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Performance of Commemorating / Performing Heritage

Roles of Remembering and Heritagization of World War II

A close look at commemorations with a focus on occurring performance shows the decisive role of physical presence and activity of the body for the success of these carefully planned events. Commemorative sites can either be active sites of remembrance, or conditionally “passive” sites of heritage, depending on the presence or the absence of bodily action. Furthermore, the stated performativity defines commemorative events and their spaces as simultaneously tangible, i.e. monumental, and intangible, i.e. narration/practice, heritage. Based on the performance-based duality of commemorative events and their spaces, this paper aims to explore the necessity and limitations of their dual interpretation within contemporary heritage management practice. In order to do so, monumental sites of NOB (Peoples’ Liberation Struggle) are used as a case study, with an emphasis on the manner of their *heritagization*. By looking at the cases studies the following questions are to be addressed. If the initial performance still exists, can a site be considered as heritage? And if yes, should these sites be considered only as tangible or intangible heritage, or the two are bound to fuse? Furthermore, looking at the current changed narratives of these sites it is justified to ask who and why considers them as heritage?

Key words: commemoration, performance, heritagization, NOB, antifascism.

Перформанс комеморације / Перформанси наслеђа

Улоге сећања и херитизације Другог светског рата

Пажљив поглед на комеморације, са посебним фокусом на пратећи перформанс, указује на пресудну улогу физичке присутности и активности тела када је у питању успех таквих пажљиво планираних манифестација. У зависности од присуства или одсуства активности тела, места комеморација могу бити активна места сећања или условно „пасивни” простори наслеђа. Такође, таква перформативност дефинише комеморације и простор на коме се оне одигравају као истовремено материјалне (споменици) и нематеријалне (нарација/пракса, наслеђе). Овај рад, заснивајући се на перформативној дуалности комеморација и простора на којима се оне одигравају, истражује непоходност и ограничења дуалних интерпретација ових догађаја у савременој пракси менаџмента наслеђа. Рад се заснива на студијама случаја везаним за споменике посвећене народно-ослободилачкој борби (НОБ), са посебним акцентом на начин

њихове херитизације. На основу анализе поменутих студија случаја, поставља се неколико питања. Уколико иницијални перформанс и даље постоји, може ли споменик бити разумеван као наслеђе? Ако то јесте случај, да ли би се споменици у том случају дефинисали као материјално или као нематеријално наслеђе, или се та два концепта стапају? На крају, имајући у виду промењене наративе у вези са анализираним споменицима, поставља се питање ко и зашто њих данас дефинише као наслеђе?

Кључне речи: коменорација, перформанс, херитизација, НОБ, антифашизам.

Commemoration and space

“The space of appearance comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech or action, and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm” (Arendt 1998, 199).

Close look at commemorations shows the decisive role of physical presence and activity of the body for ensuring active influence of this performance and its visual markers in both geographical and symbolic landscape. “Commemoration is the coming together of history, taught, thought-through, learned or mediated through commemorative tools such as monumental objects, photographs, performances, or historical sources” (Widrich 2009, 160). Furthermore a commemoration can be regarded as a cultural performance, as a “scheduled, temporally bounded, spatially bounded, and programmed” (Beeman 1993, 378) activity. It is the most obvious form of state-directed action (or performance if preferred), provoked in order to formulate a public space, and is based on the active interaction between all the present bodies (animate and inanimate). A commemoration as a performance always carries three basic qualities defining these events as actuals. Those are: “1) process, something happens here and now; 2) consequential, irremediable and irrevocable act, exchange or situation; (...) 5) space is used concretely and organically” (Schechner 2003, 46). Further, commemorative performance demands two orders of active animated bodies, those engaged in the action of performing the fixed patterns of movement (or *strips of behavior* (Schechner 1985); and those engaged in active observation, which does not imply inaccessibility, non-participation, or passive action. As many other formats of site-specific performance commemorations are grounded in firmly defined lines of actions, which are there to ensure both the usage of the given space, as well as creation of new levels of it. Detailed programing and scripting of a commemorative performance has a twofold purpose. From one side, script is made in order to code the actions of bodies, “(...) through various regimes of discipline and training, including the coordination and integration of its bodily functions so that not only can it undertake the general social tasks required of it, but so that it becomes an integral part of or position within the network, linked to other bodies and objects” (Grosz 1998, 32). Along this train of thought, Eugenio Barba (1995) argues that through formulation of the sets of extra-daily techniques (scores) bodies are placed into form, making them at the same time artificial and believable. This mimicry of reality allows a possibility of attaching meaning to the bodies, their action and interaction, as well as to the space created in that process. From the other

side, *a script* or in the words of Richard Schechner (1985) *a score*- is the main grounding tool for creating and maintaining repetitive performance, or “restored behavior” (Schechner 1985, 36). “Performance means: never for the first time. It means: for the second to the nth time. Performance is “twice-behaved behavior”(Schechner 1985, 36). When discussed in these terms, the fixed script of commemorative performance is there to ensure that the communication and exchange among the present and acting bodies, results in creation of public space with strictly determined elements. Additionally, the score/script is the necessary means for establishing a repetition of a specific action, seen by its conceiver, usually the state, as vital for making public space. However this does not imply that performances score cannot change. Richard Schechner states that they can change in “two ways: first, by a slow slippage made inevitable by changing historical circumstances; second, through ‘official revisions’ made by the owners-heir of the ‘authorized original’” (Schechner 1985, 43-44). One goal of a commemoration, besides evoking and revoking history, memory and emotions, is establishing of (public) space and the levels and types of agency to be assumed by all the involved bodies.

In order to understand and analyze public space, its performative nature, and the importance of the performative activity in it, it is of outermost importance to comprehend how the space as such is created. Space, sometimes transformed to a public one, is simultaneously a set of physical givens and configurations, and a direct product of interactions and interchanges of both inanimate and animate bodies. It is at the same time made and inhabited by bodies.

Defining of public space proves to be a difficult and conflicting task, while the boundaries between the actions which are considered to be private or public, are at least blurred if not inexistent, especially with technological and social-theoretical developments, i.e. use of new means of communication, now moved from a physical to virtual space, which allows until now unseen levels of anonymity, while actively participating in *all* which is considered ‘public’ (Low and Smith, 2005). In these terms a definition given by John R. Parkinson, in his book *Democracy and Public Space: The Physical Site of Democratic Performance* (2012), offers a viable and highly applicable definition. He states: “(...) physical space can be ‘public’ in four major ways. It is space that 1. is openly accessible; and/or 2. uses common resources; and/or 3. has common effects; and/or 4. is used for the performance of public roles” (Parkinson 2012, 61).

By looking at this definition it can be concluded that the publicness of a physical space is derived from the active workings of public sphere. “The sphere of private people coming together as a public” (Habermas 1991, 27) in order to embrace, express and claim the right of access to resources, right of deliberating decisions, and the right to be affected by consequences of assuming a public role. The *public sphere* designates ways in which people participate in collective action and the *public space* designates the physical “settings in which such engagement takes place” (Parkinson 2012, 62-63). The public sphere, therefore, is in a need of materialization, in order to manifest itself. Public spaces should be regarded as a physical room for demonstrating belonging to, and understanding of values of, a group. This

belonging is often multi-layered and multi-directional, because individuals can relate to each other through more than one set of parameters and norms. Within the public space, or better through the visualization of public space, only few commonalities of the group are brought to the front plan. Whether it is the ideal of a national or class belonging, or the joint reclaiming of public space for exercising either content or discontent, i.e. demonstration, the public space becomes the embodiment of the exercised ideals, demands and values.

By adopting Rudolf Arnheim's argument, that there is "no left or right, up or down; that there is no definable distance, while space does not physically exist" (Arnheim 1977, 10), and by assuming that space is always created and not only a physical given, it can be argued that it is grounded in interaction, in the energy made between all agencies involved. Space is an "encounter, assembly, simultaneity" (Lefebvre 1991, 101). Space exists in the energy between involved bodies, appearing in their interaction, among each other and with the pre-given sets of arrangements (Butler 2011). It is created in the actions of the body and as Bruno Zevi (1974) states "is animated by the gestures and actions of those who inhabit it" (Hays 1998, 180). When understood in terms of the performative action creating it public space might be seen as either representational or absolute (Lefebvre 1991). Lefebvre makes the difference between the two, based on the dominant agency creating the space. While *representational space* "is alive: it speaks" (Lefebvre 1991, 42), meaning that it is based on the communication as experienced by the individual body, therefore being "fluid and dynamic" (Lefebvre 1991, 42); the *absolute space* is built of isolated segments of a physical space set in the vacuum by the political forces transferring it to the realm of political, formulating a stand-still, a symbol. Further distinction between the two can be made in relation to their appropriation of time. While the representational spaces are alive and therefore "live time, after all; they are in time" (Lefebvre 1991, 48), the absolute space employs historical (never-ending) time and is to be governed by the power instances, i.e. the state. By looking into the definition of representational and absolute space as laid by Lefebvre, a conclusion can be made that the public space envisioned and made by the political agency of a society is always wished to function as a representational space, but due to the nature of its creator it is destined to transform to an absolute space.

The transformation of public space, firstly from a representational to absolute space, and later from a space to an emblem, can be easily observed in analysis of non-utilitarian state produced spaces. These are the spaces which are in a need of continuous activation, while they uncomfortable bring together the ephemerality of performance, the solidity of material visualization, and fusion of time as lived now and time as it was. These are the spaces of pilgrimage and devotion, the spaces made to resist fluidity of time, infinitely representational while holding the stability of absolute space. These are the *spaces for practice of memory*. It can be argued that each space for practice of memory is constituted from two main segments, the physical configuration, commonly an architectural marker, and the action, mainly a scripted performance- a commemoration (Boyer 1994). *The architectural configurations* in all diversity of shapes and sizes should be regarded as "*performative*

monuments” (Widrich 2009, 18). The space of performative monuments defines the position of a group of individuals in action. It lays down the prescription of wanted order commanding the bodies “prescribing or proscribing gestures, routes and distances to be covered (...)” (Lefebvre 1991, 143) and simultaneously sets the physical configuration, therefore building a representational space. In *commemorative performance* the engagement of animate and inanimate bodies is conducted along a strictly *codified line of actions*. The latter makes commemoration a closely planned and often protocol bound performance, engaging the bodies in simultaneous action of inhabiting and producing public space. The score (or a script) is there to ensure that the communication and exchange among the present and acting bodies, results in creation of public space, with strictly determined elements. The repetition and the nuanced change of the score of a commemorative event prove to be of vital importance in the transformation from a space of living memory (representational space) to the space of heritage (i.e. absolute space).

When transformed into a heritage site or a heritage object, these spaces are given an opportunity to enter a similar, but still new processes of performative space-making. Such process would be the one of *heritigization*. “*Heritigization* is a process in which heritage is used as a resource to achieve a certain social goal” (Poria 2010, 218). Yaniv Poria calls on the deliberation given by Laurajane Smith (2008) stating that heritigization presents a process in which an individual creates its sense of identity, based on connections and understanding of the values cherished by a community, or differently defined group of people. In practice this process implies careful acts of valorisation, selection and interpretation of found material relics. The process of selection implies construction of systems of values to be given and presented by a specific heritage space or object. The composite segment of any heritigization process is *appropriation*, which presents the final stage of adopting an interpreted object, space or performance as a composite part of identification with a community or a group of people. *Appropriation* is based on knowing the answer to who, how and why uses certain heritage object, space and/or performance. According to the Fact Sheet developed by Marina La Salle and the IPinCH Commodifications of Cultural Heritage Working Group, published in June 2014, the appropriation of heritage at its most basic level, refers to taking “something for one’s own” (La Salle 2014, 1). It is further stated that “the appropriated object or idea is removed from its originating or source context and applied to another” (La Salle 2014, 1).

Appropriation of heritage occurs on both tangible and intangible level of heritage object, space or a performance. Alongside with the careful documenting and registering, valorisation of heritigization, and therefore, appropriation, endows heritage with new meaning and a new role in making of public space. Therefore, when approaching commemorations and for them designated sites as subjects of heritagization, it is important to honour their dual nature. They are simultaneously tangible, i.e. monumental, and intangible, i.e. narration/practice, heritage. Due to this duality several dilemmas can be detected and should be taken into a consideration. Firstly, on which occasion and within which action can we consider commemoration space to be a tangible artefact? If and when does it belong to the realm of in-

tangibility, and when do the two fuse? Secondly, the question of appropriation of meanings and values, embodied in any heritage object, needs to be answered in order to understand the given interpretation of it? Furthermore, looking at the current changed narratives of some heritage sites it is just to ask who, how and why uses them as heritage?

Answering of these questions may and will vary depending on the analysed case of a commemorative performance and its designated site, making it difficult to establish a rounded definition of the process. First issue that can be tackled is the physical quality of such a performance, both on the level of performance and on the level of the stage. The built stage for any site-specific performance was not necessarily meant to persist and to be kept for the time to come. Rather they were intended to be ephemeral and only a visual prop, which has served its purpose with ending of the action. However, very often commemorative performances had to be single-placed, implying continuous returning to the same physical site (more or less endowed with the selected memory). The latter implies that a permanent spatial marking was necessarily made. With the durability of the marker, starting from the used materials to the adjustment of the natural landscape, qualify it as a valid subject of heritagization. Further, the intangible segment of commemorative performance, from the actual performance (encompassing all the activities starting with the making of a score to the interaction of all present bodies) to its meanings, is likewise a subject of re-valorisations of diverse formats. Often the appropriative stage of heritagization proves to be more complex when it comes to intangible levels of commemorative performance. While in the case of the tangible qualities of heritage objects, spaces and performances the appropriation seems to be straight-forward process, the appropriation of intangible meanings, such is ideology, proves to be slightly more complicated. Even though, any appropriative process is a fair-game and no person can claim a right to truthfulness, the issue of appropriative twisting should be addressed, especially with the wave of interpretations brought by the performative turn of contemporary heritage interpretations, both as a theoretical framework and as a part of the heritage management practice.

In order to illustrate the stated processes and their multi-layered end-results, this text will deal with specific case studies. The sites dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle (NOB) can be viable analysis material for tackling the above mentioned questions due to their different contemporary faith. Some of them are erased alongside with the commemoration which was held on their site. Some are still physically there but striped of any meaning and left to the vacuum of silence, lamenting over the landscape. On the other hand, some are declared to be cultural heritage of respective successor states, with their status based on the physical traits of made spaces, alone. In these cases the commemorative performance (if occurring), isn't a subject of heritage management practice. Nevertheless, the functioning of these sites in the contemporary landscape is predominantly based on the ability of bringing together and activating communication through the presence of the bodies. That is why these specific sites are only functional as public spaces, if certain performative practices are present, regardless of the form they assume.

My analysis will focus on the appropriation of commemoration performance and for it made site as heritage, on the implications of such action, and finally on its possible end-results. Therefore, a site dedicated to commemorating WWII events is looked at from the side of actual commemorative practices, envisioned during the period of existence of the Yugoslav state, and in some for is still conducted today. Further, it is important to note here that the coming text will not deal with the past and present quantity of performances and monuments dedicated to the WWII events, nor will it aspire to offer exact numbers of currently standing monuments dedicated to the NOB¹. It will, rather, attempt to illustrate the elaborated phenomena of space, its making and transformation to heritage to be appropriated, through carefully selected performances, as maybe the most flamboyant and convincing examples.

Performing /Commemorating

During the existence of former Yugoslavia employing performance was a common way of creating and entering the public space. The typology of state supported performances ranged from the performances of labour, through performances of vitality, to the performances of remembering and memory. It can be argued that each designed performance was intended to create public space, within which the official stands of the state can be demonstrated. However, not each of these performances was intended to be single-placed and therefore did not demand building of a permanent spatial configuration. In some cases complex and elaborated scenography was built on site only for a specific occasion, functioning more like a baroque, extravagant, and ephemeral scenery, than permanent marker of space. There are several examples of such performances in former Yugoslavia, from which those connected to the activities of the youth are possibly the most vibrant ones. The *Reby of the Youth*, with central celebration organized each year on the 25th of May at the stadium of JNA (Yugoslav National Army), is maybe the most mentioned and researched manifestation of this type (Videkanić, 2010). Even though this specific performance was conducted at the same site (at least when it came to its central celebration) the scenography and other physical interventions within the space changed each year. They were documented, but not kept as a permanent marker. A sort of a combination of a youth manifestation and a “proper” commemoration was held each July at Lazine near Danilovgrad (Montenegro). This performance (titled *Julske vatre mladih*) had a twofold purpose of commemorating killed members of communist youth in 1944, and demonstrating the power and progress of Montenegrin/Yugoslav youth (Popović 2014). The commemorative character of the main narrative of the space caused building of permanent marker, i.e. a monument at the

¹ Monuments dedicated to NOB have been largely present in the public arena in the recent years, due to the growing interest in their physical traits, as well as due to the alarming present condition some of them are in. Studies of Gal Kirn, Max Bergolz, Olga Manojlović- Pintar and Heike Karge, among others, offer an extensive insight into the ways these monuments were built and later maintained. However, a contextual analysis of performances occurring at these sites, or better the lack of, is still loudly missing.

site, designed by Drago Đurović. However, by looking at the scripts of the performances, it is clear that an emphasis is laid on the artistic achievements and the potentials of the youth. The date of commemoration/festival/celebration, despite the discomfort these three words create when equally used for the same performance, was closely connected to the dates of other large-scale events in Montenegro. The *Day of Upraise Against Fascism* on the 13th of July, being only one of them. The case of *Julske vatre mladih* presents a specific type of a performance that more or less successfully fuses the act of commemorating a historic event, and building of a new future, secured by strong, grateful and dedicated youth. The two named performances have a different contemporary faith. *While Rely of the Youth* was lastly organized in 1989, never to be practiced again, *Julske vatre mladih* are still being conducted. The seventy-year-jubilee of this manifestation was celebrated in 2014, with a massive performance which in its script and narrative did not differ significantly, from the originally made and used performance score (Popović 2014). The very firm emphasis on the antifascist past, present and future of Montenegro, still kept a central place in the provided narratives (both referring to the events of history, and to the contemporary daily politics).

Performative activity utterly different from the two mentioned above, but interesting in terms of contemporary appropriation, were the mass youth actions. They were organized with a goal of rebuilding the country devastated by WWII, and developing the much needed infrastructure for the new modern state. The activity of hard manual labor was used for building public space, in both literal and symbolic sense. Built spaces were of public importance and usage, and the names they were given openly referred to the main values of the state, such was for example “brotherhood and unity”. Additionally, through the conducted activities, both on the construction sites and within the camps (educational workshops, theater and music performances, active political and ideological upbringing, etc.) the made public space expressed all the normative values, the “proper, progressive and reflexive” youth was to embrace. Circulation and adoption of the stated values was ensured through active exchanges (even of social nature) among the present and active bodies. Despite the fact that these performances are intrinsically different from commemorative performances and from the festivals of youth, mentioned above, they are close to the main issues of this paper while some of the commemorative sites of NOB were built within them. Such was the ORA Sutjeska in 1971, when a large part of the *Memorial Park Battle of Sutjeska* in Tjentište (Bosnia and Herzegovina) was built. Even though, this memorial park played an important role in the commemorative landscape of former Yugoslavia, it presents a far more flamboyant example of contemporary heritage appropriation practice. When made, the Memorial Park, and to it connected commemorative practice and performance, had a high level of importance within the remembrance practices of former Yugoslavia. The space itself was embodying the narrative of the one of most important battles for the partisan movement in WWII, dated in 1943. Besides the commemorating of fallen comrades, the performances placed an unquestionable emphasis on the antifascist character of NOB. Through the regular commemoration on the level of republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which occurred each year, all the jubilee years were commemorated with the federal involvement, both on the level of performance and on

the level of finances. The commemorations (regardless of their manipulative potential) were there to keep the fire of the struggle alive, and to define the path for the future of idea, many gave their life for - the idea of antifascism.

Today, the official state commemoration is no longer held, and the state holiday calendar is changed. However, the site, or more precisely, the massive monument is far from forgotten. It is officially proclaimed heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and therefore is taken care of by the respective state. By declaring it state's cultural heritage and due the absence of the once regular conducted performance, this site is transformed into the absolute space. Even though the original commemorative performance, which made this space, and was regularly held in it, in recent years was abolished, this site was used for instigating creation of new representational space. Through activities like *Tjentište 2013*, the Memorial Park once again became the site of states clear political action, the one of appropriating past values.² Starting with the evocation of the symbolism of the year 2013, the seventy-year-jubilee of the battle of Sutjeska, the appropriation of heritage began. However, when it comes to the performance to be appropriated, the new organizers did not select once held commemoration (probably due to the potential ambivalence it might have caused in the every-day public sphere of the new states). A seemingly less ideologically charged performance, the mass youth action, was chosen for the stated process. Furthermore, using of a mass youth action should be regarded as playing on the safe-side of nostalgia, evoking fond memories for some, and presenting an understandable folklore quote for others, mainly younger generations. For this occasion, youth of Republika Srpska was gathered to renew the devastated buildings of the *Youth Sport and Leisure Center*, the composite element of once built Memorial Park. The visual similarities between performance held in a different time, and the one performed in 2013 are more than visible. From the chosen costume and working tools, to the gender equal divisions of work within the groups, acting at the site. Additionally, a Friendship Camp 2013, resembling the recreational-cultural content of the former youth actions, was organized as well.³ The event was heavily supported by the resource ministries and state officials of Republika Srpska. Here the appropriation of the performance was based on a careful selection of elements a community can relate to, and on later application of those elements in instigating activities within which public space is reclaimed, or newly created (by extracting and emphasizing the wanted dimensions embedded in the inherited physical space). The commemorative activities once connected to this absolute/ heritage space were present only as data connected to an artifact, to be used or disregarded in the new process of building the new representational space.

² Information regarding the start and reactions to the organization of Tjentište 2013 can be found in detail on the forum 058.ba ISKRA <http://058.ba/category/tjentiste/page/4/>, accessed: 20 December 2015.

³ The program and the description of the planned event can be found on the web portal foca24.info <http://www.foca-24.info/?p=6363>, accessed: 26 February 2016. The information is taken from the official report of the Youth Alliance of Repulika Srpska.

However, inherited performances can be appropriated in a different manner as well.

The official state-proclaimed heritage can still be a representational space, without transgressing into an absolute one. The continuity of the seemingly same performance, maintains the space in its representational form. Commemorative practice in its form stays the same and the appropriation of both tangible and intangible traits is present in nuanced changes, either in the offered narrative and or in the additions to the original performance script. An explicit example of such an approach can be detected in the still present commemorative practice within the *Memorial Park October of Kragujevac* (Serbia).

The Memorial Park was established in 1953 to commemorate the tragic death of several thousands of citizens of Kragujevac. Its establishment followed already annually set commemorations held since 21st of October 1945. In the same year, a sacral service was held at the graves of soldiers, which lost their lives during the liberation of Kragujevac and in the city's close proximity (Karge 2014). In 1954 an all-Yugoslav competition was made for the urban solution of the soon to be Memorial Park. According to archival data, the project was financed through the means of the Main Board of SUBNOR Serbia (the Association of Fighters of the People's Liberation War), with the assistance of the Executive Council of Serbia. Additionally, a significant financial aid was given to the project by the workers' union of the Zastava factory in Kragujevac (Karge 2014). However, other republics of former Yugoslavia took financial part as well. Numerous sculptures were erected as a result of the international exchange and were financed by other states. Both the Republic of Croatia (*Monument of People of Croatia* by Vojin Bakić and Silvana Sajsl, from 1981) and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (monument *Hundred for one* by Nandor Gild, from 1980), as an example, gifted sculptures marking the tombs at this memorial site.

Today's Memorial Park is positioned on a surface of 325ha and it encompasses 30 mounds (29 in the park and 1 outside of it), spatially connected with 7km long circular road (Manojlović-Pintar 2015). The design of the park is authored by Mihaljo Mitrović and Radivoje Tomić. The Memorial Park contains 10 monuments, from which monument of Pain and Defiance (by Ante Gržetić) is the oldest (1959) and monument of Friendship (by Anton Stojko) is the latest one erected in 1994 as a gift of the Republic of Romania. From the 10 existing monuments the most famous one is the *Interrupted flight* by Miodrag Živković (1963) (Martinović 2013). It is a land mark sculpture, which is used in two-dimensional format as a part of the official logo of the Memorial Park. Under the first Law for the Protection of Monuments in Yugoslavia (the Law of Protection of Cultural property, adopted in 1977), Memorial Park October of Kragujevac was declared a Cultural Monument of Exceptional Importance, in the category of Historic Landmarks, in 1979.

As many other spaces of a similar purpose, the *Memorial Park October of Kragujevac* was designed with a museum building as a mandatory element of its architectural configuration. The museum was opened in 1976, with a goal of collecting, analyzing, safekeeping and presenting the documentation connected to the vic-

tims in Kragujevac.⁴ Since 2003, the museum houses a permanent exhibition „Tragedy of Kragujevac 1941“ made by a team of authors- historian Stanisa Brkić and Nenad Djordjević, Milan Koljanin, painter- graphic artist Irena Paunović and painter Igor Stepančić⁵. In 2006, a chapel of New Martyrs of Kragujevac was erected within the memorial park, creating a somewhat uncomfortable fusion of sacral and secular memorial space. This act in itself presents a similar appropriation approach as it can be seen within the event Tjentište 2013, as an example. The similarity is based on the extraction of a singular segment of historical data connected to a memorial artifact. However, in this specific case, the appropriation is based on an imported segment of early commemorative activity in Kragujevac, which was not directly connected to the physical site in question. This sort of appropriation of heritage sites in contemporary interpretations is not an isolated case in Serbia. A chapel was erected within the Memorial Park Svrnjaci, as well.

The first commemorative event was organized in 1944 in the city of Kragujevac, when an academia titled *The Great School Lesson* was held.⁶ However, the first commemorative event on the site itself was held in 1957, under the same name. The final structure of the commemoration was established in 1963, when the organization was entrusted to *the Memorial Park October of Kragujevac*. The commemorative event was, and is, divided in to two main segments: the homage to the victims, and the literary and/or music program. In the first segment, the state anthem was played, the wreaths were laid, the war survivors would speak and a short caption of the world affairs was given. The homage was followed by the literary and/or music program, containing a selection of literary works of patriotic character, a theater performance and the act of orchestras and choirs. Since 1971, all the decisions regarding the contents of the commemoration are made by the Council of *Great School Lesson* formed on the level of the republic. The council had final decisive power regarding the concept, contents and program of the manifestation. Additionally, it selected the author who will write a poem and the director and composer who will create a piece especially for this occasion. In the period between 1971 and 2013 more than 50.000 participants took part in the commemoration.⁷ Until 2013, thirty poems, two theater plays and thirty-one original music compositions were written and performed. The Great School Lesson is held each year on the 21st of October on the plateau in front of the *Interrupted flight* monument, with a beginning at 11 o'clock and in duration of 45 minutes. The commemoration holds the

⁴ Information available at the official web presentation of the Memorial Park October of Kragujevac <http://www.spomenpark.rs/rs/>, accessed: 20 May 2015.

⁵ Information available at the official web presentation of the Memorial Park October of Kragujevac <http://www.spomenpark.rs/rs/>, accessed: 20 May 2015.

⁶ Information on the manifestation the Great School Lesson are available at the official web presentation of the Memorial Park October of Kragujevac, <http://www.spomenpark.rs/rs/velikiskolski-cas>, accessed: 20 May 2015.

⁷ Information on the manifestation the Great School Lesson are available at the official web presentation of the Memorial Park October of Kragujevac, <http://www.spomenpark.rs/rs/velikiskolski-cas>, accessed: 20 May 2015.

same form until this day. The event starts with intonation of the state's anthem (today changed, due to the change of the state, following the dismantling of SFRY, SR Yugoslavia, and Serbia and Montenegro), and lying of wreaths. However a new segment was incorporated since 1991 an orthodox memorial service is given at the site by archbishop of Šumadija (Marković-Milenković 2015). This adjustment can be understood in similar manner as building of a chapel within the space of Memorial Park, discussed earlier on this text.

In the case of the *Memorial Park October of Kragujevac* heritage appropriation is, as expected, made on the level of recognizing this space as a cultural monument of the state, i.e. on protecting its physical form. However, appropriation of a commemorative performance as heritage occurs in this case, as well. Since the commemoration still exists principally in the same format as it once was, it is hard to view it as an artifact which enters a new process of heritagization. Additionally, with having in mind that this specific heritage space functions more as representational than the absolute space, the appropriation has to be searched for within the nuanced changes of the performed commemoration, as well as within the approach to the narrative presented, within the memorial park. Firstly, the *Memorial Park*, following its institutional mission: “čuvanje uspomene na stanovnike grada Kragujvca, streljane 21. oktobra 1941. godine, negovanje kulture sećanja i širenje ideje mira i tolerancije kroz raznovrsne memorijalne i umetničke manifestacije i aktivnosti koje promovišu najviše etičke i estetske vrednosti”⁸ [“to keep the memory of the citizen of Kragujevac, that were killed on the 21st of October 1941. To keep the culture of remembering and to spread the idea of peace and tolerance through memorial and artist manifestations and activities, that promote ethical and esthetic values”], produces diverse public programming, which attempts to equalize the historical voices, with a so-called “non-bias” approach to the historical events and actors. This emphasis on the victims and the ambivalence towards the historical context, and with gradual erasure of the values of the after-war state, had an interesting impact on the public sphere, this space was made to create. Only one of its impacts is a new state holiday- *The Day of Remembrance of the Serbian Victims of the WWII*, introduced in 2011 (Govedarica 2012). The first official commemoration was held on 21st of October 2012 at the *Memorial Park October of Kragujevac*. With this new commemorative day the initial narrative of the site in question is changed. Instead of commemorating the innocent victims of Kragujevac killed in 1941, the commemoration day mourns the Serbian victims and suffering during WWII, raising the stakes of remembrance strategy to the level of a nation, or more precise to the level of all-national unjust suffering. In this respect it is important to note that even though Serbia did take part in antifascist fight in Europe the official day of the upraise is no longer celebrated. The holiday *Day of the Upraise against Fascism*, which was celebrated on the 7th of July, was abandoned as a state holiday in 2001.⁹

⁸ The official institutional mission of the Memorial Park October of Kragujevac. Available at: <http://www.spomenpark.rs/rs/o-nama/misija-vizija-i-strateski-ciljevi>, accessed: 23 May 2015.

⁹ *Law on State and other Holidays of Republic of Serbia*, passed in 2001 and admendmented in 2011. The full text can be found at:

Although the date alone was historically questionable, and can be considered as fashioning of official history of the former Yugoslavia (and therefore was abandoned by the successor state), a new state holiday celebrating the active role in the antifascist fight was not introduced. Therefore it can be argued that the Serbian official remembrance strategy possibly seeks to define nation's role of a victim rather than the one of an active participant, of the antifascist fight in WWII. The active working on re-defining the official remembrance strategy of the state was followed by numerous examples of revision of history, causing a wave of public ambivalence towards the past and its potential meanings. Active equalizing of historical roles during the WWII, as well present in the exhibition *Tragedy of Kragujevac 1941*, where the antifascist forces were not clearly marked (though the historical data can make that distinction), opened room for contradictions in interpretation. The latter resulted in breaching of ethical boundaries. Such an example most definitely is the placement of a portrait of Milan Nedić, the prime minister of the Serbian collaborationist government during the WWII, on the walls of the Gymnasium of Kragujevac (Čalija 2011). This decision in itself is contradictory, having in mind that the students of the gymnasium were killed in the 1941 tragedy, in which troops under the ultimate command of Nedić also took part. Since the first commemorative event at the site until today, new students of the same Gymnasium were marked as one of the main stakeholders and heirs of the site in question. The appropriateness of a decision to bring in portraits of those responsible for the commemorated tragedy, within the space caring the affliction and memory of it, will always be ethically disputable, regardless the tendency of creating new "non-bias" interpretation of history, or even the new versions of the former.

Ending/Beginning

By looking at the given cases in the light of and through a very brief referring to the issues of their appropriation, and contemporary heritagization, a question can be asked about where the similarities and differences between the three lay. Furthermore, from the position of citizens of all successor states of former Yugoslavia, as the main stakeholders of contemporary remembrance strategies, as those directly influencing and consuming it (those who embody the *who, how and why*) a question should be asked: Who, how and why appropriates antifascism as heritage?

This short analysis fairly displays different approaches to appropriating heritage dated to the same historical period. While some aim to inherit vitality of new generations and a promise of progress and advance for its stakeholders, i.e. citizens of the new national states (*Tjentište 2013*), some strive to inherit the status of a victim (*the Great School Lesson*). Further, some (although rare) engage in direct and literal quotation of the inherited performative practices (*Julske vatre mladih*). All three discussed cases are based on the understanding of how the process of heritagization and musealization function, with carefully selecting and adapting of

firstly decontextualized and later re-contextualized, segments of today historical commemorative performance. However, there is one crucial difference between cases and contemporary occurrences of the *Great School Lesson* and *Tjentište 2013*, and the case of *Julske vatre mladih*.

Besides the understanding of the processes of appropriation, the first two demonstrate purposeful disregarding of one common aspect of the former narrative—the idea of antifascism. The antifascism was preconceived by the creators of Monuments of NOB, and to them attached commemorations, as the common denominator of all the built sites, regardless of the specificity of history each of them carried. This intent can be interpreted in many ways, and this text might not be the right place to dive deeply in the problematic of all-present revisions of history occurring in the public spheres of successor states of former Yugoslavia. However, the brief look at the contemporary appropriations and interpretations of heritage spaces can be indicative of the official state strategies, or at least acceptable stands to be voiced. Revisions of history and introductions of new commemorative practices and sites, witness to fashioning of new state's remembrance strategies. The proving of a breach with the past, and of the liberation from the systems of the former state, are in these cases employed for defining own specific expression of public sphere, potentially not prepared for interpretations with a historical distance.

However, the case of *Julske vatre mladih* offers a different perspective and is an example of a different official remembrance strategy. Even though the reasons for the direct appropriation of (heritage) sites and performances, both commemorative and celebratory ones, are beyond the scope of this analysis, active inheriting of the victorious and antifascist narratives is more than an obvious. With maintaining of formerly defined state holiday the *Day of Upraising Against Fascism* (13 July), keeping of the same format of commemorative practice, with the only change introduced in the segments referring to the daily political occurrences, and with persistence in emphasizing the active role in the antifascist fight, the state claims its rightful position as an heir of historically and civilizing important flows of antifascist fight and ideology. Is the state succeeding in implementing their strategy is yet to be seen, but the nature of this attempt marks it as intrinsically different from the process occurring in its surroundings.

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