

PUBLIC SCULPTURE IN WARTIME UKRAINE AS A FORM OF THE STATE'S MEMORY POLITICS

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Abstract: The authors argue that during wartime in Ukraine, public sculpture serves as a reflection of the memory politics of the contemporary Ukrainian state. As such, these politics are aimed at breaking away from the Soviet legacy that continues to exist simultaneously in the form of hidden or sometimes obvious remnants of older colonial narratives of Ukrainian history and in the form of aesthetic artifacts akin to those that can be seen in the public space of big cities, e.g. sculptures and reliefs, etc. However, in its efforts to shed the Soviet legacy, Ukraine's memory politics often uncritically adopt dominant capitalist narratives, inadvertently perpetuating another form of cultural oppression and colonization. In addition to critiquing contemporary market-driven discourse, the authors stress the importance of not overlooking the layer of mythological memory, as it constitutes one of the most fundamental elements of Europe's cultural landscape.

Keywords: public sculpture; modern art; socio-cultural restoration; architecture; cultural landscape.

1 Introduction

Modern art in Ukraine reflects the active processes of nation-building. This includes the desire of people to remove monuments that perpetuate Soviet ideology from public spaces. In urban landscapes, these processes were most evident in the removal of names and symbols associated with communism from cities and streets, as well as the dismantling of monuments to Russian figures of the military, political and cultural front. Similarly, recent public sculpture projects fulfill society's demand for spatial embodiments of memory politics, preserving the memory of those killed in the current Russian-Ukrainian war.

During December 2023, the aporia of antagonistic art-epistemes in the urban context became evident with the removal in Kyiv of the last propaganda sculptures. These sculptures celebrated the triumph of the Bolshevik occupation, which destroyed the Ukrainian People's Republic (1917-1921), proclaimed by the national liberation movement led by the Ukrainian Central Rada. We refer to the removal of the equestrian monument to the 'red commissar' Mykola Shchors on the capital's Taras Shevchenko Boulevard (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The decommunization of the monument to M. Shchors. Kyiv, December 2023.

This demolition was underscored by the ceremonial opening of the monument to the Hero of Ukraine Oleksandr Matsievskiy, a sniper of the 163rd battalion of the 119th separate brigade of the Territorial Defense of the Chernihiv region. The new monument stands in the park of the National Historical and Architectural Museum 'Kyiv Fortress' (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Oleg Tsos, Albina Safronova. The monument to Oleksandr Matsievskiy. Kyiv, December 2023.

We are, however, also referring here to the removal – on Christmas Eve – of another Bolshevik monument dedicated to the armed rebellion of 1918 against the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic (Figure 3).



Figure 3. The dismantling of the monument to the armed January uprising of the Bolsheviks in 1918.

In other words, cultural and artistic events in the capital contribute to shaping the public space of democracy. This aligns with the Resolution of the General Assembly of the UN (2015) on the sustainable development of modern cities, titled 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. The resolution emphasizes the full permanent sovereignty of every state over its wealth, natural resources, and economic activity [17]. Paragraph 11 of the resolution sets the goal to 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable'. Furthermore, the Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 emphasizes the need to accelerate changes to qualitatively achieve the planned goals [16]. Therefore, the processes of socio-cultural restoration of Ukraine – or rather the construction of a new image of the state (see the article titled "Between aesthetics and imagination" [...]) – despite the difficult conditions of the war, take into account the

recommendations for accelerating the necessary changes, and correspond to actions to organize urban public milieu. In a similar manner, one might say, the non-profit organization "Americans for the Arts" operates – the organization has a social goal: "Public art is often site-specific, meaning it is created in response to the place and community in which it resides... Simply put public art is art in public spaces. The term "public art" may conjure images of historic bronze statues of a soldier on horseback in a park. Today, public art can take a wide range of forms, sizes, and scales—and can be temporary or permanent. It often interprets the history of the place, its people, and perhaps addresses a social or environmental issue. Public art can include murals, sculpture, memorials, integrated architectural or landscape architectural work, community art, digital new media, and even performances and festivals! ... Public art instills meaning—a greater sense of identity and understanding of where we live, work, and visit—creating memorable experiences for all. It humanizes the built environment, provides an intersection between past, present, and future, and can help communities thrive" [10; 11; 13; 12].

The symbolism of the dismantling of the political and ideological idols of Bolshevik propaganda hides the deep meaning of the transformations taking place in the collective cultural memory of Ukrainians, who, in particular, got convinced of the rightfulness of the position of R. Kearney, P. Ricœur, G. Marcuse, all of whom did not share Walter Benjamin's optimism regarding the manipulative politicization of art, because, "Any attempt to use art to influence the masses in order to transform their consciousness and mind necessarily distorts the true purpose of art", as the freedom of artistic expression is replaced by trivial propaganda [6]. And if numerous works of art within the dominant memory politics, which in turn is an integral part of the nation-building process, perpetuate the memory of those who died in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, then the quote "The history of art is not the history of wounds, but only those wounds that were reincarnated into light" [15] seems particularly apt. In this manner, the opposition of a sovereign democratic European country to a totalitarian dictatorial state becomes palpable, while still preserving the cultural memory and certain aspects of the spirit of the free Cossacks.

Therefore, the simultaneous removal of Bolshevik and Soviet monuments from the cityscape, alongside the installation of monuments commemorating those recently fallen in the ongoing war against Russia, highlights the nuanced differences between the Soviet-era politicized propaganda art and the evolving aesthetics aligned with the memory politics of contemporary Ukraine. These processes, though historically and culturally antagonistic, currently coexist in the capital, illustrating Ukraine's liberation from Soviet-era influences and its focus on nation-building.

Perhaps here lies an opportunity to return to a form of art rooted in cordocentrism, a traditional element—or, as one might argue, the foundation—of Ukrainian culture, still preserved in popular memory. These qualities persist, not "thanks to," but "in spite of," the dominant trajectory of the art market, which tends to transform urban spaces into manifestations or representations of post-capitalism. Simultaneously, it is crucial to preserve visual memory as a component of cultural memory concerning universal human values, harmony, and the beauty of a just social order, where the rule of law transcends mere rhetoric. Critical reflection on events should maintain a distance to help overcome the alienation of the modern world, as discussed by Ukrainian aestheticians such as Maria Shkepu and Oleksiy Bosenko. This preservation gains heightened importance in light of Europe's essence, as observed by the British-American historian Tony Judt in 2007. He noted that Europe is more about relations than geography. When, at the end of the 20th century, Ukraine, along with Armenia and Moldova, collectively liberated themselves from the Moscow Empire, they became 'post-imperial orphan states,' casting their gaze towards another 'imperial' capital—Brussels. In the 21st century, these Eastern 'European citizens' prioritize not only inclusion in the new Europe but also the preservation of their self-identification and cultural memory of a

pre-modern past shared with Europe, a memory that both Nazi and Soviet regimes sought to erase [5].

2 Literature review

The process of maturation of cultural memory is quite delicate and can only be rooted in transcendental freedom. The Ukrainian aesthetician Oleksiy Bosenko described this latter not as "freedom is not a choice, but when there is no choice," referring to the transcendental aletheia, when necessity becomes free and freedom becomes necessary [4]. He categorically did not approve of the currently widespread method of appropriation known as "cultural jamming". In this approach, public sculpture often neglects certain aspects of art, becoming merely a dimension of the spatial design of the post-capitalist world. As one might argue: there is no freedom of choice in the total designation of public sculpture either, but this repressive pressure of "cultural jamming" imposes on artists' slavish patterns of benchmarking thinking (very similar to the Soviet totalitarian ideology), where creativity becomes subordinated to the need to conform to the stratagems of the art business. Then contemporary artists (philosophers, critics, historians) perform the function of "the global interpretive community" (Samuel Makinda), or cerebrospinal fluid, the fluid of the "ideology of brainlessness", without which modern society cannot function. That is how, "through the tears of Heraclitus" [4], the Lego art of Anton Logov, "Horn of Plenty", arises, where not the author, but the global interpretive community determines the legitimate quasi-original form and meaning of the work, while the author only imitates the post-ethnic episteme, not focusing on the critical awareness of subtleties of the concepts "such as security, sovereignty and globalization" [8], (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Anton Logov. *The Horn of Plenty*. Metal, paint. 2023. Agro Region, modern ukrainian agricultural company.

However, according to Bosenko, true freedom, experienced as ecstasy in absolute time, is necessary for the growth and maturation of cultural memory [4]. Therefore, when cultural memory loses its pragmatic functionality, it is aestheticized as "intermediate aesthetics", as an affect and effect of the aestheticization of history itself, and ... becomes free atonality. "Freedom is like a museum exhibit," memory and oblivion, where art and philosophy freeze in the confused silence of co-existence, intriguing only with the freedom of the spirit of the past and present, ponders Oleksiy Bosenko in another book [3]. He claims: free atonality does not promise anything, does not teach, does not prophesize, it is contemplative, like death in the works by L. Feuerbach – "always a successful creation". Its tone is incomplete, like an internal transition, consisting of breaks, jumps, interrupted gradations. "Atonality is not only determination, chaos, the essence of any contradiction, but also its solution, whatever it may be: space and time, life and death, existence and nothingness, form and content, essence and phenomenon. The point is in the moment when there is no more contradiction, but there is also no unity. When the viewer has gone beyond his limits, and the work of art "gives up", branches out towards them, leaves its shores, abandoning itself, and a

collision occurs, a cosmic catastrophe, a collision of two galaxies" [3].

However, according to Hannah Arendt, the tragedy does not begin at the moment of the process of liberating the country, when the small islands of freedom, already doomed, are automatically and completely erased – as Bakhmut, Mariinka, Avdiyivka are now destroyed – no, the real tragedy begins when the conditions disappear to inherit, investigate, reflect on cultural memory, because "without such a mental completion of the aftermath, without the articulation carried out by memory, there is no story at all that could be told" [1].

In European literature of the last decades of the 20th century, it was W.G. Sebald who, in his novels "Austerlitz" and "The Rings of Saturn", but also in his "On the Natural History of Destruction", undertook an ambitious effort to examine the relationship between "culture" and "nature" – not only as such but also as the cornerstones of the metatext of the civilization of signs, symbols, and meanings that we are embedded into and exist in. According to Sebald, then, it is only through memory that nature might seek fulfillment and liberation from the curse of natural laws. However, this same curse is smuggled into culture, as seen in Sebald's observation of the tragedy of the Holocaust in "Austerlitz" [14], akin to the distant observation of ruined landscapes. One might also think of this view as of a distant echo of Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of the intertwining of Enlightenment and myth, but that would already be a topic for a separate study.

Therefore, in the conditions of an ongoing exhausting war, it becomes extremely important not to lose the integrity of the cultural memory of the nation, and not to allow "the mind to wander in the dark" (de Tocqueville), when the past ceases to grasp the future. In the end, "miracles" are created by people themselves, because men, who "have received the twofold gift of freedom and action can establish a reality of their own" [1] ("The tragedy began not when the liberation of the country as a whole ruined, almost automatically, the small hidden islands of freedom that were doomed anyway, but when it turned out that there was no mind to inherit and to question, to think about and to remember" [1]). Instead, racism today serves as proof of the perniciousness of the dominance of the twilight of the mind. It purposefully cultivates a "world order" in which "international law is nothing, and the power of the stronger instead is everything," as noted by the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock, in a column for the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" on 11.12.2023.

Meanwhile, while the hybrid Third World War continues, Europe is already on the threshold of understanding the processes of reconstruction: political, economic, oh, cultural, and it will again have to go through the experience of overcoming post-war traumas, but now on a different level than it was after the first two world wars in the 20th century.

Therefore, just as Paul Ricœur, working on the introduction to the French edition of Hannah Arendt's work and recalling the horror of being in the Bergen-Belsen camp, tried to answer the question "why did the war happen?" how to prevent totalitarian terror, mental degradation, and genocide again?", Ukrainians have been asking this question since the first days of the aggression and annexation of Crimea in 2014, perpetuating the memory of the dead, calling on the world to stop yet another brutal murder of a European nation, and international capital to stop trying to make money from crimes against humanity. Right now, in order not to fall into barbarism, the world must overcome the dangerous disjunction between historical experience and cultural memory. Moreover, Hannah Arendt emphasized that "This past, moreover, reaching all the way back into the origin, does not pull back but presses forward, and it is, contrary to what one would expect, the future which drives us back into the past... Only because man is inserted into time and only to the extent that he stands his ground does the flow of indifferent time break up into times" [1].

Public sculpture, in this sense, is a phenomenon of the important and hopeful position of that sphere of the spirit, which, according to H. Arendt, is in the gap between the infinite past and the infinite future, providing mortal man with an opportunity to emerge from the ruins of historical and biographical time through a narrow path into a renewed time-space, and rethink his way, without falling into the political traps of surrogates of mental and practical realization, without fearing the fat truth/aleteia resides in the transcendent, and in the material is often uncertain. Therefore, freedom (be it creative freedom or existential freedom of will) should be understood at a distance from politics, "in interaction with oneself".

Criticizing the sensible amorphousness of modern culture, which has managed to recognize the singularity of nothingness, Maria Shkpeu emphasizes: today "the world deprived of development progresses in the opposite way - it is not only divided by zero, but moves into regressive vectoriality"; "The degenerate loop as a consequence of the regressive inversion of the boundaries of history is rooted in the aesthetics of the ugly. As K. Rosenkrantz argued, the absence of beauty not only progresses to the final deformation, but, unlike the last chord of his concept, does not perceive itself as a caricature. In the degenerate loop of modern history, modern philosophy, and modern art, aesthetics appears as the transformation of the ugly from chance into regularity, then into a categorical imperative, and finally, into a cult. Everything is turned inside out, even man in all his natural modes" [15].

A prime example of history and consciousness distortion through politically manipulative fake memory propaganda is the public sculpture in the temporarily occupied territories. In addition to immortalizing Bolshevik figures like I.V. Stalin and current perpetrators of Ukrainian atrocities, invaders fixate on politicized idols and fetishes. This art showcases a sharp decline in both professional and moral standards, as ugliness is mistaken for beauty, and high-quality pre-war sculptures are dismantled or destroyed. Thus, in the Kherson region alone, dozens of monuments to the victims of the Holodomor were destroyed, along with Christian crosses and images of the Mother of God, and enemy forces did it with particular cruelty on November 25, the day Ukraine commemorates the victims of the Holodomor. It is very significant how anger towards monuments embodying the nation's historical aspirations for democracy eats away at the twilight consciousness of the Rushists, which was noticeable during the occupation of Kyiv region in February 2022, when residents recorded on video the acts of the enemy shooting at

sculptures not only with automatic weapons, but even from tanks. Meanwhile, all museum valuables were certainly looted, for example, 11,000 works of art from the collection of the Kherson Regional Art Museum named after Oleksiy Shovkunenko were stolen during the temporary occupation of Kherson. Similarly, enemy archaeologists are looting Scythian burial mounds and gold jewelry, hastily expropriating Ukrainian history for their museums.

That is why the "hermeneutics of social life and exposing the intrigues of power systems in the history of mankind" is so necessary, while the idea of transcendence should remain the basis of any discourse of non-violence, as a utopian hope to end the entire system of violence and oppression, and for which humanity is looking as for a way to combine rationality and spirituality" [6]. For a comprehensive image of the memory politics of the modern Russian state, we note that the monuments to the commanders of the Russian tsarist army, Suvorov and Ushakov, along with other sculptures of its political leaders and military, were not destroyed. Instead, they were carefully dismantled and taken from the parks of Kherson to the territory of Russia.

3 Results and Discussion

Therefore, the competition of antagonistic art epistemes in the cultural and artistic space of modern Ukraine reveals nuances in the philosophy of historical evidence of the past and present. The process of decommunization complements the phenomenon of

resetting the cultural memory of Ukrainians. The current military victories in returning the integrity of a sovereign democratic country change the episteme of the oppressed past, but at too high a price - the lives of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, both soldiers and civilians. Given this disposition, we can claim that the look of the Hero of Ukraine Oleksandr Matsievskiy, thanks to the emphasized attention of the sculptors, conveys a whole spectrum of meanings and feelings. In order for the sculpture to convey this holographic multiplicity of emotions and thoughts as accurately as possible, the artists Oleg Tsos and Albina Safonova were extremely focused on the technical performance of the figure of the Hero, which immortalizes the tragic moment on December 30, 2022, when a Ukrainian soldier shouted "Glory to Ukraine" and was demonstratively executed by the Rashists, who then spread their video proof of the act of war crime through social networks. The figure was made by sculptors from silicone and plastic using 3D technologies, which replaced the ancient tradition of wax sculpture, in which the famous Ukrainian sculptor Leonid Posen, the author of numerous portraits, genre compositions from the life of Zaporizhzhya Cossacks, and monuments to the writers Mykola Gogol and Ivan Kotlyarevsky, worked in Poltava.

However, we must note that in 2023, traditional bronze monuments to Alexander Matsievskiy were also erected. They appeared in the city of Nizhyn, his hometown, and even in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, on the territory of the private clinic of Mr. Akaki Tsilosani (Figure 5).



Figure 5. The monument to O. Matsievskiy in Tbilisi, Georgia, 2023.

Moreover, the situation of the shooting, which became a viral meme, was depicted on April 29 on a Kyiv mural on one of the parliament buildings by the French artist Christian Guemi, who has the nickname C215 (Figure 6).



Figure 6. K. Guemi. Mural. Kyiv, 2023.

And already in the summer of 2023, a stencil mural was created in Berlin by Ukrainian artists Tymofiy and Nadia Maksymenko together with street-art artist Ms. Sorokina, who works under the nickname Ptashka Somari, on top of a three-meter fragment of the Berlin Wall with colorful street graffiti. It is installed at the entrance to the Museum Haus am Checkpoint Charlie at Friedrichstrasse 43-45 at the initiative of the museum director, Alexandra Hildebrandt (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Tymofii and Nadiia Maksymenko, Ptashka Somari. Mural. Berlin, 2023.

Philosophically speaking, each sculpture or mural that perpetuates the memory of the hero as a "living metaphor" reflects the formation in the collective consciousness of a "new structure of time" (P. Ricoeur). This new structure combines the socio-cultural time of the nation's memory being created with individual eschatological time. It is no coincidence that, as Hannah Arendt pointed out, the meaning of human life lies not only in the transformation of the surrounding world, but also in existentially remaining in the memory of future generations as a special narrative, and in such a form that history is not abstracted into an impersonal narrative that is then politically manipulated. Thus, in the historical past of Ukraine, the Russian tsar, and later the Soviet totalitarianism, systematically deprived the nation of its history, language, culture, and memory, which Paul Ricoeur drew attention to during both of his visits to Kyiv in the 1990s.

It is not coincidental that the monument to O. Matsievskiy was situated on the grounds of the former museum of fortification and defense significance, known as the 'Kyiv Fortress.' The sculpture is encased in glass, a precautionary measure not uncommon in similar instances. For instance, the monument to Theodor Adorno, erected in 2003 at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt, consists of a desk, lamp, and the philosopher's chair, symbolizing his intellectual legacy, according to Vadym Zakharov. However, in our case, the figure of the hero in natural military clothing has a reference to the situational tragic moment before his execution by the Rashists, so the fact of exhibiting such a figure not in a wax museum, but in an open natural public environment, which is, besides, a museum complex, has an additional semantic emphasis. "Kyiv Fortress", which for some time served as a military and political prison, also eloquently alludes to the long historical resistance and struggle of Ukrainians for freedom, due to which the museum was closed during the Stalinist period, documents were hidden, and its researchers were repressed. It can be argued that the fact of exhibiting the sculpture in this particular place retrospectively creates or constructs a certain line in meta-national memory politics. "Meta" because modern meanings and feelings and the logic of nation-building are projected into a noticeably different cultural situation of the beginning of the 20th and the end of the 19th centuries, retrospectively as if finding - creating, imagining (in the spirit of "imagined communities" by Benedict Anderson) the Ukrainian nation

where there are artifacts testifying to the facts of Ukrainian resistance to invaders.

We must note that the consequences of the repressions are such that the Ukrainian nation is still experiencing the totalitarian traumas of the tragedies of the 20th century, when the "Ukrainian question" was solved by the Russian Federation not only through Red Terror and deportation, but also through disarmament, three waves of brutal famine, appropriation of cultural monuments, historical and artistic values, and even by means of faking the nationality of Ukrainian artists. Thus, many world-famous Ukrainian artists are still considered "Russian", such as O. Arkhipenko, K. Malevich, D. Burlyuk, V. Tatlin, A. Kuindzhi, I. Stravinsky, and others. Today, new injuries of the current war have been added to those old traumas.

Therefore, the private time of history of an individual who is aware of its own existence as "being-to-death", according to M. Heidegger, might, at least occasionally, lead to the humanization of the social "living time of history". However, it is interesting that a similar opinion was expressed at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s by Paul Ricœur in a dialogue with R. Kearney: the repetition of the past always intersects with the existential vision of the individual himself and his possibilities, therefore, the retrospection of historical narratives always contains promising horizons of the future, which is yet to happen, but the meaning of the past in history is always relevant, because the essence of the future is based on it [6].

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If the harmony between the past and the future in the cultural memory of the people and the artist is properly reflected in the work, and if the recipient is able to connect to the interpretation, expanding the semantics of the message in absolute time, it is possible to talk about the infinite universe of each work of art in any period of history [7]. Ricœur emphasized: only the return of a complete cultural memory to contemporaries will return them the future. Moreover, envisioning a society not solely driven by consumption, but one that values multi-layered 'figurative thinking', where the memorialization of an imaginative future is central to the philosophy of liberation and utopian aspirations. These aspirations, devoid of empty dreams, hinge on bridging the gap between individual experience and the universal concept of history, which, when centered solely on the Western model, risks leading to an abstract, pathologically formless, and contentless future utopian horizon.

Accordingly, it is important to include a person's personal experience (creativity, sacrifice, reasoning...) in the general movement of social and cultural development in order to overcome the crisis of subjectivity, the disintegration of which continues in the conditions of the worsening crisis of the

consumer society. During Soviet times, the individual also did not have the right for a subjective opinion, different from the party ideology, which led to the existence of a number of complex and interesting cultural phenomena, some of which eventually might have contributed to the collapse of the USSR. Now this scenario threatens Western society, where globalized public culture is produced in conditions of "paradigm without paradigm", "personality without personality", which prompted Michael Baker 2022 to state, referring to an opinion by Jean-Luc Nancy: "Our time is thus one in which it is urgent that the West — or what remains of it — analyze its own becoming, turn back to examine its provenance and its trajectory, and question itself concerning the process of decomposition of sense to which it has given rise" [2].

Considering that one of the origins of modernity is Ancient Greece, Greek myths can generally be understood as treasures of cultural memory, the appeal to which can help to reveal that, one way or another, the events of the entire post-mythological, historical era are only paraphrases and patterns, consisting of certain myths and their combinations. Quite in tune with this, some artists, such as, for example, the Ukrainian sculptor Volodymyr Protas, devoted their work exclusively to myths [9] (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Volodymyr Protas. *Leda and the Swan*. 2013. Donetsk.

Myths, as scholars and, in particular, Ricœur insist, will exist forever, thus encouraging humanity to critical self-reflection, to a chance for a more complete cultural memory.

According to P. Ricœur, myth is the imaginary core of all cultures, i.e., the core on which self-awareness and self-analysis of society is formed. This is a structural and historical phenomenon at the same time, which allows, if we continue the thought of Hannah Arendt, to build not just "public freedom", but "public happiness". However, the myth is as well as happiness - it can also be understood purely instrumentally, this is how dangerous modern myths arise, which includes, in particular, the phenomenon of racism. Moreover, speaking about the group of myths of fascism, it is worth remembering that until now "causal explanations and global theories are unable to cover fascism in all its various manifestations, nor to explain the fact of changes in individual fascist movements in the course of their development", - one of these the latter can be called Russian rashism in the 21st century [18].

How symbolic and demonstrative is the incompatibility of various modern mytho-strategies, modern myths, expressed through various variants of memory politics, is demonstrated by the fact that in the brutal battles for Bakhmut, when the enemy periodically captured and then again lost territories near the village of Luhanske in Donetsk region, where in 2016 died, from sniper bullets, the world-famous Ukrainian opera singer Vasyl Slipak, during the temporary occupation, the Russians completely destroyed the monument to him (which was erected in 2019 (Figure 9) three times. Still, each time after Ukrainian

forces regained control over this land, they immediately restored the monument.

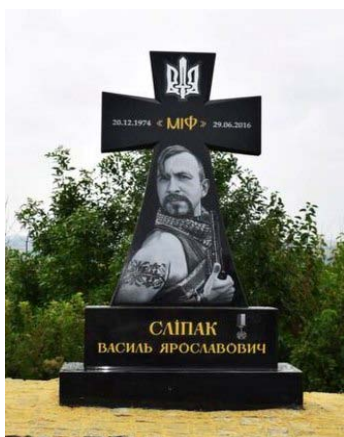


Figure 9. Oleg and Volodymyr Ganzha. 2019. A monument to Vasyl Slipak, "Myth". Donetsk region.

4 Conclusion

Public sculpture as such cannot be considered separately from the broad cultural context of a particular place, city, region or state. And the specificity of these latter is largely determined by cultural memory, which is characterized by a certain time structure and a certain utopian horizon: each mechanism of cultural memory relates to the image of the future in the exact same way as it relates to the image of the past (which, in fact, is cultural memory), since the past cannot exist without the future, and vice versa.

In public sculpture, which is characteristic of Ukraine at the time of the Russian invasion and Russian war crimes, at least four layers (or approaches) could be distinguished.

The first approach involves conformist "art objects" that are "produced" by the artist in full accordance with the logic of the global art market and generally do not take into account the unique features of the place where the sculpture is installed. In this case, the latter often turns into a tool of soft power, a component of the biopolitics of capital.

Without excluding this component, which can be and usually is present to one degree or another, the second approach is based on the artist's appeal to cultural memory - which, it should be noted, can be understood quite differently (as the cultural memory of a place, the memory of the landscape itself (which W.G. Sebald wrote about in the novels "Austerlitz" and "Rings of Saturn"), as the memory of the nation (considering the fact that different researchers understand the latter in quite different ways), etc.).

Finally, the third approach is an attempt to intuitively overcome the trap of the 'past - future' dichotomy by going beyond it into the space of reactualization of the myth, which has a direct relationship to the Sacred Time of the creation of the world, and therefore, as such, the myth carries the eternal renewal of the present and the postponement of eschatological events through the reactualization of the Sacred Presence of one or another kind in modern times. Myth is not subject to the curse of the linear Arrow of Time, which tears subjectivity apart between past and future, and therefore myth does not construct an image of the future based on a linear (or geometric) progression of past states of nature and society.

After all, the fourth approach to the creation and study of public sculpture involves the existence of works of art where the first three approaches are present simultaneously, but in different proportions.

It is quite obvious that any approach can be integrated (even with a significant deformation of its initial artistic logic (or myth-

logic)) by a modern state - with more or less successful results - into memory politics, which is carried out by the state in the context of its nation-building processes.

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Primary Paper Section: A

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