

CRISIS OF THE MEMORY – TWO MONUMENTS FROM THE SOCIALIST ERA TODAY

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The paper studies the fate of two landmark monuments of the socialist era – the memorial “1300 Years Bulgaria” and the “Buzludzha Monument” – their glorious past and sorrowful present. These are significant historical masterpieces of architecture and art from the second half of the 20th century. They were built to commemorate important events of Bulgarian history – the first one dedicated to the 1300th anniversary of the Bulgarian state and the second – the 90-year anniversary since the local formation of the socialist movement. However, when in the 1990s the political situation in the country changed, breaking with the past was frantically sought and these two monuments, branded as “socialist art” were abandoned and doomed to destruction.

This report is an attempt for a critical study of the way we remember and treasure our past. A semiotic analysis is made in order to examine the compositional characteristics, conceptual contents, semantic and emotional organization of the structural elements of the monuments. The aim is through arts-based research to highlight the artistic merits of the two projects, their communicative and interactive features and to clear their image of the ideological load. Thus we strive to look objectively on the problem and to assess impartially the style paradigm with its specific artistic and aesthetic qualities.

Today these monuments get absolutely contradictory assessment by the public. The need to rethink their historical role and to start a discourse on the threat of destruction of the cultural heritage of our country is brought to the front. We argue that it is necessary to inform and educate the community on the problems of protection and preservation of the cultural values. Establishing criteria for aesthetic evaluation and formation of values, which is not subject to political bias and reflects the eternal and intransient values in architecture and art is imperative.

In conclusion is summarized how through intuitive way of engagement with the monument its resurrection for a new social life in the context of current conditions can be achieved.