mutual respect.

Most of the states of the European Council have signed the Faro Convention, including our host country Bulgaria. Germany, however, is one of the few states that have neither ratified nor signed the Convention. This is an omission that cannot be justified.

European Union

Last, I would like to mention the European Union. The EU has limited powers in respect of cultural heritage. The role of the European institutions is generally limited to financial support, coordination of joint projects and efforts, and sharing of knowledge. The EU has contributed to raising awareness about preservation, conservation and restoration issues, technological research and scientific progress in technological solutions. Furthermore, cultural heritage has been taken into consideration in numerous resolutions, recommendations, declarations or EU funding programmes, underlining, *inter alia*, the necessity of the protection of cultural heritage, its role for democracy, society and economy.

But no document of the EU has ever obliged its member states explicitly to identify and protect their national, dissonant or uncomfortable heritage.

Summary

Looking at the international legal frameworks in summary, it should be noted that there is no binding set of regulations that explicitly calls for the protection of dissonant, controversial or less prominent monuments. There are, however, recommendations. And with the Faro Convention, there is even a framework convention of the Council of Europe that sets far-reaching goals for the implementation of concrete measures and activities that are to be incorporated into national legislation in the longer term. On the other hand, the international regulations are not worded in such a way that they explicitly exclude the consideration of the disputed heritage and only protect the good and beautiful.

This résumé leads us to the question of whether it is possible that so little controversial heritage is found in our monument lists because the criteria for protection in our national or regional monument protection laws are too narrowly defined? Perhaps we need new or additional categories in the canon of our legal categories of significance in order to make the protection of controversial or inconvenient heritage easier to understand, and thus easier to support? Categories such as “dispute value of monuments”, as “identity-forming” or “democracy-building”?

At this point, I would like to briefly discuss this question using the example of Berlin's law on the protection of historic monuments.

The Berlin Monument Protection Law was codified in 1977, two years after the European Monument Protection Year of 1975 and on the basis of the recommendations of the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage. From the very beginning, the Berlin Monument Protection Law also included the inconvenient heritage in its scope of protection.

According to this law, a monument is a building or part of a building whose preservation is in the public interest because of its historic, artistic, scientific or urban significance.

Unlike many international agreements, the law does not require that the monuments be of outstanding, special significance or of increased value to the people. Initially, it is sufficient that one of four criteria is fulfilled: namely historic, artistic, scientific or urban significance.

The Berlin experience proves that especially the criterion of historic significance is sufficiently broad or leaves room for interpretation to also include controversial and inconvenient heritage under this criterion.

Because these monuments mostly have historic significance as documents of a period of time. They can be proof of an incriminating and burdened history, witness of perpetrators and victims, documents of state terror and human tragedies. They are memorials to what was and to what could happen again.

As the capital of various German states and empires, Berlin was unfortunately strongly marked by the changeable and ominous German history in the 20th century. Today, many testimonies to this history are listed for their historic and/or artistic or urban significance: evidence of the Third Reich such as the Berlin Olympic Stadium (Fig. 1), Tempelhof Airport or the Deportation Ramp Grunewald; documents of the division of Germany, especially the Berlin Wall and the former border fortifications (Fig. 2); the traces of the GDR's system of repression, such as the State Security prison in Keibelstrasse (Fig. 3); or the architecture of the Allies, such as the buildings on Karl-Marx-Allee (the former Stalinallee) (Fig. 4) or the Congress Hall, and the legacies of the Cold War like the wiretapping installations on Teufelsberg (Fig. 5).

However, Berlin's experience also shows that the historic, urban or artistic legitimisation of these unloved buildings as part of our heritage alone does not automatically lead to their listing and to their effective protection, because these

buildings do not simply have to be identified and inventoried. In addition to a profound knowledge of history, especially the history of architecture and art, the listing requires above all courage: *courage* to acknowledge uncomfortable truths and to face up to uncomfortable history; and courage to challenge an indifferent or dismissive society and its political representatives, to hold up a mirror to them, to remind them and to demand that they acknowledge their history. This requires independent, scientific specialist authorities that can act *independently* of the instructions of a mayor or governor.

This professional and scientific independence of the authority responsible for the registration is, for example, not given in Berlin, unlike in other German federal states. In Berlin, the governing mayor, the responsible senator, or state secretary can prevent or obstruct the registration of a monument by giving instructions to the specialist authority. This led, for example, to the loss of the Palace of the Republic (the parliament building of the former GDR) (Fig. 6), to the removal of the statue of Lenin, and to the years-long delay in listing the wiretapping installations on Teufelsberg.

I would like to end my discourse with the recognition that our legal foundations, be it the international framework agreements and conventions, or the national heritage law derived from them (at least in Germany), do not make an explicit distinction between dissonant/difficult heritage and consonant/easy-to-handle heritage. In fact, the vague legal terms, such as the categories of historic or artistic significance common to all laws, leave sufficient room for interpretation to cover and protect both categories of monuments equally.

Further, I conclude that the perceived imbalance in our inventories is mainly due to the fact that decision-makers find it easier to protect consonant monuments than dissonant monuments. In my opinion, this dilemma can only be compensated for if committed monument conservators, contemporary witnesses, citizens, universities, etc. do not give up reminding us constantly and repeatedly why even dissonant heritage must play a significant role in our culture of remembrance.

Credits

Figs. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 Wikimedia Commons

Fig. 4 Gregor Hitzfeld

Dissonant Heritage – Case Study: Estonia¹

Riin Alatalu

The territory of Estonia was under the control of foreign powers since the beginning of the 13th century. The turbulence of World War I and the collapse of imperia opened the long-awaited possibility to create a nation-state that survived till the makeover of the political map during World War II and the occupation by the Soviet Union. The state that existed between 1918 and 1940 restored its independence in 1991. Not just the recent past, but centuries of wars, conflicts between big powers for its territory, rank segregation between nations etc. have formed the attitude towards the legacy of the past.

Such a background enables to demonstrate that the values as well as the notion of dissonance change over time. A relevant example is the acceptance of the mansions of the former Baltic-German nobility – they were not appreciated by the general public in the 1920s because they represented the unjust past of serfdom and social inequality. After the abolishment of ranks and the radical property reform the manor houses were preserved mainly for practical reasons – they were turned into schoolhouses and nursery homes. The early

heritage protection authorities started listing them as national monuments, facing often little enthusiasm and low support from municipalities. Now, a century later, after many political turns, these architecturally and culturally interesting buildings are considered as the pride of the rural areas and there is regret that only one third of this legacy has been preserved.

The same scenario repeated in the 1990s when people despised the buildings from the Soviet occupation period. Now many of the constructions from the Soviet period are listed and great efforts are being made to preserve what remains of the work of Estonian architects, as well the memories of life during the 50-year occupation. The effort to avoid blank pages in history even if the heritage objects carry very dissonant meanings is based on the national trauma of the abolition of memory by the Soviet regime. Even if the past is traumatic, it is important to keep the attributes of history as they help to remember and interpret the past. The architectural masterpieces should be evaluated for their architectural value and simultaneously interpreted in their political context.



Fig. 1 Sillamäe will have a conservation area to protect the Stalinist-style architecture

In this article I would like to present some case studies and initiatives taken to protect and interpret dissonant heritage in Estonia, focusing mainly on the second half of the 20th century.

Traces of terror in living quarters

From the first decades of occupation a layer of government and residential buildings of so-called Stalinist style has been preserved, often decorated with the Soviet symbols and thus openly carrying the memory of times of terror and forced assimilation. It is common knowledge that the majority of these houses were built by war prisoners and the new apartments were reserved for people immigrating from other parts of the Soviet Union following the assimilation policy of the occupation. The conservators have in the past 10–20 years taken the brave decision to restore these buildings in their original glory. The most significant quarters of Stalinist architecture are protected either by the Conservation or Planning Act. The establishment of the Sillamäe conservation area to protect the authenticity of the former closed city which was developed as an industrial hub for processing uranium for military purposes is underway (Fig. 1). Booklets, guided tours, and building restrictions and regulations have given these areas a novel cultural cache and real estate value. Conservators and art historians have assisted the gentrification process of these quarters. Now, almost 30 years after the collapse of the Soviet regime, the negative ideological aura is almost inverted: Stalinism is explored as a curiosity, especially by the young generation. Real estate companies market the areas as valuable parts of the cityscape. However, one has to be very careful that the original narrative of the period of terror and occupation is not forgotten or rewritten, especially that it is not approved as normality, but explained in the relevant context.

Misuse of dissonance as an argument

In 2007, the Estonian National Heritage Board, the Estonian Museum of Architecture and the Estonian Academy of Arts initiated an inventory of 20th century heritage in Estonia.² The critical impulse for this study was the demolition of one of the symbols of Soviet-Estonian architecture – the Congress Centre of the Communist Party, later known as Sakala Keskus in Tallinn (architect Raine Karp 1985, Fig. 2). The case however illustrates the situation where the dissonant background is misused for other purposes.

Already at the time of construction, Sakala Keskus was given scornful nicknames to ridicule the communist ideology it symbolised. Its unpopularity was mainly due to the fact that, although it was situated in the heart of Tallinn, it was usually closed to the public. After the restoration of independence, Sakala Keskus was turned into a cultural centre and hosted many well-attended events. However, the excellent location attracted developers and it was bought up by a private company. The new owners planned to demolish the building and replace it with a combination of cultural and shopping centre. They used the haunting ideological past as



Fig. 2 Sakala keskus by architect Raine Karp was replaced by a commercial centre

an argument to remove “this painful reminder of the occupation” from the city’s centre. The disputes over the demolition of the building were caught between the recognition of the architectural values of the building and the aversion to the communist legacy it symbolised. Only shortly before its planned demolition did the general public become interested in the building’s merits – its unique design, high construction quality, expensive materials, and decorative use of lime on the exterior, Estonia’s national stone. The protests against the demolition reached considerable proportions – in a very short time almost 10,000 signatures were collected in favour of preserving the building, the Union of Estonian Architects protested against the procedure, a public demonstration was held and a number of articles were published in newspapers. All this was in vain. The modern shopping mall with incorporated concert hall and a cinema is a reminder of corruption in urban planning, as regulations and permits were repeatedly ignored during the demolition and construction of a new shopping centre.

Another interesting case is Linnahall multi-purpose venue also designed by Raine Karp and built for the 1980 Olympics. It received many awards at the time of construction. Linnahall is an example of listing something as a national monument (1997) to prevent the planned demolition. Linnahall is one of the largest buildings in Tallinn and situated on one of the most valuable plots just between the Old Town and the sea. It was not difficult to manipulate public opinion in favour of demolition by pointing to the original name of the V. I. Lenin Palace of Culture and Sport and the poor quality of construction typical of the end of the Soviet era. The city intentionally reduced the maintenance and the building was closed for public events in 2010 due to poor condition. However, due to intensive publicity, the architectural significance of the building has become common knowledge and the public is awaiting its renovation. The unusual support was provided by Hollywood as the recent movie “Tenet” by Christopher Nolan used the building as a setting, which ap-



Fig. 3 Linnahall, photo from the Visit Tallinn marketing album “Tenet Location in Tallinn”

pealed to new audiences (Fig. 3). The municipality however, has been very ineffective in finding potential partners and funding.

Neutralising dissonant heritage

In the former noble summer palace at Maarjamäe, Tallinn, the History and Revolution Museum of the Estonian SSR was opened in 1987. The Ministry of Culture at the time commissioned a mural that was suitable for the Zeitgeist, *Rahvaste sõprus* (Friendship of Nations, tempera, 1987) by Evald Okas. The high-quality artistic painting is full of Soviet symbols, including the coats of arms of the USSR and ESSR. The building was carefully restored for the 90th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia and the new permanent exhibition was opened. The premises of the museum, especially the festive hall with the painting, are used for different purposes and the content of the painting may cause tensions for some events. A solution was found through a special electronic glass-cover that can hide the picture by just pressing a button when needed (Fig. 4).

Next to Maarjamäe castle there is an enormous Soviet monument complex completed in 1975 to commemorate all who had perished fighting for the Soviet Union (Fig. 5). This memorial by architect Allan Murdmaa is probably the best example of modernist landscaping and the main commemorative object in Tallinn during the Soviet era. Even though it serves ideological purposes, its high artistic stand-

ard and emotional power are ensured by its highly abstract solution. Even the obligatory eternal flame is surrounded by a sculpture of just two palms placed together, thus avoiding direct ideological references in the form and conveying a universal feeling of loss instead. Despite these careful considerations at the time of creating the memorial, it is still a symbol of occupation in a very prominent space in the capital city. Although there had been ideas to reconstruct



Fig. 4 The Estonian History Museum at Maarjamäe, restoration of a dissonant painting from 1987 by the students of the Estonian Academy of Arts, Department of Cultural Heritage and Conservation



Fig. 5 At Maarjamäe the memorials to the victims of World War II from the Soviet period and to the victims of Communism from 2018 stand next to each other



Fig. 6 Bronze Soldier – a memorial to soldiers killed in World War II was moved from Tallinn city center to the military cemetery

the area, a memorial to the victims of communism by JVR Architects was opened instead just next to the Soviet monument. The memorial had been planned for a long time as Estonia lost one fifth of its population of just over one million to Soviet terrorism. The memorial was opened in 2018 when we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia. There were several debates before the architectural competition on the location of the memorial and there was concern if the neighbourhood of a Soviet monument would be suitable for a memorial dedicated to the Estonian people who suffered from the terror of the Soviet regime. However, the brave decision has proved to be very suitable as it diminished the message of the Soviet monument. A third element of the memory field is the cemetery for German soldiers who perished in World War II.

The tradition of having statues in public spaces is quite modest in Estonia in comparison to many other countries. There were a number of political statues from the Soviet period, mostly compulsory monuments of Lenin and a limited number of other personalities. They were removed at the time of transition during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The majority are preserved in museums. In 2007, the government decided to remove the monument commemorating World War II from Tallinn city centre as it had turned into an artefact of political provocations controlled by Russia and in the city centre these always caused a lot of publicity (Fig. 6).

The removal was carried out at night and it provoked the riots known as the Bronze Night. Since then the statue in its new and respectful location at the military cemetery has not been given peace as pro-Russian groups gather there to celebrate the victory day of the Great Patriotic War. The relocation has not served its purpose, as the national and international press continues to give the activists the attention they are seeking.

In conclusion, it is obvious that dealing with dissonant heritage is a challenge that requires careful consideration. Removing dissonant attributes removes the artefacts that enable interpretation of the past. At the same time, care must be taken that such monuments are not used to provoke tensions in society. Dissonance, negative memories or meanings must be faced and explained to new generations with balance and respect for those affected and their descendants.

Credits

Figs. 1, 5 and 6: Photo Martin Siplane

Fig. 2: Photo Estonian Museum of Architecture EAMAr 6.4.8:56 <https://www.muis.ee/museaalview/4087053>

Fig. 3: Photo Kadi-Liis Koppel

Fig. 4: Photo Taavi Tiidor



¹ The article was written before Russia started the war against Ukraine. The evaluation and protection of Soviet memorials has changed radically since 24 February 2022.

² XX sajandi arhitektuur, <http://register.muinas.ee/?menuID=generalinformation>

V
Epilogues and Recommendation



The Burial and Resurrection of Kiev's Wall of Memory

Sarah Maâfi

In 1981, in the same year that the Buzludhza monument was opened in Bulgaria, the Wall of Memory, a 214-metre-long funerary relief at Kiev's Baikove Cemetery, disappeared under a layer of concrete due to censorship by the Soviet Regime. It was only recently, in 2018, that a few square metres of the monumental concrete relief were uncovered again as part of the Kiev Art Week (Fig. 1), following a campaign by artist and co-creator Volodymyr Melnychenko to reinstate the work.

How did such a monumental relief come to be, and how did it end up buried and yet so close to resurrection 40 years later? The story begins in 1968, when the Soviet regime commissioned architect Avraham Miletsky to create the Memory Park crematorium in Kiev. It was to be the first facility of its kind in the country, as cremation was promoted by Russia not just as a practical alternative to burial, but also as a way of diminishing the influence of the church.¹ Attempting to create a new ritual was met with several obstacles: Not only did the Orthodox church at the time reject the idea of burning the body after death; it also carried negative connotations for many Ukrainians due to the Babi Yar massacre, where the Nazis had forced their prisoners to burn the corpses of tens of thousands of Holocaust victims.²

The architect had thought of the crematorium as a functional place at first, but ended up collaborating with the artists Ada Rybachuk and Volodymyr Melnychenko, who had previously taken part in a competition to create a memorial for the victims of Babi Yar. In the light of this painful collective memory, to reframe cremation in a peaceful and respectful way was a difficult and delicate undertaking. Therefore, the artists decided to create a series of various scenes that would accompany the mourners along the funeral procession and create new associations. They included mythological and religious symbolism such as Adam and Eve guarding the Earth, or the flight of Icarus into the sun, to remind mourners of the existence of unreachable places and celestial bodies.³

Together, Miletsky, Rybachuk and Melnychenko created a *Gesamtkunstwerk* – an integration of different fields of art and design – that combined architecture, landscape, interior design and sculpture in an ambitious whole, creating a building made of elegant white concrete shells embedded in carefully designed steps (Fig. 2). The most striking part of the ensemble was the Wall of Memory, a 214-metre-long concrete relief. Normally, such a complex relief would be made in parts in the studio and attached to the wall on site, but for cost reasons the artists worked simultaneously with the concreting and formed the steel reinforcements by hand so that everything, wall and reliefs, could be cast in one piece.⁴



Fig. 1 A part of the concrete top layer was removed in 2018, revealing the relief of a face gazing upwards

However, after seven years of painstaking work, the Soviet regime cruelly ordered the artwork to be concreted over at once. The reason was simple: The Soviet regime deemed it too far removed from the ideals of Socialist Realism. In a last act of disobedience, the artists did not pour concrete directly onto the relief, but carefully enshrined it in a protective mesh first.⁵

Being able to lift a small part of the sacrificial layer in 2018 must have been a vindicating moment for Melnychenko. However, we must question whether this was the right decision for the monument. Creating an opening may have left the relief vulnerable to water penetration, which could accelerate the hidden damage caused by a freeze-thaw cycle. In addition, as the artwork was created by more than one hand over a period of seven years, there is no guarantee that the concrete mix and application would have been homogeneous. One could argue that despite Melnychenko's successful proof of concept not all parts of the Wall of Memory will survive exposure – or should even be exposed.

There is a tension between Melnychenko's desire to see his life's work resurrected, and the argument of monument conservation to preserve all layers of history and accept the Wall's fate as part of our collective memory. Compared to Buzludhza, the Wall of Memory seems to present the opposite problem: It was not celebrated by the communist party, but wholly rejected by the regime; and it is not exposed to the dangers of the weather, but is quietly awaiting liberation from its concrete veil. Yet, we can consider it dissonant heritage: It is a simultaneously powerful and painful reminder



Fig. 2 The artist Ada Rybachuk in front of the crematorium in 1976, a futuristic edifice composed of concrete shells



Fig. 3 Ada Rybachuk standing in front of a part of the Wall of Memory, the scene “Defence of the Homeland”, in 1977–78

of the Soviet repression of artistic freedom.

Now, the future history of the monument stands at a crossroads. And thus, we must ask ourselves both practically and philosophically: If it were to be liberated, would its condition match Melnychenko’s hopes, or has it, in fact, already deteriorated beyond any chance of recovery? If we decided to keep parts of it covered to commemorate the events that led to its current state, which parts would we choose?

One could argue that the role of the conservationist is to intervene decisively before time and weather take their toll, and to secure what exists before it is irrevocably lost. In this case, where the creator of the work desires not just preservation but liberation, the role of the conservationist might be different: not to act fast and against the clock, but to slow down the decision-making process and assist the author of the work to act carefully before he inadvertently damages his own creation and thus the heritage of future generations.

The Wall of Memory is unique in that it does not allow for any visual inspection of the actual artwork from the outside. Minor invasive methods such as taking samples would involve drilling small holes through the sacrificial layer and into the relief. This could pose the potential problem of causing damage to the artwork, especially to slender parts prone to breakage. Sampling without knowing what lies behind would therefore carry an element of risk. In this vein, drilling a small hole through only the sacrificial layer and using an endoscope – a small camera and light on a flexible stalk – would reduce this risk. However, at over 200 metres in length, to cover the entire wall could prove immensely time-consuming. So how could one get a first overall impression of the condition be built up without being able to look behind the concrete?

In this situation, non-invasive methods could be considered, similar to conducting a vertical archaeological survey before planning a dig. For example, ground-penetrating radar (GPR) is a technology that has proven successful with

concrete and helps locate rebars and areas of increased moisture.⁶ As the artwork below the sacrificial layer does not have a flat surface, it could be anticipated that the signals returned from the surface of the relief would show more variation and hence be harder to decipher than scans of a flat concrete slab. To gauge the effect of the rippled surface, a model of the structure of the Wall of Memory could be scanned and used as a comparison to on-site results.

Another non-invasive option would be to use infrared thermography (IRT) equipment. Thermal images are fast and easy to take and have been used to detect damage such as delamination, cracks and voids in concrete by measuring the temperature difference between the intact concrete and the air pocket where the damage is located. Normally, it is used on heated buildings but can produce decent results on unheated outdoor surfaces on a day with a large temperature discrepancy between noon and night.⁷ Nonetheless, IRT is more suited to shallow detection and might only produce diffuse results beyond the sacrificial layer. Additionally, the thermal picture could be influenced by the varying thicknesses of the air layer due to the projections of the relief. However, even if it corresponded to the outline of the artwork and showed no damages, it would provide useful information as to the position of the different scenes. Furthermore, any method that provides results in a safe way is worth trying to reduce the risk of irrevocably destroying the artwork.

Based on these considerations, what could be the next steps for the Wall of Memory? Firstly, no further uncovering of the monument should be attempted until all other options for assessment have been exhausted in the order of non-invasiveness, from visual inspection and to-scale mapping, to IRT and GPR, and finally endoscopic inspection and sampling. Additionally, if not already done, a concept for protecting and draining the opening created in 2018 should be developed and implemented to assess and slow down the

potential damage caused when part of the relief is exposed to the elements. These steps would not only be in the best interest of the monument, but hopefully also in the interest of Melnychenko to protect his legacy for the future. Only then can the question whether to uncover the monument or parts of it even be debated. Overall, slowing down and investigating the monument first would serve both sides of the argument by tempering hurry with patience, balancing the known with the unknown, and supporting the preservation of the Wall of Memory by giving due consideration to all possibilities.

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Credits

Fig. 1: Arthur House
Figs. 2 and 3: Archive, UU (Ukrainian Unofficial)

¹ MALYŠEVA and AMMER, *Tod in Rot*, 2017, pp. 437–445.
² BYKOV, BURLAKA and RADYNSKI, *MEMORY PARK*, 2014.
³ GOROVA, *Wall of Memory*, 2018, p. 122f.
⁴ RYBACHUK, *Arhitektura i Ritual*, 1973, pp. 17–21.

⁵ GOROVA, *Wall of Memory*, 2018, p. 124f.
⁶ CHABAN, DEIANA and TORNARI, *Wall of Mosaics*, 2020.
⁷ JANKU, BREZINA and GROŠEK, *Infrared Thermography*, 2017, p. 68.

Who Said “Unwanted”?

Unpacking the Case of the Partisan Memorial Cemetery in Mostar

Aida Murtić

Yugoslav memorial architecture: heritage of a country that no longer exists

Although the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia ceased to exist as a political entity, its architectural heritage has not stopped generating as well as resisting multiple interpretations of the past. The Partisan Memorial Cemetery (*Partizansko spomen-groblje*) in Mostar discussed here represents a well-known site in Bosnia and Herzegovina that plays a prominent role in the network of antifascist and partisan memorials scattered across the territory of the former state.

Seeking to shed lights on the experiences of groups and individuals from different generations who are otherwise hidden from mainstream narratives about their own heritage, this article draws on long-term collaborative ethnographic research work and material collected through a series of (walking) interviews, participant observations and site explorations.¹ The study problematises and offers insights not only into the architectural potential but also into the political ramifications of the Partisan Memorial Cemetery today by investigating the tensions between the image of the Memorial created by political and institutional discourses and the understanding shaped by people’s direct engagement with the site.

The city of Mostar and its Memorial

Mostar’s Memorial was completed in 1965 to honour local partisans (mostly young people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds) who lost their lives during the Second World War (Fig. 1). The initiative for the construction came directly from the citizens of Mostar, war veterans and survivors, and gained the support of local politicians. Architect Bogdan Bogdanović (1922–2010) worked on the concept that took into account the urban aura of Mostar to design a memorial complex that “gazes at and watches over the city”.² Working on multiple scales – sculptural, architectural, landscape and urban – Bogdanović, together with skilled stonemasons from the island of Korčula, shaped an optimistic topography open to new uses and possibilities. Cobblestone paths and winding alleys lead visitors through the entrance gate up the hill to the grassy terraces covered with stone markers (also called stone flowers) with engraved names of fallen partisans. The focal element of the uppermost terrace is a circular stone relief recalling cosmological references and a fountain from which the cascading water used to flow down the hillside.



Fig. 1 The Partisan Memorial Cemetery shortly after the construction in 1965

Built without political, ideological or religious symbols and embedded in the surrounding landscape, the Memorial became much more than a space of public commemoration. Generations of Mostar citizens used it as a city park, public promenade (*korzo*) and a meeting place (Fig. 4). The Memorial eventually emerged as a prominent urban landmark. The collapse of Yugoslavia and the war of 1992–1995 transformed Mostar into a city whose institutions were internally fragmented between nationalist Bosniak and Croat stakeholders, so that the Memorial suffered from damage, neglect, and vandalism.

Public discourse about the Partisan Memorial Cemetery

An official act of recognising the importance of the site came in 2006 when the Partisan Memorial Cemetery was declared the national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although formally placed on the list of the historically and artistically most valuable properties of the state, the listing itself could not guarantee mechanisms of maintenance and management of the site. Partial restorations could neither change the perception of ordinary people that the whole complex was an unsafe no-go zone. The memorial setting,



Fig. 2 Broken stone markers with the names of partisans and neo-Nazi graffiti sprayed on the stone relief on the uppermost terrace of the Memorial in 2018

however, became part of young residents’ lives as they used it for informal gatherings.

It is important to highlight that citizens who openly cherished the site were dismissed as “(Yugo)communists”, welcomed with Nazi and Ustasha symbols³ sprayed on the walls of the Memorial (Fig. 2), while masked hooligans occasionally attacked the visitors and participants of commemoration ceremonies. From time to time, stone markers with the names of partisans were broken to pieces or even relocated. In 2015, activists found their fragments at the garbage landfill in the suburbs of Mostar. The role of the local ethno-national political elites in controlling the city budget and (not) providing regular maintenance of the site, as well as a possible complicity of the police in (not) prosecuting troublemakers deserve further investigation. Different civil society organisations and associations of anti-fascists have repeatedly warned that the active neglect of the Partisan Memorial Cemetery was a conscious political strategy for disqualifying the site. Equally alarming are the repercussions of the European Union’s acceptance of the discourse of “two totalitarianisms” resting on the equation of communism with fascism that legitimized the suppression of social dialogue about the heritage of everyday life during Yugoslav socialism, and on the Mostar Memorial itself. More precisely, the narrative of “two totalitarianisms” in synergy with local populisms and conservatism contributed to the ideological misuse of the Memorial, raising concerns among civil society actors about a silent acceptance of neo-

fascism as a tool for settling accounts with the Yugoslav socialist past.

The cumulative effect of the debates and events described above is an active erasure of the memory of the partisan resistance movement in the Second World War and transnational solidarity that characterised it, not only in Mostar but also in other regions of former Yugoslavia. The very existence of the Yugoslav memorial architecture has been threatened in many cases by the post-socialist search for political legitimacy and the rising right-wing sentiments, whose mutual interconnectedness is worthy of both scrutiny and suspect.

The Partisan Memorial Cemetery as an object of care

While public discourse about the Memorial was largely dismissive, one important aspect remained frequently overlooked: the Partisan Memorial Cemetery was an object of care embedded in urban experiences of a significant number of Mostarians and valued across communities. The most common reaction of citizens was to carry out voluntary work and clean-up campaigns, which not only contributed



Fig. 3 Installation by Marina Đapić inspired by the text of architect Bogdan Bogdanović (Translation: “I am scared of cities without memory, just like I am scared of people without subconscious...”) an exhibited in 2013



Fig. 4 Assemblage of family photographs taken between 1965 and 1980

partially to improving the condition of the site, but also helped to channel disagreement about the gradual decay of the Partisan Memorial that was deliberately left unclean, poorly lit and vandalised.

The political misuse of the Memorial as previously discussed generated multiple forms of sociality and solidarity among citizens, artists and activists who accepted the status quo of the site as an invitation to engagement and experimentation. They expressed the willingness to preserve, reactivate and promote knowledge and ideas about the Memorial, demonstrating that the site interacts with new communities of users while producing new civic and artistic responses. Over the past 20 years, individuals and groups have entered into dialogue with the Memorial on numerous occasions, choreographing their bodies, engaging stones in sound performances, or letting their brushes speak about urban and political matters in today's Mostar. These interventions have sought to make citizens' concerns about the Memorial in the public arena visible (Fig. 3). The poetic, visual, and performative responses that generated alternative claims about the values of the Partisan Memorial have not been officially recognised or integrated in any form of community-based heritage assessment.

Excluded from the decision-making about the present and the future of the Memorial, Mostarians have reacted by opening their family archives to show that the past they lived is worth remembering and that the Memorial deserves institutional protection (Fig. 4). Some of these analogue photographs, originally intended to capture occasional visits to the Partisan Memorial and quotidian details, are often digitised today, annotated by comments of their owners, and publicly shared on social media platforms.⁴ As such, they serve as crucial resources for understanding the everyday life

of the Memorial in the years after it was built. What became clear in the interaction with the owners of the photographs was that the associations with the life with and around the Partisan Memorial are today as much their heritage as the materiality of the site itself. Their reflections were not simply a nostalgic longing for the past, but a concrete and constructive thought process about the manner in which urban fabric changes.

Conclusion

In contrast to the dominant protocols in which the Partisan Memorial Cemetery in Mostar is seen, spoken and written about as “unwanted” heritage, this article proposes a shift in perspective and a new set of questions. For whom is the Partisan Memorial in Mostar “unwanted”? Who has the power to control the narrative about the Memorial? What kind of strategies and techniques are used to understand and put into context this example of Yugoslav memorial architecture?

By combining (memory) activism from below and scholarship from above, this study exposes the complexity of encounters between people and the site expecting to counter waves of misleading historical revisionism. It demonstrates that the Partisan Memorial today is much more than the political elites allow it to be – it is a place of remembrance, learning and creativity that additionally lives on through performative interactions and the creation of activist archives. For this reason, it is crucial to acknowledge that individuals, groups and organisations who engage with the Memorial in a variety of formats are active agents in creating knowledge and values about the site. Preservation



Fig. 5 The Partisan Memorial Cemetery after a partial restoration of the memorial complex in 2018

of the material integrity of the memorial complex has to be accompanied by a change in discourse that will allow a plurality of engagements with the site to be freely expressed and evaluated.

Credits

- Fig. 1: Courtesy of Agencija Stari grad Mostar
Fig. 2: Aida Murtić, 2018
Fig. 3: Marko Krojač, 2013
Fig. 4: Courtesy of the citizens of Mostar
Fig. 5: Antonio Radić, 2018

¹ I want to thank Marko Barišić, Alisa Burzić and all the contributors to the collaborative research project “Mostar’s Hurqualya: The (Un)Forgotten City” for creating an inspiring terrain of learning and action. For our previous work, see <https://nezaboravljenigrad.com/?lang=en>.

² Bogdan Bogdanović, in: Ico MUTEVELIĆ (ed.), *Partizanski Spomenik u Mostaru*, Mostar: IKRO Prva književna komuna, 1980, p. 37.

³ Fascist movement that ruled the Independent State of Croatia during the Second World War.

⁴ ⁵ The online community CIDOM (*Centar za informaciju i dokumentaciju Mostar*) offers unique insights on how citizens of Mostar remember and experience their urban environment. For more details, see <http://www.cidom.org/>. I would like to express my gratitude to the numerous members active on this platform for their support and trust in this research.

The Art-in-Architecture of the German Democratic Republic and the Paradigm Shift. A Few Cases from the Federal State of Brandenburg (Germany)

Paul Zalewski

The so-called *Kunst am Bau*, the *art-in-architecture*, also known as *public space art* or *art in construction*, is a genuine phenomenon of Modernity, a tendency aiming for a free collaboration between an architect and an artist in order to provide an individually balanced design and to strengthen the functional idea of a particular building. The integration of the aesthetic education has become one of the obligations of the modern state. The initial reformatory idea, however, was increasingly bestowed with a political dimension in the 1920s, and its misuse for propaganda purposes intensified after 1933. The characteristic realism-style was used during the Nazi regime and, later on, in East Germany during the Stalinist period. Thereafter, art and architecture in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) reoriented towards the modern international style. The following report highlights how Germany handled this modern legacy of the socialist art-in-architecture after the reunification. While we witness an increase of historic research about the art-in-architecture itself,¹ less exists about its current *heritagization*.² According to David Lowenthal, the relicts of the past undergo two types of transformation. The first type refers to the direct impacts on the relicts, i.e. protection vs. iconoclasm. The second type refers to indirect effects in terms of how they are perceived, explained or appreciated.³ Of course, we can speculate in which way both forms of transformation interact with each other, and in which order they come into play in respect to heritagization. According to Yaniv Poria, “heritagization is a process in which heritage is used as a resource to achieve certain social goals”, and this process is linked to phenomena “behind the pictures”.⁴ Who wants to achieve what in our case? The development to be explained in this paper displays some relatively recent bottom-up movements starting in different places but taking similar trajectories. Of course, their nature depends on the specific historic and social features of the particular place and setting. This helps to better differentiate the processes in question, as well as the cultural phenomena of East Germany.

Immediately after 1989, the general public did not show any interest in maintaining the art and architecture of the postwar modernism in the GDR.⁵ In view of the bright new epoch of individualism and neoliberalism, the whole legacy of the *collectivist society* appeared rather embarrassing. Even if some specialized bodies were commissioned to collect documents and conduct research studies⁶ as early as in the 1990s, the topic has attracted wider attention only about ten years ago, when some universities in East Germany started to engage in the debate by organizing well-broadcasted events and conferences.⁷ The energies to do so were fueled not so much by the disappearance of whole socialist sub-

urbs in the wake of serious town-shrinking but rather by the demolition of iconic buildings in many East German cities (Berlin, Erfurt, Dresden, Potsdam, Weimar, etc.). Moreover, besides the remastering of the city structures also the new regulations related to energy saving measures endangered the modernistic building stocks and especially the works of art attached to their façades.

This article deals with two cases located in the federal state (*Bundesland*) of Brandenburg, the region surrounding both former royal residences in Berlin and Potsdam. Although there are a number of other towns with a rich legacy from the socialist period, such as – above all – Eisenhüttenstadt or Brandenburg/Havel, Cottbus, Eberswalde, Schwedt, etc., our chosen cases clearly illustrate two quite different ways of the appropriation of the post-socialist art and architecture.

The first case is related to Frankfurt (Oder), a town on the German-Polish border that faced severe war damages in the whole city and underwent an almost entire exchange of population after 1945. Over time, the reconstruction of the city in the 1960s and -70s proved to be insufficient and did not provide satisfying living qualities in the public space. One of the means to overcome this lack were the efforts to decorate the city with small pieces of art. Thanks to Frankfurt’s status of a district town (*Bezirksstadt*) it obtained many works of art in public space. The biggest improvements of the city centre were achieved in the 1980s, when the erection of additional houses became affordable. This allowed increasing the density of urban structures and reshaping the concept of the retail sector. The main result of the new planning was Frankfurt’s central pedestrian zone covering a section of an old street called Große Scharnnstraße. This zone was designed to be an attractive, innovative and event-oriented asset of the city. Interestingly, almost 20 artists were commissioned to deliver their designs without any political expectations or pressure. However, the opening of the pedestrian zone became part of a huge festival, carried out according to the official propaganda requirements. Unfortunately, Frankfurt, like many other cities in Eastern Germany, lost almost a third of its population after the reunification. The pedestrian zone, a much celebrated and fully accepted project among the inhabitants until 1990, thence turned into an abandoned street with empty shops.

However, the bad condition of this space has become an interesting topic for the university. The first reflection of the problematic situation was a film produced by the students of anthropology in 2010. Four years later, the first text describing the history and values of the space was delivered by the author of this article.⁸ In 2017, the Viadrina University organized an exhibition on the socialist art in public space

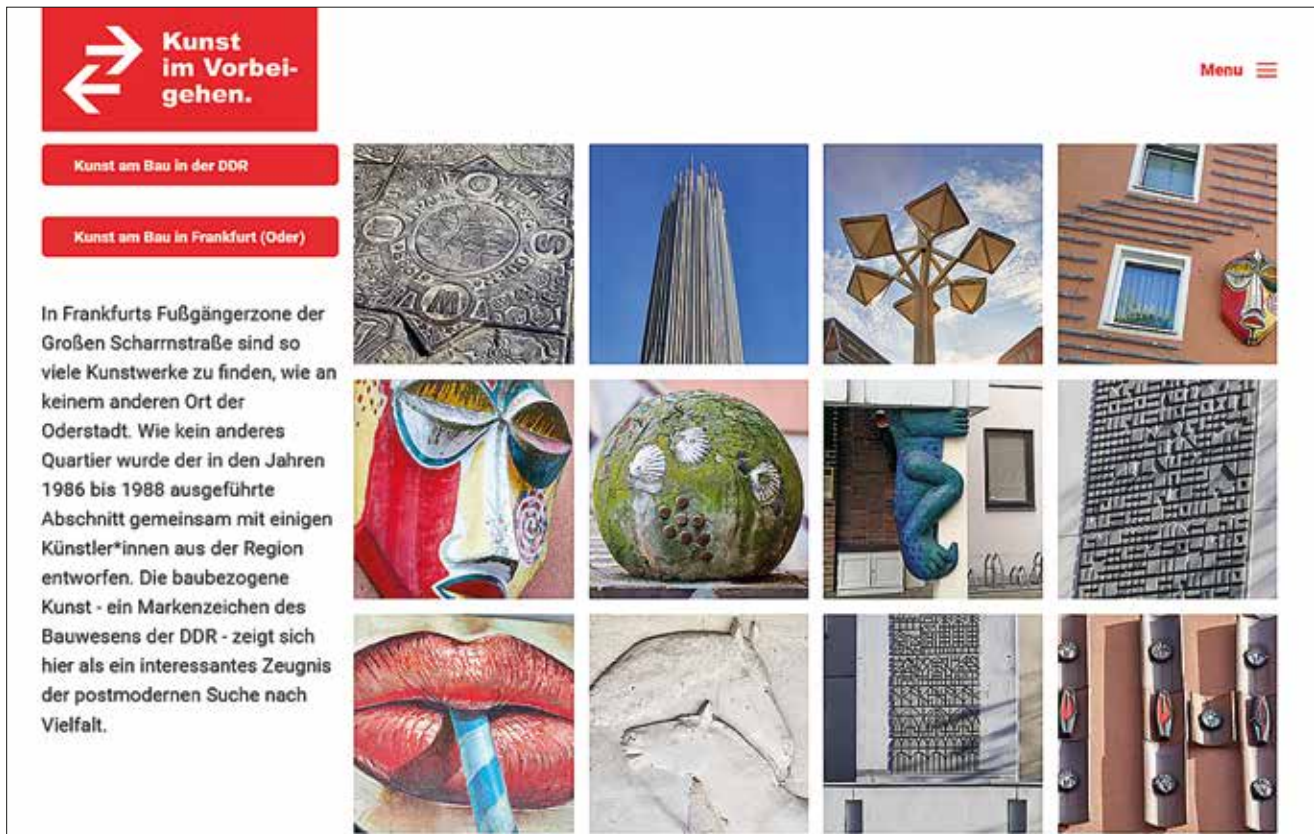


Fig. 1 The website <https://kunst-im-vorbeigehen.de/>, an important means of knowledge dissemination developed by the students. Screenshot by Paul Zalewski with kind permission of "WohnBau Frankfurt"

in Frankfurt (Oder).⁹ It attracted many inhabitants from different social backgrounds in the town. The final discussion involved the mayor of the town as well as the CEOs responsible for the building resources in the city. It confirmed the belief that the art works in public space had the potential to enhance the city's uniqueness and should thus be seen as an important cultural benefit for the community.

Since then, two years of coordinated action has been done. The cooperative administering the houses in the pedestrian zone now also takes care of their renovation, although most façades as well as the overall outlook of the street just need a brush-up without any significant alterations. At the same time, the students of the Viadrina University work on the critical approach and dissemination of the knowledge about the recent history of the city. Besides archival research they use qualitative methods of the social sciences by interviewing witnesses, especially those artists who had delivered works for the pedestrian zone. The outputs of this project include the website (Fig. 1) and the exhibition curated by the students; their aim is to open a space for critical intergenerational dialogue about the history and transformation of this urban space in all its different aspects.

Potsdam, the capital of the *land* of Brandenburg, was also heavily damaged during the war and then rebuilt in a socialist manner. Since 1989, thanks to the highly developed cultural infrastructure, Potsdam has constantly attracted wealthy people and thus become one of the richest communities in East Germany nowadays. The tensions between the pre-modern and modern old and new imaginations of the city

triggered many controversial debates. In 1991, the Council of the Town agreed on the principles of the historically oriented planning policy for the city. Following this agreement, many buildings of the GDR-period were torn down or partly replaced by reconstruction projects such as the Royal Castle or the Palazzo Barberini. Both these buildings were backed up not only by regular citizens but also by the members of the financial elite – mostly new residents – donating lots of money. This harsh turn away from the city's socialist imprint to a baroque one mobilized, of course, the opposite side of activists engaged in the preservation of socialist modernity supported by the locally influential leftist party. Indeed, the debate politicized quickly.

Within this debate, the question on whether or not to demolish a prominent functional building from the socialist time, the so called *Rechenzentrum* (centre for digital operations), in order to rebuild the baroque Garrison Church (*Garnisonkirche*), originally situated on the same location, became the most prominent discussion. The church, consecrated in 1732, damaged in 1945 and finally blown up on behalf of the Communist Party in 1968, was an important but difficult object. The main reason for its historic importance is the fact that it contained the coffin of King Frederic the Great, an object of admiration of the Emperors Napoleon Bonaparte and Alexander I. Yet, an even more critical aspect of the church than the link to the old Prussian militarism as a whole, is the symbolic contamination by the so-called *Day of Potsdam* on 21 March 1933 when Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of the *Reich*¹⁰. The *Rechenzentrum* was

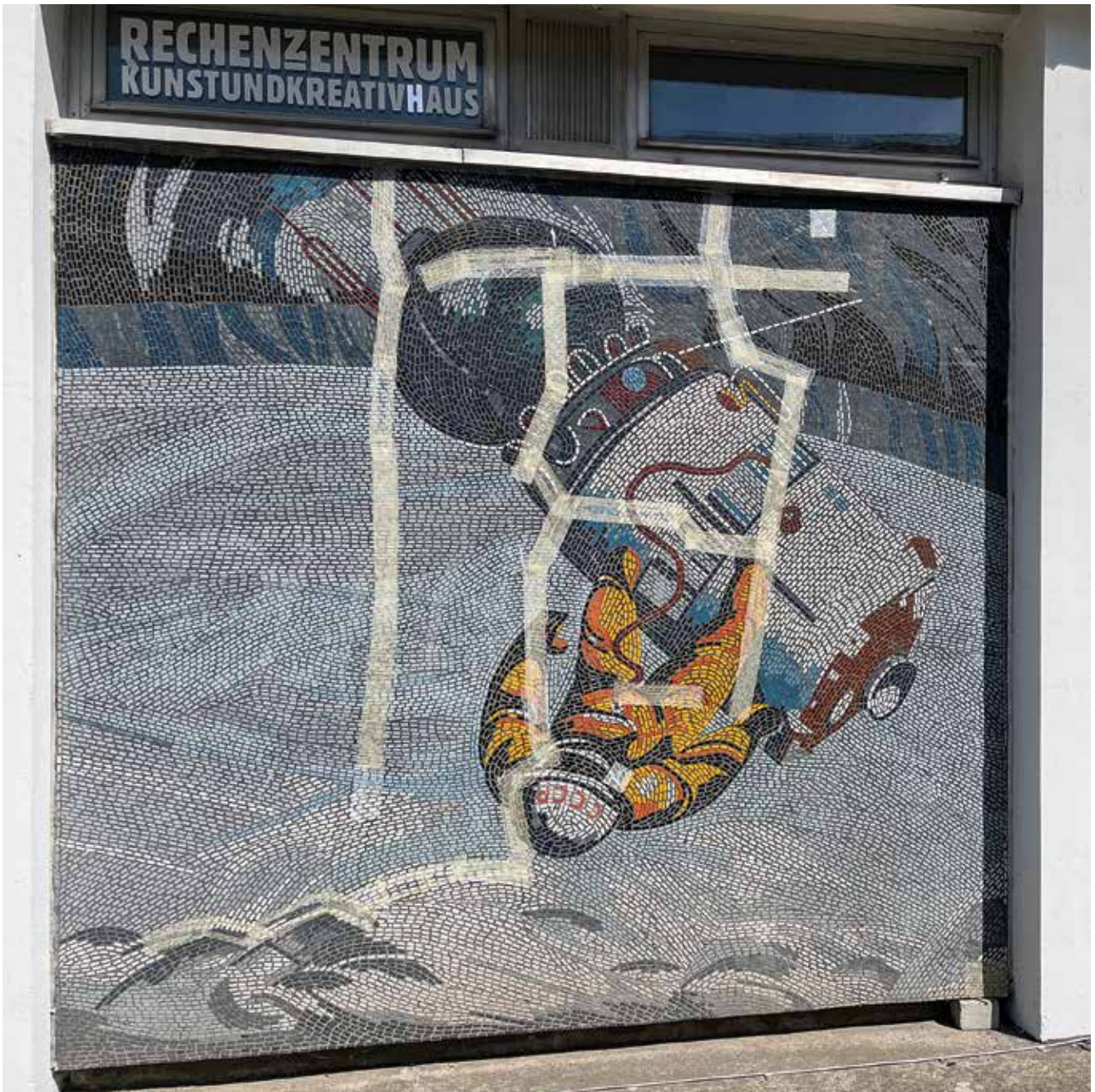


Fig. 2 Human Being Conquering the Cosmos, mosaic made of 18 parts, created in 1972 by local artist Fritz Eisel for the facade of the Rechenzentrum. The themes of the mosaics are dedicated to the secular notion of the cosmos and as such consciously exclude the religious interpretation of space, thus contradicting the sense of the previous sacred building on this ground. Since the beginning of the Russian invasion against Ukraine in 2022, however, the mosaics can be seen not only as witnesses of the Cold War, but also as an expression of the Kremlin's expansionist continuities and long-lasting imperialism. Photograph by Paul Zalewski.

erected almost at the same place between 1969 and 1972 by architect Sepp Weber and others. It was a humble functional building complex decorated with large-scale mosaics made by Fritz Eisel (Fig. 2).

The building complex represents an early development of the electronic and digital industry, a branch of fundamental importance for the centralistic steering of the socialist planned economy. After the dissolution of the GDR the complex was used in a provisional way. Despite this, great sections of it were torn down in 2010 and 2019, so that only

a small part of it – the one with the mosaics – remains up to the present.

For a long time, it seemed that the outcome of the battle between the opponents and the supporters of the church's reconstruction was clearly in favor of the latter. Not only the financial elite such as fashion designer Wolfgang Joop or TV-star Günther Jauch, but also top politicians including Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Frank-Walter Steinmeier were convinced supporters of the reconstruction. Despite the critical opinion of the Director of the Branden-

burg Heritage Authority and his skepticism about the reconstruction project in 2012, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture declared in 2013 that “the not existing church (sic!)” was a “nationally important monument”. The rebuilding of the baroque tower only 1.7 metres away from the socialist *Rechenzentrum* started in 2017, foreshadowing the demolition of the latter. Moreover, the reconstruction project obtained 20 million euros funding from the state and five million euros from the Lutheran Church. Critical observers see this process as a typical example of top-down planning, one that combines a patronizing discourse about aesthetics with the exploitation and privatization of the city.¹¹

However, a public petition against the reconstruction and against the demolition of the *Rechenzentrum* in 2014 marked a turning point in the debate. In 2015, the socialist building turned into a provisional workplace for some 200 artists until 2025. Meanwhile, even the administration of the town having supported the destruction in the past has recently changed its attitude now demonstrating its openness to dialogue. During a critical conference in 2020 devoted especially to this conflict, the large-scale mosaic on the façade of the *Rechenzentrum* was put forth as an argument for the preservation of the building. The debate is still open and the end unknown, yet, observers can witness a significant change in the appreciation of this piece of socialist heritage – despite the considerable alterations of the original building since 1989 and the lack of outstanding architectural quality.

In conclusion, when comparing both cases, we can see a common pattern resembling what we already know from the history of heritage preservation: the experience of loss is the starting point for every reflection and re-valuation of objects¹² although their speed and circumstances may be different. While we can observe a symbolic fight for the representation of particular epochal layers in Potsdam’s public space, Frankfurt (Oder) seems to be a rather archeological example, fueled by the curiosity related to the recent history of the town.

The discussions in Potsdam, indeed the most significant place for the history of Prussia, have a direct impact on the physical transformation of the city and therefore quickly attracted political powers. The city of Frankfurt does not have this type of explosive potential and the late socialist pedestrian zone with its different objects was not endangered but rather asleep in the last years. In both cases, the younger generation and the exchange of information as well as the dissemination of the problem in the press and via social media played a crucial role.¹³ The media allow creating epistemic communities¹⁴ aiming for a better understanding of modern local history. This relatively recent heritagisation of the post-socialist architecture and art in public spaces is not yet covered by the authorized heritage discourse.¹⁵ Although the communal authorities for heritage preservation in Brandenburg are aware of and interested in this phenomenon, they often remain unable to defend the genre against destruction owing to an overload of work and too many other pressing issues.¹⁶ In this situation the engagement of civil society could be seen as a much desired and welcomed support, and as a way to help increase the objectivation of specific protection purposes.¹⁷ Moreover, we can easily rec-

ognize some social goals in the described actions: the curiosity the remaining pieces of socialism still arouse today seems to be important for the self-definition of the younger generations born in East Germany after the reunification. In a way, it also brings positive recognition for the older generations that grew up in a completely different system and which has been absolutely discredited after 1989. This sort of recognition seems to be a vital gesture and symbolic means to help overcome many of the problematic developments and tensions that have come up in the wake of the German reunification.

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¹ Among the considerable number of recently published books and articles on the topic we only refer pars pro toto to two comprehensive works published by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR) in 2020: 70 Jahre Kunst am Bau in Deutschland (see also <https://www.bbr.bund.de/BBR/DE/KunstamBau/70-jahre-kunst-am-bau-in-deutschland.html>, consulted last on 7.2.23) and the online presentation of art-in-architecture commissioned by the German Federal Republic since 1950: <https://www.museum-der-1000-orte.de/> (consulted last on 7.2.2023)

² The term “heritagization” means: heritage making – the creation and recreation of cultural and historical meaning and identity – is done by different actors and at different levels, from institutions, museums, their visitors, to common people (see also <http://statusproject.net/heritagization/>, consulted last on 23.2.23).

³ LOWENTHAL, *The Past*, 1985, p. 264.

⁴ PORIA, *The Story Behind*, 2010, p. 218.

⁵ This becomes evident in Frankfurt (Oder), for instance, when tracking local press releases from the 1990s, which was scrutinized in the framework of the university seminars given by the author.

⁶ Such as the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space in Erkner.

⁷ For instance, the conferences devoted to the Ostmoderne provided by the Bauhaus-University Weimar in 2011 and

2014 or the international conference at the German Historical Museum organized by the European University Viadrina in 2012.

⁸ ZALEWSKI, Frankfurt an der Oder, Große Scharnstrasse, 2014, pp. 141–153.

⁹ ZALEWSKI, Entstaubt: baubezogene Kunst der DDR, 2017, pp. 88 f.

¹⁰ GRÜNZIG, *Deutschtum und Vaterland*, 2017 and EPKENHANS, WINKEL (eds.), *Die Garnisonskirche in Potsdam*, 2013.

¹¹ LUTZ, TOMCZAK, ZSCHOGGE, *Make Potsdam Great Again*, 2018, pp. 231–244.

¹² BOGNER, DOLFF-BONEKÄMPER, MEIER (eds.), *Collecting Loss*, 2021.

¹³ For example via: <https://www.facebook.com/ReZePotsdam> (consulted last on 23.2.23)

¹⁴ HOLZNER, *Reality Construction*, 1968.

¹⁵ SMITH, *Uses of Heritage*, 2006.

¹⁶ This is the result of an extensive empiric survey in which more than 30 communal authorities from Brandenburg and (East) Berlin took part and which was conducted under the supervision of the author. See DAMMANN, *Wandgebundene Dekorationen der DDR-Zeit*, 2017.

¹⁷ ZALEWSKI, *Problematik der Objektivierung*, 2017, pp. 271–276.

**Recommendations of the Dissonant Heritage
Conference, 22–23 July 2021, Kazanlak, Bulgaria**

ICOMOS

international council on monuments and sites

ПРЕПОРЪКИ

на конференцията посветена на

Дисонантното културното наследство

проведена в Казанлък на 22 и 23 юли 2021

Участниците в конференцията на ИКОМОС:

- Имат предвид значението на валидните до днес принципи и дух на Всеобщата декларация за правата на човека (1948 г.) за развитието на демократичните общества, както актуалността на Декларацията на ИКОМОС за правата на човека и културното наследство, по случай 50-ата годишнина на Всеобщата декларация (Стокхолм, 1998 г.);
- Убедени са в значението на баланса между правата и отговорностите на всеки по отношение на наследството, дефинирани в Рамковата конвенция за стойността на културното наследство за обществото на Съвета на Европа (Фаро, 2005 г.);
- Припомнят препоръките в заключителния документ от Конференцията на тема „Правата на човека и културното наследство“, проведена в чест на 60-ата годишнина от приемането на Всеобщата организация на правата на човека (София, 2009 г.);
- Позовават се на Декларацията на БНК на ИКОМОС във връзка с премахването на монумента „1300 години България“ пред НДК, София, 2017;
- Имат предвид документа на ИКОМОС относно "Оценки на кандидатури за световно наследство, свързани с обекти, асоциирани със спомени за скорошни конфликти" (2018 г.);
- Позовават се на Европейските принципи на качеството при финансирани от Европейския съюз интервенции във физическата среда с потенциално въздействие върху културното наследство, приети от Генералната асамблея на ИКОМОС през декември 2020 година;
- Споделят призива на Инициативата за социалистическото наследство на Научния комитет на ИКОМОС за опазване на наследството на XX век (ISC 20C) за признаване и опазване на произведения на архитектурата и изкуството от времето на социализма като културни забележителности и исторически паметници, за събиране и предоставяне на информацията относно местата и обектите, текущото състояние на тяхното опазване, историята на проектирането и строителството на социалистическото наследство.

В резултат на проведените дискусии участниците в конференцията се обединиха около следното:

- Разбират, че съхраняването на културното наследство е неделима част от процеса на развитие на обществото и неговото устойчиво развитие;
- Съгласни са, че наследството е неделимо, и приемат, че дисонантно е това наследство, на което различни общности приписват противоречиви стойности, произтичащи от тяхната колективна памет и правото им на наследство;

- Оценяват положително приноса на Конференцията като стимулираща международното партньорство в опознаването и опазването на дисонантното наследство като интегрална част от културното наследство;
- Подкрепят опазването на монумента на връх Бузлуджа като необходим и добър пример за интердисциплинарна екипна работа за опазване на дисонантно наследство;
- И отправят следните **ПРЕПОРЪКИ**:

Към националните системи за опазване на културно наследство:

- Да създадат процедури на помирение за справедливо управление на дисонантното наследство, като осигурят неговата превантивна защита в процеса на помирение;
- Публичният дебат да бъде широко прилаган за идентифициране на различията и за дефиниране на аспектите на дисонантност в спорните обекти;
- Да възприемат принцип на равнопоставеност на дисонантните и останалите обекти относно тяхната юридическа защита, опазване и управление като културно наследство.

Към професионалните общности, работещи в полето на изследванията, проектантската практика и образованието:

- Архитектурната интерпретация, приложена при дисонантни обекти, не бива да заличава, намалява или омаловажава дисонантността, а напротив - следва да я съхранява, изявява и тълкува, и по този начин да допринесе за тяхното по-добро разбиране и устойчиво опазване;
- Проектите трябва да съблюдават автентичността на историческите свидетелства, които отразяват историческия живот на ценността;
- Да се поощрява синтезът на архитектурата с други изкуства, културни дейности, науки и технологии;
- Подходът, ориентиран към хората, следва да се прилага широко като основен принцип и ключов фактор за успеха на всяко професионално усилие в областта на опазването на културното наследство, особено по отношение на дисонантното наследство.

Към обществото като цяло:

- Да отстоява своите права на културно наследство, като приема своите отговорности за разбиране и уважение към културното наследство на другите;
- Да разпознава дисонантните обекти като стимул за граждански дебат и публичен диалог, например чрез свързване с инициативата "Нов европейски Баухаус" и нейния широк диалог за начина, по който изграждаме нашите градове и живеем в тях;
- Да стимулира повишаване на познанията и чувствителността на децата и младежите чрез адаптирани образователни програми, към разбиране и опазване на дисонантното наследство.
- Да има предвид, че са спешно необходими разумни и съгласувани действия на всички професионални и политически нива, за да се предотврати необратимата загуба на дисонантни обекти на наследството в Централна и Източна Европа от периода след Втората световна война.

Текстът е подготвен и разгледан от името на участниците в конференцията от организаторите, представлявани от Емилия Кълева и Мариела Маламатенова (ИКОМОС България), Джон Зисемер (ИКОМОС Германия) и Радослав Илиев (Фондация "Проект Бузлуджа").

Казанлък, 23 юли 2021

ICOMOS

international council on monuments and sites

Recommendations
of the

Dissonant Heritage Conference

22-23 July 2021, Kazanlak, Bulgaria

The participants of the ICOMOS conference „In Restauro: Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe – Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites“:

- Bear in mind the relevance of the principles and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) still valid today for the development of democratic societies, as well as the relevance of the ICOMOS Declaration on Human Rights and Cultural Heritage, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration (Stockholm, 1998);
- Are convinced of the importance of the balance between everyone's rights and responsibilities with regard to heritage as defined in the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005);
- Recall the recommendations in the outcome document of the Conference on Human Rights and Cultural Heritage held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Sofia, 2009);
- Refer to the Declaration of ICOMOS Bulgaria about the dismantling of the 1300 years Bulgaria monument in Sofia, 2017;
- Reflect the ICOMOS discussion paper on the "Evaluations of World Heritage Nominations related to Sites Associated with Memories of Recent Conflicts" (2018);
- Refer to the „European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with potential impact on Cultural Heritage“ and with strategic cultural heritage protection policies, adopted by the ICOMOS General Assembly in 2020;
- Share the plea of the Socialist Heritage Initiative within the ICOMOS Scientific Committee for 20th Century Heritage conservation (ISC 20C) for the recognition and protection of works of architecture and art from socialist times as cultural landmarks and historical monuments, collecting and providing information on locations and sites, current conditions of conservation, about the planning and building history of the socialist legacy.

As a result of the discussions held, the conference participants agreed on the following:

- They realize that the preservation of cultural heritage is an integral part of the process of societal development and a prerequisite for its sustainability;
- They agree that heritage is indivisible and that different communities attribute contradictory values to dissonant heritage, arising from their collective memory and their right to heritage;

- They appreciate positively the contribution of the conference as stimulating international partnership in exploring and preserving dissonant heritage as an integral part of cultural heritage;
- They support the preservation of the Buzludzha monument as a necessary case study and a good example of interdisciplinary teamwork towards the preservation of dissonant heritage.;
- And they make the following **RECOMMENDATIONS**:

To national systems for the protection of cultural heritage

- To establish reconciliation procedures for the equitable management of dissonant heritage and ensure preventive conservation of dissonant heritage;
- To widely apply a public debate to identify differences and to define aspects of dissonance in disputed sites;
- To adopt principles of equal treatment of dissonant and other heritage sites on their identification, legal protection, conservation and management as cultural heritage.

To the professional communities working in research, design practice and education

- Architectural interpretation applied to dissonant sites should not erase, decrease or diminish dissonance, but on the contrary should preserve, express and interpret it and thus contribute to a better understanding and sustainable preservation of dissonant heritage sites;
- Designs should respect the authenticity of historical evidence that reflects the diverse history of the cultural property;
- A synthesis of architecture with other arts, cultural activities, sciences and technologies should be encouraged;
- People-centred approach should be broadly applied as a basic principle and a key factor for the success of any professional effort in the field of cultural heritage conservation, especially with regard to dissonant heritage.

To societies in general

- To assert people's cultural heritage rights, accepting their responsibilities to respect the cultural heritage of others;
- To recognize dissonant sites as a stimulus for civic debate and public dialogue, e.g. by linking with the New European Bauhaus initiative and its broad dialogue on how we build our cities and live in them;
- To stimulate the knowledge and sensitization of children and young people, through adapted educational programmes, towards a deeper understanding of the cultural value of the diversity of heritage layers and the preservation of dissonant heritage.
- To bear in mind that wise and concerted action at all professional and policy levels is urgently needed in order to prevent the irreversible loss of post-WW2 dissonant heritage monuments in Central and Eastern Europe.

Prepared and reviewed on behalf of the conference participants by the conference organisers represented by Radoslav Iliev (Buzludzha Project Foundation), Emilia Kaleva with Mariela Malamatenova (ICOMOS Bulgaria), and John Ziesemer (ICOMOS Germany).

Kazanlak, 23 July 2021

Conference Programme

Thursday, 22 July 2021

09:00

Welcome and Introduction

Chair: Jörg Haspel (ICOMOS Germany)

Welcomes

- Co-Organiser: Gabriela Semova-Koleva, President of ICOMOS Bulgaria
- Patron and Host: Galina Stoyanova, Mayor of Kazanlak Municipality

Goodwill Messages

- EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, EU Commission for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth (tbc)
- Ambassador Christoph Eichhorn, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Sofia
- State Secretary Kathrin Bohle, EU Urban Agenda/Partnership Culture and Cultural Heritage, German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community
- Antoine Wilmering, Senior Program Officer, Getty Foundation
- Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović, Secretary-General, Europa Nostra

Introduction

- Buzludzha Project: The Initiative | Dora Ivanova (Buzludzha Project)
- Conservation Management Plan: Significance Assessment and Conservation Strategies for Buzludzha Monument | Anna Nevrokopska, Dobrin Tsvetkov (Buzludzha Project/E House Architects)

10:30

Section 1: Modern Mosaics and Architectural Surfaces – Conserving and Restoring Controversial Post-war Heritage

Chair: Boyan Georgiev (ICOMOS Bulgaria)

- Buzludzha/Bulgaria – “It is Big Stuff.” Ways to Materially Conserve a Ruined Dissonant Monument | Thomas Danzl (Buzludzha Project)
- Synthesis of Mosaics, Decorative Arts and Architecture in Buzludzha Monument – Aspects of Significance | Mariela Malamatenova (ICOMOS Bulgaria)
- Good-bye Lenin and Welcomed Comrades? Curating Socialist Cold War Art in East Berlin | York Rieffel (ICOMOS Germany)

- Conservation of Cultural Heritage Sites of VDNH: Mosaic, Painting, Sculpture | Yulia Loginova (ICOMOS Russia)

12:00

Discussion

12:30

Lunch Break

14:00

Section 2: Interventions and Interpretation – Heritage Acceptance and Heritage Appropriation through Contextualisation and Commenting

Chair: Dörthe Hellmuth (ICOMOS Germany)

- Staging Buzludzha Monument– Revitalisation and Re-use Scenarios for the Generation after Next | Uwe Brueckner (Buzludzha Project/Studio Uwe Brueckner)
- Contextualizing Concrete Clickbaits. Dissonance, Rejection and Cultural Appropriation of Bulgarian Postwar Heritage | Aneta Vasileva (ICOMOS Bulgaria)
- Who Cares? Socialising Modern Heritage | Andreas Putz (ICOMOS Germany)
- *Nonument*. Performative and Exhibitions Approaches to Contested Cultural Heritage | Margarita Dorovska (Museum of Humour and Satire, Gabrovo)

15:30

Discussion

Friday, 23 July 2021

09:30

Welcome and Introduction

Chair: Elena Dimitrova (ICOMOS Bulgaria)

Welcomes

- Co-Organiser: Jörg Haspel, President of ICOMOS Germany
- Momchil Marinov, Director of Iskra History Museum Kazanlak

Goodwill Messages

- Ivan Markov, Rector of the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia
- Claus-Peter Echter, International Scientific ICOMOS Committee on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH)

10:00**Section 3: Dissonant Monuments of Art and Architecture in Citizen Dialogue and in Tourist Marketing**

Chair: Claus-Peter Echter (ICOMOS Germany)

- Buzludzha Monument Sustainable Cultural Tourism Plan: Acknowledging the Past – Embracing the Future | Sanjin Mihelic (Buzludzha Project/ICTC)
- Dissonant Post-WW2 Heritage in the Urban Context of Bulgaria: Space, Time, and Building a Culture of Public Debate | Elena Dimitrova (ICOMOS Bulgaria)
- Getty Keeping It Modern Project: The Tbilisi Chess Palace and Alpine Club | Manana Tevzadze (ICOMOS Georgia/Blue Shield Georgia)
- Connecting Urban Post-war Heritage of Totalitarian Regimes in Europe: the ATRIUM Cultural Route | John Patrick Leech (ATRIUM)

11:30**Discussion****12:30****Lunch Break****13:30****Section 4: Listing and Budgeting Dissonant Heritage. Legal and Funding Tools**

Chair: Mariela Modeva (ICOMOS Bulgaria)

- Preparing a Business Plan for the Buzludzha Monument | Mario Aymerich (Buzludzha Project/EIBI)
- The Indisputable in the Disputed Heritage | Emilia Kaleva (ICOMOS Bulgaria)

- Dissonant Heritage versus Consonant Heritage: All Equal before the Law? | Gregor Hitzfeld (ICOMOS Germany)
- Experiences and Recommendations from the Baltic Sea Region | Riin Alatalu (Vice President ICOMOS International)

15:00**Discussion****15:45****Closing Discussion and Recommendations**

Chair: Jörg Haspel (ICOMOS Germany)

Common Input of the Rapporteurs:

- Radoslav Iliev (Buzludzha Project)
- Emilia Kaleva (ICOMOS Bulgaria)
- Mariela Malamatenova (ICOMOS Bulgaria)
- John Ziesemer (ICOMOS Germany)

Initial Online Statement

- Todor Kretev, Honorary President ICOMOS Bulgaria

Panellists

- Galina Stoyanova, Mayor of Kazanlak Municipality
- Tanya Hristova, Mayor of Gabrovo Municipality
- Aneta Vasileva, ICOMOS Bulgaria
- Thomas Danzl, ICOMOS Germany
- Riin Alatalu, Vice President ICOMOS International
- Dora Ivanova, Buzludzha Project

16:45**Closing Words and Thanks by the Hosts and Organisers**

Curricula Vitae

Riin Alatalu

Vice President of ICOMOS; associate professor of cultural heritage and conservation at the Estonian Academy of Arts; coordinator of the UNESCO chair in heritage studies at the Estonian Academy of Arts; chairperson of the Estonian Heritage Conservation Council; member of the ICOMOS Rights-Based Approaches Working Group, as well as of CIVVIH and ICLAFI.

Alatalu has worked in the National Heritage Board, Tallinn Culture and Heritage Department and in the Estonian Ministry of Culture in leading positions.

Her PhD: *Heritage in Transitional Society from Nation's Conscience in the Estonian SSR to Harasser of the Private Owner in the Republic of Estonia*, 2012.

Alatalu has run several campaigns, including the Estonian National Cultural Heritage Year in 2013, the European Cultural Heritage Days, Visit Baltic Manors, and other awareness-raising activities. She has initiated the cooperation with decision-makers and the wider audience, including nature protection authorities, municipalities and local communities.

She has participated in several research projects, including *Power of Heritage*. She is the author and co-author of several books and numerous articles both on the academic and popular levels.

Mario Aymerich

Ingeniero de Caminos, Canales y Puertos (UPC, 1982). Civil servant, Ajuntament de Barcelona ('80); Engineering Executive, SICE S.A. ('90).

Transport/urban development expert, European Investment Bank (since 1999). Director of Environment & Regional Development Department & Managerial Advisor (2011–2018).

At present, Technical Advisor to the EIB-Institute. Professor at several universities. Member of ICOMOS. Some 200 articles/presentations and co-author of seven technical books.

Uwe R. Brückner

was born in Germany, studied architecture at the TU Munich and worked as an architect before studying costume and stage design at the ABK Stuttgart. After his studies he founded his Studio Uwe R. Brückner in 1988, co-founded ATELIER BRÜCKNER in 1997 and founded STUDIO UWE BRUECKNER in 2020. He teaches as a professor in the field of scenography at the FHNW Basel and at several international universities, and is a regular guest and speaker at various events worldwide.

Thomas Danzl

is a conservator/restorer and art historian. After an apprenticeship as a decorator he attended conservation courses at ICCROM in Rome and did an internship at the OPD in Florence. After studies in Art History and History in Florence as well as in Conservation and Heritage Studies in Udine he

got a PhD at the University of Regensburg in 1997. Between 1998 and 2006 he headed the conservation department of the Heritage Conservation Authority of Saxony-Anhalt and, between 2006 and 2008, of the Federal Heritage Conservation Authority of Austria. In 2007, he became honorary professor at the University of Fine Arts in Dresden and, in 2009, an ordinary professor. Since 2018 he teaches at the Technical University in Munich.

Elena Dimitrova

graduated as architect in 1976 and defended her PhD in 1990 in Sofia. Over 30 years of teaching and research in spatial policy and planning at the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia. Professional interests: spatial and sociocultural aspects of sustainable development, participatory planning, interdisciplinary and intercultural urban research. Member of ICOMOS Bulgaria and of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH).

Margarita Dorovska

Directs the Museum House of Humour and Satire in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, since 2016. She studied Cultural Studies and Social Anthropology at the Universities of Sofia, Vienna and Fribourg and holds an MA in Curating Contemporary Art of the Royal College of Art, London. With vast experience in numerous cultural and art projects, a.o. as a curator, researcher and project manager at the InterSpace Media Art Centre and as the managing director at the Cult.bg Foundation she took up a position as Senior Expert at the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture before taking up her current position in Gabrovo.

Gregor Hitzfeld

Secretary General of ICOMOS Germany. Since 2012 legal advisor of the Berlin Heritage Conservation Authority, Senate Department for Culture and Europe Berlin. Since 2017 lecturer at the Technical University of Berlin, master's program in Historical Building Research and Heritage Conservation. Law studies at Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg/Breisgau and Pierre Mendès-France Grenoble.

Dora Ivanova

graduated in architecture at the Technical University of Berlin in 2014. In 2015, she founded the Buzludzha Project Foundation and is the organization's CEO. She managed and coordinated the following projects for Buzludzha: *Conservation Management Plan 2019–2022*, *Emergency Stabilization of Mosaics 2020–2022*, *Securing and providing visitors access 2022*. In her work, activating the social potential of heritage through sustainable practices is a main goal. Contact address: buzludzha.project@gmail.com

Emilia Kaleva

is a heritage conservation architect who specialised in Rome (ICCROM, Course on Conservation of Built Heritage). She

holds a Ph.D. in conservation of architectural heritage and is assistant professor at the “History and Theory of Architecture” Department of UACEG – Sofia. She is a member of ICOMOS and its 20th Century Heritage International Scientific Committee as well as a member of DOCOMOMO Bulgaria.

Jonathan Karkut

had an early career as a mining and research geologist (including experience in the fields of exploration, mining and in the British Geological Survey). Over the past 25 years he has specialized in anthropology, heritage and tourism, with a notable emphasis upon Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and cultural tourism. This combination of experience and skills allows Jonathan to bring a unique knowledge of both earth and social sciences, particularly as connected to the realm of tourism development. He completed his PhD on Public Policy in the context of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Programme – applying this knowledge in different contexts of community engagement.

Todor Krestev

Professor in preservation of the architectural heritage at the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia, Bulgaria. Honorary President of ICOMOS/Bulgaria. Honorary member of ICOMOS International. Expert on the evaluation of the World Cultural Heritage of UNESCO and ICOMOS (implemented missions in: Avignon, Lyon, Berlin – Museum Island, Budapest, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Yaroslavl, Ferapontovo, Solovetsky Islands, Kiev, L’viv, Berat, Kotor etc.). Golden medal of the World Biennale of Architecture in Sofia.

Patrick Leech

DPhil, European History, University of Sussex (UK), is Full Professor of English Language and Culture at the University of Bologna. From 2009 to 2014 he served as city councillor on the Executive Council of the city of Forlì, with responsibility for Culture and International Relations. He was president of the ATRIUM Association from 2014 to 2016 and again from 2019 to 2022 and was a member of the Scientific Committee from 2016 to 2019.

Fergus T. Maclaren

is a sustainable tourism and cultural heritage management professional with 25 years of experience in Canada and internationally, with much of his current professional focus involving tourism to World Heritage sites and the implementation of tourism and cultural heritage-related facets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. His background includes a broad range of tourism planning, destination management, and community and cultural heritage development expertise. His professional experience includes: serving as Director of the UN-funded International Year of Ecotourism; teaching sustainable tourism at McGill University and lecturing internationally on the subject; acting as President of the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC); and working in an expert capacity for UNESCO, UNWTO, Organization of World Heritage Cities, World Monuments Fund, and Heritage & Cultural Society of Africa.

Mariela Malamatenova

specialised in mural painting at the National Academy of Arts, Sofia. She works as curator in the Department of Decorative Arts of the National Art Gallery. She is a member of the Union of Bulgarian Artists and ICOMOS Bulgaria. Mariela is the author of paintings, sculptures and glass reliefs presented in Bulgaria, Europe and the USA. Her murals, stained glass and decorative works are part of public and private spaces. She is interested in the problems of preservation and presentation of cultural heritage and in the synthesis of the arts.

Laure Marique

MA Interior Architecture, specialised in built heritage, ESA Saint-Luc (BE) | MSc – MA Dynamics of Cultural Landscape, Heritage, Memory and Conflictualities (FR-PT-RO-IT)) is currently a cultural project officer at the ICHEC Brussels Management School. From 2013 to 2020 she worked on heritage restoration projects. She was a trainee for the ATRIUM cultural route from March to August 2021 and then continued her collaboration with the route as an ATRIUM ambassador until December 2022.

Sanjin Mihelić

is an archaeologist and heritage professional with a 20-year experience in cultural heritage management, currently serving as Director of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, Croatia and as President of the Iron Age Danube Cultural Route Association. He is also President of the management board of the Archaeological Museum in Zadar and a member of the management boards of the Croatian History Museum, the Croatian Museum Documentation Centre and of ICOMOS Croatia. Moreover, he is a corresponding member of the German Archaeological Institute and of a number of other heritage associations. He has a profound and long-standing interest and experience in cultural tourism in Croatia and internationally. Among the notable projects he authored or led are: Archaeology and Tourism in Croatia, The Neanderthal Trail (both including large exhibitions and scientific catalogues in English), the international conference on archaeology and tourism entitled *Sense and Sustainability* and the international programme Festival of EU Archaeology.

Lyubomira Momcheva

has a master’s degree from the History and Theory of Architecture Department, UACEG, Sofia. She worked at E House architects, focusing on residential architecture and heritage preservation, including the development of the Conservation Management Plan for Buzludzha 2019–2022. In 2022 she joined the Buzludzha Project Foundation’s team as a cultural coordinator. She is a member of the Bulgarian Chamber of Architects and the Architectural Heritage Union.

Aida Murtić

is an architect and doctoral candidate in Art History at Heidelberg University, Germany. Currently she is a member of the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (earlier Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context”). She worked on a number of projects of post-war reconstruction of architectural heritage in Bosnia and Herze-

govina. She is Secretary General of the ICOMOS National Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Anna Nevrokopska

graduated from the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, Sofia, Bulgaria in 1990 where she specialised in “History and Theory of Architecture”. She has almost 30 years of practice in the field of heritage conservation and several years of teaching at two different universities of architecture in Sofia. Currently, as senior architect at E House Architects Ltd., she is part of an international team of professionals involved in the analysis, research and revitalisation of the Buzludzha Monument in Bulgaria. She is responsible for the development of its conservation management plan (CMP), the first on this scale and structure to be prepared in Bulgaria.

York Rieffel

studied restoration of wall paintings and stone at the University of Applied Sciences in Hildesheim until 1995. In 2007 he successfully completed the postgraduate Master’s programme “Protection of European Cultural Heritage” at the European University Viadrina Frankfurt/O. Until 2004, he worked as a freelance conservator of historical monuments with his own company. Since 2004, he has been employed as a conservation officer in the Department of Art and Building Preservation at the Berlin Monument Authority.

York Rieffel is a lecturer at the Technical University of Berlin in the field of historical building archaeology and monument preservation. He is a member of the National Committee of ICOMOS Germany and the Association of State Monument Conservators (VdL).

Manana Tevzadze

is Chair of the Georgian National Committee of the Blue Shield and leads internationally funded projects advocating for cultural heritage risk preparedness and management in Georgia.

She is a graduate of the international master’s course in World Heritage Studies at Brandenburg University of Tech-

nology Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany. She has 15 years of experience in the cultural heritage sector in Georgia. She also works as a freelance consultant in EU-funded projects in Georgia and in the EU-Eastern Partnership region.

Dobrin Tsvetkov

graduated from the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in 2015. From 2014 to 2022 he was part of E House Architects Ltd – an architectural studio based in Sofia. During that time, he worked on various projects in the field of architectural heritage. From 2019 to 2021 Dobrin took part in the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan for the Buzludzha Monument and then in a “Concept for Adaptation of the Buzludzha Monument” – a collaboration between the Buzludzha Project Foundation, E House Architects and Studio Uwe Brückner.

Aneta Vasileva

Ph.D, M.Arch., is an architectural historian, critic and publicist based in Bulgaria. She teaches at the History and Theory of Architecture Department of UACEG/Sofia and is member of ICOMOS Bulgaria and member and secretary of DOCOMOMO Bulgaria. Aneta has been a contributor to the international EU Programme ATRIUM, to the Trans-European Research “Competition Culture in Europe” and most recently to Buzludzha’s Conservation and Management Plan, funded and organised by the Getty Foundation and ICOMOS Germany.

Paul Zalewski

studied Art History and Architectural Preservation in Bamberg, Heidelberg and Torun (PL). In 2000 he received his doctorate from the Berlin Technical University and worked then as assistant and as Junior Professor for Heritage Preservation at the universities in Weimar and Hanover. In 2009 he was appointed Professor for Heritage Studies at the European University in Frankfurt (Oder). His experience is based on different projects and memberships in professional associations in Denmark, France, Germany, Poland and Romania.

