

# Relative Noncontemporaneity and Reflexive Nostalgia: A Case Study of the Monument to the Uprising of the People of Banija and Kordun

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*This paper explores the Petrova gora memorial complex as a case study for understanding dynamics of politics of memory in post-socialist Croatia. Focusing on Vojin Bakić's 1981 Monument to the Uprising of the People of Banija and Kordun, it examines how the monument's shifting significance reflects broader processes of remembering, forgetting, and reinterpreting socialist heritage. Once a key site of Yugoslav antifascist commemoration, the monument today embodies contested narratives: state neglect and nationalist erasure on one hand, and grassroots efforts at preservation and critical engagement on the other. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, and discourse analysis, the study traces how commemorative rituals, cultural interventions, and graffiti re-inscribe meaning onto the site. By utilising Svetlana Boym's distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia, the analysis highlights how ruins — artefacts of noncontemporaneity — mediate collective memory, enabling both continuity with the past and the imagination of alternative political futures rooted in antifascist solidarity.*

**KEYWORDS:** *politics of memory, reflexive nostalgia, postsocialism, socialist monuments, Petrova gora*

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**F**rom Hollywood remakes of previous decades' box-office hits, to global nationalist longing for a "golden era" of national harmony and strong "family values," we are experiencing an epidemic of nostalgia, a longing for community, continuity, and collective memory in a world seemingly devoid of them. Nostalgia is a defence mechanism that resurges in times of great changes to the rhythm of life (Boym, 2001). Uncritical engagement with nostalgic fantasy can lead to monstrous politics, a willingness to die or kill for the sake of a homeland that never was. The sentiment itself is, however, as unavoidable as are the displacement and sense of irreversibility of time that fuel it, both hallmarks of modernity. Out of this arises the question of whether nostalgia can be harnessed not only for right-wing reactionary political aims, but for progressive ones as well.

While not giving a definitive answer about progressive politics, Svetlana Boym argued that distinctive kinds of nostalgia definitely exist. In developing the opposing types of "restorative" and "reflexive" nostalgia, Boym (2001) distinguished between "national memory that is based on a single version of national identity, on the one hand, and social memory, which consists of collective frameworks that mark but do not define individual memory, on the other hand" (ibid, 7). Social memory, which the reflexive strand of nostalgia supports, is enacted primarily in its materialisations. In order for a certain historical remembrance of a group to be perpetuated, reminders of the desired past need to be constructed, become loci integral to the public sphere, and thus become a part of the average person's everyday life (Ilić and Škrbić Alempijević, 2017). Monuments play a prominent role in official politics of memory, and are sometimes appropriated in informal practices of collective memory. By defining historical memory as a determinant of a place's cultural significance, monuments constitute memory-places as expression of ideology, shaped in equal measure by political discourse which led to the monument's erection, as well as everyday behaviours, movements, and relationships between the people and their material culture (Nora, 1996). The interplay between monuments as material objects and the people who produce or encounter them is central to ethnological and anthropological study of monuments. These objects shape and are shaped by people's perspectives, stories, practices, emotions, and interests; thus they offer scholars a lens through which to examine broader social and political dynamics, not only at the time of their creation but also throughout their subsequent use, reinterpretation, or neglect.

What happens, though, when these relationships between people and cultural objects are disturbed or discontinued? What becomes of a memory-place if ideology and political discourse that constituted it in the first place are no longer desirable, or even permissible? The place becomes unmoored, a relic, no longer an integral part of contemporaneous collective memory. On the other hand, owing to its tenacious materiality, and to the lasting remembrance of the few that continue to visit it, a monument is also an object that resists being consigned to oblivion. It is, to borrow David Gross's concept of relative noncontemporaneity, a representative of a past that "while also over and done with, has nevertheless left behind more immediately and continuously experienceable physical or cultural traces than those housed in museum displays" (Gross, 2000: 142). As such, it lends itself to reimaginings and reinterpretations rooted in nostalgia.

This study looks at application of reflexive nostalgia by researching policies and cultures that keep alive memories of a bygone alternative political system through continuing use of its cultural heritage. The memorial complex explored in this study was profoundly transformed with the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and establishment of the Republic of Croatia, and the replacement of the old symbolical system of socialist brotherhood and unity with one focused on exclusive, nationalist imaginary. The focus is on Petrova gora, formerly a memorial park containing numerous historical sites and artefacts related to the World War 2-era antifascist insurrection, known in Yugoslav historiography as People's Liberation Struggle (*Narodno-oslobodilačka borba*, or NOB for short). More particularly, the case study that forms the basis of the argument about reflexive nostalgia as a vehicle of alternative political imaginary is centred on the Monument to the Uprising of the People of Banija and Kordun, authored by the famous Yugoslav architect of Serbian ethnicity, Vojin Bakić, which was erected at the Petrovac summit in 1981.

Vojin Bakić was one of the most important Yugoslav sculptors, active mostly in the 1950s and 1960s, and his work was central to the development of a distinct Yugoslav modernist style in figurative arts. Today, most of Bakić's surviving monuments are in a state of neglect and decay. A number of them were destroyed during the war in Croatia in the 1990s — usually by explosives due to their size — such as the "Bjelovarac" statue in Bjelovar (erected in 1946, destroyed in 1991, rebuilt in 2010), or the "Monument to the victory

of the people of Slavonija” in Kamenska village (erected 1968, demolished 1992). One of Bakić’s later and most famous works, the Monument to the Uprising of the People of Banija and Kordun commemorates the Partisan struggle on Petrova gora, namely the local antifascist insurrection in July 1941, but also the battle in May 1942 when some seven hundred Partisan fighters broke out of encirclement by numerically far superior fascist forces, rescuing many civilians and wounded guerrillas (Goldstein, 2020).

The principal building of the memorial complex is a massive, 37 meters high and 40 meters wide sweeping construction of steel and concrete. Four storeys rise above ground in asymmetrical, flowing shapes. The sculpture’s form is reminiscent of flags flying in the wind (Celner, 2024: 51), but also of more abstract or fantastical objects, such as “a space station or a space shuttle” (Kirn, 2011: 263). Gal Kirn’s statement that the Petrova gora monument looks as though it has come from another world was echoed by many visitors to the monument during the ethnographic phase of the research. Bakić’s monument invites utopian imagination by design. Its form is a stark departure from the socialist realist style typically associated with antifascist memorials, both Soviet and early Yugoslav ones (Kirn, 2011). There are no figures of suffering victims or triumphant Partisan heroes; whatever meaning there might be in the structure’s form — outward and interior both — is ambiguous and left to interpretation. The monument “completely negates the humanist moment of suffering or victory, but at the same time strategically touches the question of re-presentation and imagination of the partisan struggle” (ibid.: 263). It forces the observer to recognize a certain striving for the future, whereas at the same time it reasserts the utopian character of the antifascist movement that fought for and created the socialist Yugoslav society (ibid.). This property lends the Petrova gora monument a unique potential among the surviving socialist memorials in Croatia as a site for reinventing the past and reimagining the future.

The monument and the surrounding memorial park — one of only seven in the federation — had a prominent role in constituting and maintaining official politics of memory in Yugoslavia, owing to its prominent place in the narratives of Partisan heroism and “brotherhood and unity” of different ethnicities as central underpinnings of Yugoslav statehood. Multi-ethnic cooperation aspect of the (re)produced memory was particularly salient to the locality of the monument, historically a majority-Serb area.

The stated rationale at the founding of the Memorial Park in late 1960s went beyond memorialisation of the NOB, and aimed to develop the area into an engine of economic, educational, and political innovation and development (Horvatinčić, 2023), thus making it an integral part of daily life for local inhabitants. With the dissolution of Yugoslavia amid the 1990s wars, sites of memory dedicated to ethnically Serbian victims of World War 2, or the ideals of “brotherhood and unity” and socialist revolution, became undesirable to Croatian authorities, and were either destroyed, or abandoned to ruin and oblivion. There have, however, been numerous initiatives over the past three decades to restore or rebuild this vast built heritage — and, by organising commemorative events, to rescue from forgetting the history of socialist-era progressive antifascist politics.

It is these practices of commemoration that this paper aims to analyse. I have employed qualitative methodology comprising observation and ethnographic descriptions of commemorations and recent interventions in the space of Bakić's monument at Petrova gora; discourse analysis of media coverage and various initiatives for the monument's restoration; and interviews with visitors to the monument and the coordinator of the SNV-organised commemoration on 17th May, Aneta Vladimirov. In my ethnographic observations and interviews I aimed to gather experiences of a broad spectre of people, both those who were born and lived during the socialist period and those who did not; and those more and less directly involved in political activism. My research was guided by the following starting questions: How do commemorative practices keep alive historical memory after the generation of people who lived during the socialist era are gone? What are the different (and sometimes conflicting) ideas about potential restoration of the Bakić monument, and how do these reflect varying political imaginaries underpinning them? Which aspects of these practices can be described as “reflexive,” i.e. critical of the very memory they perpetuate, and how is this reflection achieved? How do visitors to the monument, especially those of younger generations without lived experience of socialism, relate to the cultural heritage of the NOB and incorporate the monument into progressive politics? Before those questions can be addressed, it is necessary to examine the processes by which objects such as the Petrova gora monument are detached from symbolical and political systems in which they were created, and the means by which they might be harnessed, through practices of reflexive nostalgia, into imagining alternative futures.

## / Nostalgia and forgetting — politics of memory in postsocialist Croatia

Dynamics at play at Bakić's Petrova gora monument — the neglect by state and local authorities on one hand, and on the other attempts by organisations and political parties invested in protecting antifascist heritage and history to protect it from oblivion — are in a sense a microcosm of politics of memory in Croatia at large, the primary reason why the location was chosen for this case study.

In an era defined by temporal instability and political upheavals caused, in part, by rapid technological advances and multiple historical ruptures, memory is among the most powerful instruments for constructing group identity. Therefore, “the right to ‘your own memory’ may serve as foundation for the construction of identity” (Vasileva and Kaleva, 2017: 188). In the Croatian post-socialist context, this right was sharply contested. Neither the successor party to the League of Communists nor their political opponents on the right displayed much interest in revisiting the shared socialist past. Instead, as Ugrešić (1996) observed, memories of communism and of coexistence were confiscated by the new regimes and supplanted with divergent narratives: some fixated on post-World War II crimes against the defeated collaborationist armies; others on strategies of national reconciliation; while still others buried recent historical traumas under layers of denial or ancient mythologies (Hozić, 2014: 234). Against such a backdrop, socialist monuments occupy an uneasy position: they are ignored, vandalised, or left to decay, yet simultaneously defended by actors who see them as vital reminders of antifascist struggle.

The tension lies in how these monuments are understood. In their examination of Bulgarian socialist monuments and their fates, Vasileva and Kaleva (2017) argue that they “deserve to be preserved: not as established, indisputable heritage, rather as *pretext for continuous interpretation of the past through authentic material traces* [emphasis added by me]” (189). Preservation of monuments such as the one on Petrova gora, therefore, is not about fixing a single meaning, but rather enabling an ongoing dialogue about history, identity, and values. This is especially pressing in the post-Yugoslav context, where one of the most prominent signifiers of nationalist ideology has become the

idea of “national reconciliation” (Kirn, 2011; Radonić, 2010; Todorova, 2004, 2010; Velikonja, 2013). As shown in this scholarship, this process has been instrumental in legitimizing ethnic divisions, shaping both imagined pasts and imagined futures. Nowhere is this more visible than in the management — or deliberate mismanagement — of monuments, which has come to exemplify the “politics of memory.” In practice, this politics manifests in relativisation of historical facts, universalisation of victimhood, symbolic reconciliation of Partisans and local fascists they fought against, and even in policies such as granting pensions to wartime collaborators (Kirn, 2011: 253–54). In this context, Partisan monuments are unwelcome reminders of forsaken emancipatory ideals and the facts of antifascist struggle that do not fit neatly into the new version of history and “national reconciliation.” New monuments are built instead, oftentimes as replacements or obstructive additions to the socialist memorials (e.g. Cimeša 2018). Within this setting, nostalgia emerges not simply as personal sentiment but as a discursively mediated ideology. As Hill and Manheim (1992: 381–82) emphasise, the human world is fragmented and contingent, and nostalgia reflects this contingency by offering competing frameworks for meaning-making. Petrović (2010: 128–29) adds that nostalgia is never merely an expression of longing but an ideological tool through which actors articulate positions, reinforce value systems, and pursue political ends. The contemporary rhetoric around monuments oscillates between restorative and reflective forms of nostalgia, each carrying distinct implications for the politics of heritage.

As Boym (2001) points out, already by the end of the nineteenth century a debate emerged between defenders of “complete restoration,” who sought to reconstruct monuments into their imagined previous wholeness, and advocates for the preservation of ruins and fragments, who believed these objects carried “age value” and invited reflection on the passage of time. Restorative nostalgia today manifests in total reconstructions and attempts to over-write or “correct” memory (Boym, 2001: 55–56).

In contrast, reflective nostalgia dwells in ruins, decay, and the patina of time, embracing history’s irreversibility and opening spaces for new interpretations. Rather than seeking to recreate a lost home, reflective nostalgia fosters aesthetic individuality and a meditation on temporality itself: it is concerned with the irrevocability of the past, human finitude, and the possibility of resisting the instrumental efficiency demanded by politics of memory. Ad-

herents of such nostalgic politics are “amateurs of time, epicures of duration,” who delight in history's textures rather than its instrumentalisation (64).

The Petrova gora monument sits precisely at this crossroads. Left in ruins, it can serve as a site of reflective nostalgia, a reminder of antifascist heritage and of the contested meanings of Yugoslavia, as well as an inspiration for imagining different political futures. At the same time, its neglect embodies the broader post-socialist drive toward restorative nationalist narratives that erase, relativize, or overwrite uncomfortable pasts. It is in this tension — between erasure and endurance, between political utility and reflective memory — that the monument's significance for Croatian politics of memory becomes most apparent.

## / History of the Monument and the Petrova gora Memorial Park

The foundation stone for the future memorial-complex was laid on 6th May 1946 by the president of the Presidency of the People's Assembly of Yugoslavia (*Prezidijum Narodne skupštine Jugoslavije*), Dr Ivan Ribar; however, due to a lack of funds, the monument was not built until 35 years later. While the construction of a monumental edifice did not happen for more than three decades after the war, there was much activity concerning the wider area of the Petrova gora mountain. On the eve of the 20th anniversary of the insurrection in Banija and Kordun in 1961, a special session of municipal boards of the Topusko, Vrginmost and Vojnić municipalities declared the remaining objects (huts, shacks, and cemeteries) of the partisan hospital a protected area “Memorial-Objects of the Central partisan hospital Petrova gora,” and the surrounding forest a protected park (Celner, 2024). That same year, a smaller memorial monument was erected at the Partisan cemetery, designed by the sculptor Stevan Luketić and the poet Jure Kaštelan, the only new build in the now protected area (Horvatićnić, 2023: 121). In 1963 the Memorial Area Petrova gora was given the status of a cultural monument, defining its borders and thoroughly listing the many historical artefacts situated on its grounds: hospitals, pharmacies, workshops, printing shops, ruins of churches, monuments, etc. (Mataušić and Horvatinčić, 2024). The Central Hospital complex was completely restored in 1964, and in 1965 the whole area was redefined

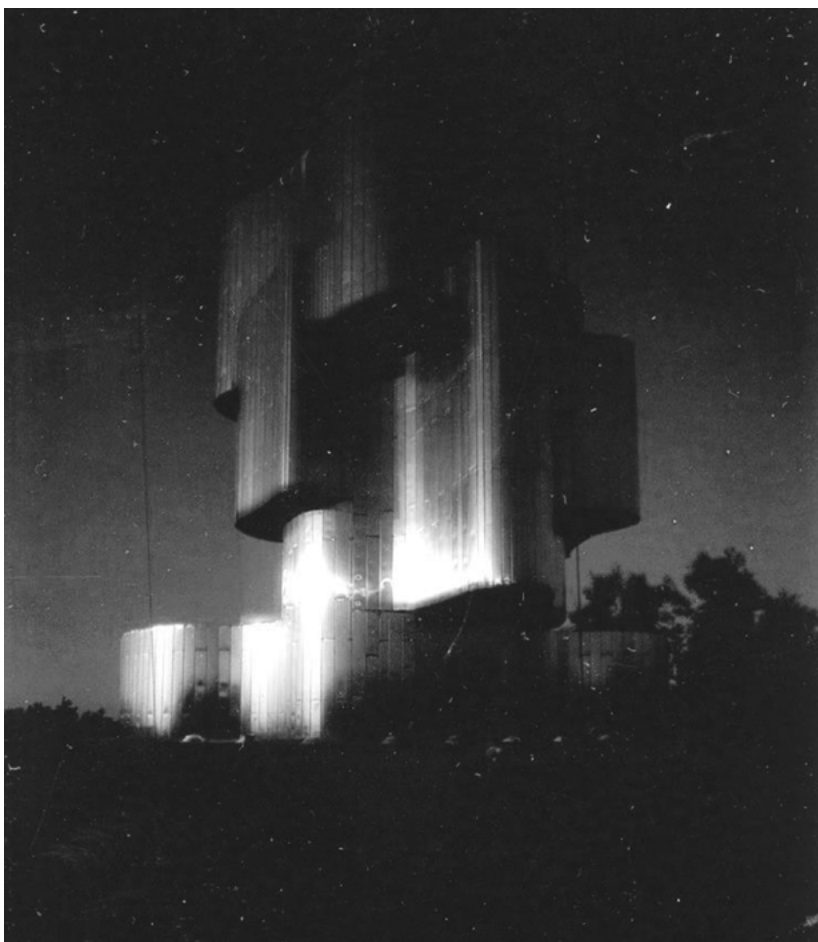
as a “memorial-area” in line with the results of contemporary historical and archaeological research on Petrova gora (Celner, 2024). The Institute of Urbanism of the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb, developed in 1969 a General Area Plan (Generalni prostorni plan) for the memorial park (Dragičević, 2015: 387).

The first design competition for the new monument was held between 1970 and 1971, but its winning design was not implemented due to disagreements between the architect, Igor Toš, and the Committee for the construction of the monument (*Odbor za izgradnju spomenika*) (Celner, 2024). Following the second federal competition in 1974, the Committee approved a design by Vojin Bakić (who had previously won a second-place award in the first competition with a different design), with Berislav Šerbetić and Tomislav Odak as principal designers and Karlovac branch of “Tempo” as the contractor (Dakić, 1989). Issues with securing funding persisted; construction finally commenced in 1980, and was completed by the following year, in time for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the people's uprising in Banija and Kordun.

The memorial complex consisted of an assembly plaza with adjacent hospitality and retail units; a 150-metre memorial promenade, at the halfway point of which was an ossuary containing the remains of seventy-two Partisan fighters and civilians who died on 1st April 1942, during the breakout from enemy encirclement; and the monument itself. While the monument was planned to house a Museum to the Revolution — notably exhibiting and commemorating the NOB and the Yugoslav socialist revolution as a whole, thus lifting the monument's significance from the local onto the wider, federal level — lack of funds delayed this project. Instead, on the ground floor inside the monument a photographic exhibit was mounted, titled “Tito in the Karlovac-Kordun region.” Further, there were gallery spaces, a reading room, a library, and offices of the Memorial Park administration on the various floors. Inner communication was facilitated by a pair of stairwells and a pair of lifts; the latter led to the observation deck, 544 meters above sea level, providing a view of the entire Petrova gora, and — on clear days — the surrounding lands as far as Zagreb, almost 60 km away (ibid). The monument was a crowning jewel and centrepiece of the Memorial Park, which reached its peak of development and tourist activity during the 1980s. Other important memorial objects included the Central Partisan Hospital, multiple smaller memori-

als scattered around the mountain, ossuaries, smaller monuments, and a refurbished children's centre in Radonja — consisting of traditional wooden cottages — which had operated from 1943 to 1945. A number of events and festivals were held on annual basis in the Memorial Park and the surrounding municipalities, and the growing tourist and education activities were supported by a number of hospitality objects providing food and lodgings (ibid.)

The ceremonial opening of the monument by the Speaker of Parliament (*predsjednik Sabora*) of the Socialist Republic of Croatia Jure Bilić, on 4th



**Slika 1. Bakić's monument in the 1980s (Archive of the Serbs in Croatia, Vojin Bakić archive)**

October 1981 was reportedly attended by some 3500 people (ibid.). On the occasion, the Speaker Jure Bilić warned of “potential future wars,” but expressed optimism that Bakić’s monument would give inspiration to the local people to resist future aggressors” (ibid.). Sadly, in less than a decade, war became a harsh reality, and the optimistic utopianism of Bakić’s work could not stem the historical tide of nationalism.

On the eve of the war in Croatia, on 4th March 1990, a political meeting was organised on the entry plaza of the Petrova gora monument. Held in the aftermath of the First general assembly of the Croatian Democratic Union party (HDZ), the meeting was organised by the municipal councils of Vojnić and Virginst in collaboration with the Yugoslav Independent Democratic Party, headed by the director of the Petrova gora Memorial park Mile Dakić (Celner, 2024). Participation of party leaders such as Dakić or Jovan Opačić of the Serbian Democratic Party (*Srpska demokratska stranka*, SDS) was prohibited, as the meeting organisers wanted to send a message of “brotherhood and unity,” against all exclusionary nationalist politics (Pauković, 2008: 20). The retired general Dušan Pekić, a prominent speaker at the meeting, recalled the historical multi-ethnic Partisan collaboration against fascism, and warned of the threat that nationalism posed to the Serbian ethnic minority in Croatia; however, among the many thousands of people attending, there were some who carried pictures of Slobodan Milošević and waved historical Serbian national flags, who saw the meeting on Petrova gora as a means of furthering a nationalist agenda (ibid.) which would become separatist as well a year later.

It was ultimately the latter group that prevailed over the former, as first an autonomous province and then an independent republic of the Serbs was established on a territory including the Petrova gora mountain and memorial park. That decay settled in quickly at the monument is evident from a dispatch by Milan Dakić to the Government of the Republic of Serbian Krajina (*Republika Srpska Krajina*, RSK), in which he asks for funding and assistance in repairing the damage done to the Memorial park since 1992. Nationalist, exclusionary forces prevailed on the Croatian side, too, and their renunciation of the antifascist Partisan past is evident in the symbolic act of abolishing the civic award named after a famed Partisan surgeon from Petrova gora, dr Marija Schlesinger.

While all belligerent sides in the 1990s wars renounced their Partisan heritage — and some actively worked on changing the past and redefining the

antifascist struggle along exclusionary ethnic lines (Radonić, 2010: 55–56) — Bakić's monument was left to rot: plating on the edifice's northwestern side began to crumble and fall, the monument was struck by gunfire on several places, and the museum's archive and exhibits were looted and devastated (Celner, 2024: 69). The lower levels of the monument were converted into storage space for weapons, munitions, and medical supplies, while other parts were used as military headquarters and training grounds by the army of RSK (ibid.). These were all evacuated, as was the RSK hospital in Vojnić and the civilian population of the surrounding municipalities, during the 1995 military operation “Storm” by the Croatian armed forces. While other memorial sites and objects on Petrova gora dedicated to the NOB were damaged during the fighting, the monument itself survived relatively unscathed; television reports by the Croatian Radio-television (*Hrvatska radiotelevizija*, HRT) in the wake of the fighting show the Petrova gora monument and surrounding plaza somewhat covered in overgrowth, but otherwise in good shape, prompting hopes that it could be refurbished and reused with minimal effort (Ban, 2023).

## / Bakić's Monument in the 21st Century

Bogdan Bogdanović, another famous Yugoslav architect and author of the “Stone Flower” monument in the Jasenovac Memorial Area, made a prediction in 1987 that a half of over 12,000 monuments and memorials to the NOB across Yugoslavia would not live to see the 21st century due to their decrepit state and rate of decay (Banjeglav, 2012: 99). What ultimately happened was partially a perverse actualisation of Bogdanović's prophecy; while many socialist monuments were outright demolished or removed, even more of them were destroyed through negligence. Just like erection of monuments is vital to establishment of memory places, so is their destruction a key method in achieving collective forgetting, which is as integral to the process of establishing and perpetuating collective memory as remembering is. “The decision based on which layers from the total historical inventory are to be put in the background, not mentioned, or removed in the period when they are proclaimed unsuitable, is reflected and can be seen in the spatial planning policies, especially those related to how the monuments are treated.” (Ilić and Škrbić Alempijević, 2017: 74) Socialist monuments in eastern European coun-

tries after 1989 became unwanted, troublesome; they represented “dissonant heritage par excellence which generates social tensions and clashes instead of promoting common understanding as the ideal universal layer of culture” (Vasiljeva and Kaleva, 2017: 189). Destruction of socialist monuments is thus one of the most visible — hence most important — means of reshaping collective memory through forced forgetting.

The collective fate of Croatian material antifascist heritage in the 1990s thus is not only an expression of the past being re-evaluated (Banjeglav, 2012), but is also a negation of values which underpinned the monuments, condemning “brotherhood and unity” and socialist emancipation while promoting a nostalgic reconstruction of a desirable, ethnically exclusive and exclusionary past.

According to data collected by the League of Antifascist Fighters and Antifascists of Croatia (*Savez antifašističkih boraca i antifašista Republike Hrvatske*, SABA) in 2002, out of over 6000 antifascist monuments and memorials extant in Croatia in 1990, only a half survived undamaged into the 21st century; among those destroyed, damaged or removed were 731 monuments and other memorial objects deemed to be of significant artistic and cultural-historical significance (Hrženjak, 2002). While the majority of destruction was directly or indirectly perpetrated by Croatian military, paramilitary, or civilian culprits, it should be noted that some of these monuments were destroyed or damaged by members of the Army of RSK (Banjeglav, 2012: 100), showing that memories of multi-ethnic Partisan collaboration were undesirable to nationalist extremists on all sides. Some monuments survived the war relatively intact, but then suffered severe damage due to neglect. Vojin Bakić’s monument on Petrova gora is an example *par excellence* to how memory of antifascism was consigned to oblivion in the new Croatian state, destroyed through abandonment rather than outright demolition or removal.

Despite promises on the part of the Croatian Government enshrined in the coalition agreement with the Independent Democratic Serbian Party (*Samostalna demokratska srpska stranka*, SDSS), in which the memorial complex of Petrova gora was listed among important monuments that were to be repaired or restored (ibid.: 102) the terms of the agreement have not been fulfilled to this day. While some objects were restored, such as the Monument to the Uprising of Peoples of Croatia, rebuilt in 2011, Bakić’s monumental building on Veliki Petrovac was among those that remained derelict.



Slika 2.  
Petrova gora  
monument  
in 2012 (Tomi-  
slav Medak)

There have been attempts to repair the monument by non-governmental and non-party actors as well. In September 2012, the artist collective *What, How and for Whom?* (WHW) organised a collaborative session to explore possibilities for the monument's restoration, and potential social and commercial functions (Dragičević, 2015). Bakić's monument had previously been the focus of WHW's "Yesterday, Tomorrow" project in 2009, co-organised with the Serb National Council (*Srpsko narodno vijeće*, SNV) and architect Ana Bakić, Vojin Bakić's granddaughter (Zajović, 2012). WHW organised an event on 13th October 2012 at the monument, including a tour, a collaborative exhibition setup of the submitted works, and a discussion about the monument's role as

a public space (Dragičević, 2015). The discussion included local government representatives, authors of the proposals, members of SABA, and other interested participants. The monument was featured in the video series *Scene for a New Heritage* (2004–2006) by the Croatian artist David Maljković (ibid.), and in a Museum of Modern Art photo exhibition *Toward a Concrete Utopia* from 2018 to 2019 (Miljački, 2019).

While initiatives for the monument's restoration have mostly fallen on deaf ears, the monument has not remained completely unused. Commercial interest in Bakić's work for its aesthetic element, and in its microlocation, have variously led to minor destructive and restorative interventions in the monument and its immediate surroundings. In August 2019, it was reported that the monument would be used as a filming location for the 2021 German Netflix production *Tribes of Europa* and was set to be under lease until the following year, at which point the interior of the monument was mostly cleared of rubbish, and the graffiti removed from the walls (Lasić, 2019), though the intervention was also criticised.

A performance of the music opera *Musicville* was held on the plaza by the monument in October 2024 (Knezović Belan, 2024).

Telecommunications masts for cellular networks were installed in 2009, prompting outcry from various artistic, architectural, and antifascist organisations; they were removed in 2020 on the request of the Department of Culture (*Ministarstvo kulture*) as part of preparations for planned restoration of the monument, which has not materialised so far (Cimeša, 2020). These same cellular receivers were mounted on a newly built tower next to the plaza on Petrovac peak in the autumn that same year. In a stark demonstration of government neglect of the area, and its prioritisation of commercial interest at the expense of common good

, the brightly-illuminated tower effectively destroyed the international “Petrova gora Dark-Sky Park,” first of its kind in Croatia, established in 2019 for the benefit of amateur astronomy (Bobo, 2019), thanks to the mountain's unique low levels of light pollution and traffic accessibility. Now the lost dark night skies are added to the company of Bakić's monument and Partisan emancipatory struggle as an object of nostalgic yearning tied to Petrova gora.

## / Nostalgia, Anti-Nationalism, and International Solidarity: New Graffiti on Bakić's Monument

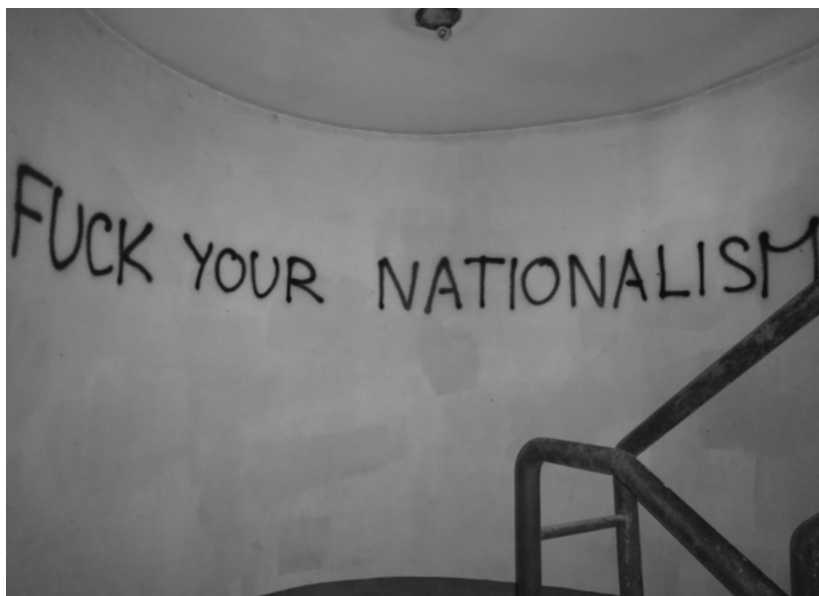
The Petrova gora monument's cleaning in 2019 in preparation for the filming of *Tribes of Europa* for Netflix represented a significant rupture in the history of its appropriation and use by anonymous authors of graffiti. Earlier reports on the state of the monument (Dragičević, 2015; Lasić, 2019; Miljački, 2019; Zajović, 2012) note the overwhelmingly nationalistic and xenophobic nature of the graffiti that had sprung up over the decades after the end of the war in 1995, very much in line with other examples of graffiti on derelict Partisan monuments and memorials.

Six years later, the situation is vastly changed, as a significant portion of the new graffiti — especially the most prominent ones — express diametrically opposite values. Thus the new inscriptions represent a stark contrast to the usual state of antifascist monuments, and an intriguing breath of new life that echoes the original utopian ideals inscribed into the monument by its chief designer. As the “Monument to the Uprising” of the local people aimed to preserve the memory of interethnic collaboration in shared emancipatory antifascist struggle, the older ultranationalist and hateful inscriptions sought to do away with the legitimacy of that, previously hegemonic, ideology, both textually and visually. Such destructive interventions on the symbols of the overthrown social and political system were typical for the wartime and post-war Croatian graffiti (Ključanin and Senjković, 1995).

While the monument's general state of disrepair was much bemoaned by visitors to the monument during my ethnographic fieldwork, the graffiti elicited varied but overall broadly positive responses. In discussing potential restoration of the monument, many visitors suggested that the graffiti be preserved in some manner; some argued for their outright preservation on the walls, keeping them untouched or even refreshed, while others preferred a more conservative approach of creating a photographic exhibition of the more interesting pieces. The movement and conversations among the attendees of the commemoration, along with the Yugoslav-era music and Partisan songs coming from the speakers mounted on the entry plaza, briefly brought the otherwise empty and derelict monument to life. The cleaning job done in 2019 further contributed to restoration of some of the place's old glory;

even in its state of advanced disrepair, Bakić's monument is awe-inspiring, and much of the conversation among visitors commented on the relatively well-preserved basic structure, and speculated how much (or how little) investment it would take for a complete restoration. Six or more years ago, the reactions must have been very different; in the warm light of early summer sun, even the graffiti elicited a warm and appreciative reaction.

Apart from one anti-communist inscription along the second storey on the main staircase ("KILL ANTIFA"), right-wing and xenophobic slogans were virtually entirely absent. On the contrary, there were several prominently-placed graffiti expressing hostility to nationalism and fascism. On the second floor, just a few metres behind the aforementioned graffiti, is one declaring "FUCK YOUR NATIONALISM." On the next floor on the southern side of the monument is a graffiti "MAY WE DANCE ON THE GRAVES OF NAZIS" in black spray paint, next to which is a stencil of the Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina by Dušan Džamonja, also in black spray. A few of the graffiti openly mock Croatian mainstream nationalist ideals, such as the inscription "18.11.2023. VUKOVAR HEROIN CITY" on the third floor, mocking the "hero city" epithet given to the city of Vukovar.



Slika 3. Graffiti on the inside of the monument (Viktorija Ćurlin, 17/05/2025)

The most visible contention between the worldview of the graffiti artists — at least those politically minded — and the state policy of destruction of antifascist heritage through neglect, comes in a series of graffiti painted in green spray, with inscriptions on virtually all levels of the monument (the subterranean levels were mostly bare of graffiti). These call for actions and values that echo those of the World War 2-era Partisan fighters and other members of the NOB. “SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE ON THE MOVE,” “FUCK BORDERS,” and “FIGHT FORTRESS EUROPE” express solidarity with refugees and display hostility to exclusionary, xenophobic policies of the Croatian government and European Union at large. Such messages implicitly compare the current issues surrounding asylum seekers with the refugees of Petrova gora, Kozara, and other Partisan-led sanctuaries during World War 2. The authors of the graffiti go further in their politics of international solidarity and fight against fascism with the clearly freshly painted slogans “FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA, PALESTINE WILL BE FREE,” located on multiple points inside the monument.

Reflecting on the graffiti and potential for new, emancipatory politics, the chief coordinator of the May commemoration on Petrovac, Aneta Vladimirov, said: “I see [potential] only in the initiative for Free Palestine; not as an organisation, we are no organisation, but only in pro-Palestine solidarity do I see a possibility for thinking a collective struggle.” While these graffiti generally do not explicitly express nostalgia — though there are some exceptions, such as the Džamonja monument-stencil — their message undoubtedly echoes the same values and goals espoused by the members of the historical *People's Liberation Struggle* (NOB). The choice of location for these inscriptions, the remote and solitary Petrova gora monument, is likely partially pragmatic; the monument is located near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina, its surroundings (especially the derelict Central Partisan Hospital) a popular stop on the so-called Balkan migrant corridor.<sup>1</sup> However, it cannot be discounted that the choice of location by the authors of these graffiti reflects a positive evaluation, nostalgic appreciation of, and perhaps even identification with, the material cultural heritage of socialism. It consciously draws a parallel between the fight for the dispossessed refugee of the 21st century with the struggle of Partisans

1 For more on the issues of refugees and migrations in the Balkan context, see Emina Bužinkić and Marija Hameršak, 2017, *Kamp, koridor, granica: studije izbjeglištva u suvremenom hrvatskom kontekstu*.

and their civilian supporters in the 20th century, thus manifesting a critical sort of nostalgia, one that aims to harness the derelict heritage of socialism for contemporary political aims.

## / Commemorations on Petrova gora today

In this chapter I will explore the social memory of the Bakić monument on Petrova gora among visitors to the monument, attendees and organisers of the commemoration of the Partisan breach of fascist encirclement in 1942, and elements of restorative or reflexive nostalgia in their memory. I conducted unstructured interviews with half a dozen visitors to the monument during the commemoration on 17th May 2025, and two semi-structured interviews with the Deputy Chairman of Karlovac County and the chief coordinator of the event Aneta Vladimirov from the SNV. Key questions that guided the interviews were: What does the monument represent to my interlocutors in the context of contemporary Croatian politics of memory? Are they nostalgic for the past socialist era that birthed the monument, and, if so, what is the character of their nostalgia? How do they view the transformations it has endured over the decades? What visions of the space and its possible usages are they creating, and how are these informed by nostalgia? This approach allows us to understand both the transformations in the symbolism of the monument and the memory politics shaping those transformations. The premise is that it is visitors who are primarily redefining the memory place of the Petrova gora monument, rather than state policies, while also interrogating the factors that guide their interpretations.

Unlike some other socialist memorials (c.f. Hrobat Virloget and Čebrović Lipovec, 2017; Ilić and Škrbić Alempijević, 2017; Janev, 2017), located in urban environments and thus integral loci of everyday life (even in the sense of deliberate avoidance or destruction), the Petrova gora monument's remoteness means that its uses and associated practices are intermittent, irregular, and usually specially planned departures from the rhythms of daily life. Nor are these punctuations recreations like the explicitly Yugonostalgic commemorations of former holidays in neighbouring Slovenia (Velikonja, 2013), or more commercial spaces like a Yugoslavia-themed café in Ljubljana (Boyd, 2001). Each visit to Bakić's masterpiece is a special occasion, prompting not only

recollection of a golden past, but also a reflection on the current state of the monument and the events that led to it. Some interlocutors went as far as to describe visits to Petrova gora as a pilgrimage of sorts.

It is a really special feeling. Like going to a sanctuary. We have been to Spain and France to these sacred sites and the experience is similar. (Alenka, 62, Slovenija).

Presence of visitors from multiple countries — including Slovenia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina — combined with the respects paid to the victims and heroes of Partisan struggle, all playing out in the shadow of Bakić's unyieldingly sublime creation, all strengthened the impression of a multinational journey to a sacred place. An additional dimension of this sacredness is added by the fact that the monument is not merely a reminder of the heroic Partisan struggle, but also a memorial to the many victims of fascist terror on Banija and Kordun, the vast majority of whom were ethnically Serbian. The commemoration thus has a double purpose of celebrating victory and honouring victims of atrocities.

Despite the monument's neglect, interlocutors and other visitors repeatedly expressed admiration for the architectural and engineering significance of the complex, and expressed wishes to see the monument restored to its original glory. Conversations highlighted broader dissatisfaction with the state's custodianship of socialist heritage in Croatia, and contrasted it unfavourably with preservation practices in Slovenia and Serbia<sup>2</sup>.

It is a disgrace, truly, and a shame. So many wonderful monuments you have here, and look. When I compare it to the si-

2 Slovenia in particular has integrated its antifascist history into mainstream political narratives regarding nationhood and statehood (c.f. Hrobat Virloget and Čebrov Lipovec 2017; Velikonja 2013), reflecting a successful (in a certain sense) case of postsocialist ideological “reconciliation” of opposed ww2-era political movements, in contrast to the far more contentious situation in Croatia (Kirn 2011; Radonić 2010). While official politics of memory in Slovenia are not without detractors, socialist material heritage is preserved and promoted to a far greater degree in Slovenia than is the case in Croatia. A salient example is the funding and protection for the “Franja” Partisan hospital in Cerklje ob Krki, which has received state- and European-level status of protected cultural heritage, and multiple rounds of funding for its restoration and protection (Jovanović 2021). Meanwhile, the much larger Central Partisan Hospital on Petrova gora is largely neglected by state authorities, and owes its continued existence, derelict as it is, to initiatives by local government and antifascist- and Serb minority-organisations (ibid.)

tation back [in Serbia] or to the way Slovenians do it, this is...  
sad, a disgrace. There are no other words. (Mile, 38, Srbija).

Throughout the day, antifascist songs, including Yugoslav classics such as “Through the forests and the mountains” (*Po šumama i gorama*) and international ones like “Bella Ciao,” were broadcast continuously. During the official programme, the SKD “Čudina” from Split performed a number of Partisan songs, including “Companies of partisans” (*Čete partizana*), “Hey, Mosor” (*Oj, Mosore*), as well as several historical folk songs, thus combining elements of nostalgia for the socialist past with traditional folk aesthetics. The musical repertoire was overall skewed towards energetic, positive-sounding pieces and antifascist hymns, omitting some locally and historically pertinent songs such as “Graves on Kordun” (*Na Kordunu grob do groba*) likely due to their sombre tone. While the commemoration has a dual purpose, it appears that celebration of antifascist resistance was given a greater deal of weight compared to the mourning of victims. The general atmosphere among the gathered folk certainly skewed more festive than mournful: people ate and drank, made merry, and after the end of the official programme they spontaneously began to sing. Other symbolic expressions of nostalgia for the heroic Partisan history, such as a beverage seller wearing a soldier's cap with a red five-pointed star, contributed to the atmosphere of nostalgia. The ceremony was attended by delegations of SABA, local antifascist organizations from Zagorje and Glina, SNV, SDSS, the Social Democratic Party (*SDP-Glina*), councils of the Serbian national minority, the County of Karlovac, and the municipalities of Vojnić, Gvozd, and Topusko. Representatives of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, and the United Nations were also present. Media coverage was provided by the SNV-affiliated Vida TV, which conducted interviews with prominent figures including the former President of Croatia Stjepan Mesić.

Speaking of the local Serbian communities on Kordun and Banija, commemoration's organiser Aneta Vladimirov pointed out the multi-ethnic make-up of the attendees as a vital element of the wider political effort by these communities to keep antifascist history alive:

What brings them most joy, I'd say, is when there are all nationalities on Petrova gora. They are overjoyed when people come from BiH, when they can. They did so earlier, now the organisers of these activities are mostly gone; those were Partisans, Muslims, Bosniaks. [...] I mean, not only because

[the local Serbs] are potential inheritors of the principles of brotherhood and unity, but because then it is automatically easier for them to be there.

The implied unease regarding organisation and attendance of antifascist commemorations points to a deeper structure of forgetting and remembering certain aspects of history, and to the sense of cultural responsibility and political willingness to preserve antifascist heritage in contemporary Croatia. Unwillingness to systematically protect this heritage and meaningfully promote values that underpin it on the part of virtually all mainstream Croatian parties<sup>3</sup> is evident in the case of Petrova gora by a virtually total absence of national and local state representatives (Jurišić 2025). The one exception, Deputy Chairman of Karlovac County Nenad Vukadinović, shared that he is regularly tasked with representing the county at commemorations related to the NOB, a responsibility delegated to him by the county council. The county's leadership, dominated by HDZ, has consistently avoided direct involvement in or patronage of antifascist events. Neither the commemorations of the 1945 liberation of Karlovac nor the 1942 breach of fascist encirclement at Petrova gora have ever received sponsorship or official attendance from the county leadership. Vukadinović himself does not expect any meaningful change in policy, either locally or nationally. In his view, the prevailing stance toward NOB history can be summarized as one of “calculated ignorance” and “institutional neglect” (interviewee's phrasing). This reluctance extends even to private behaviour. While many HDZ officials admit they would personally welcome the opportunity to attend certain commemorations — particularly prestigious gatherings such as those on the Adriatic islands of Brijuni — they refrain from doing so for fear of jeopardizing their standing within the party or appearing out of step with its dominant nationalist narrative. The result is a disjunction between private sympathies and public silence, which underscores how heavily historical memory remains tied to political identity.

Under such circumstances, it has largely fallen to minority — primarily Serbian — organisations and parties to preserve the memory of a shared an-

3 Local government in Zagreb, dominated by the “*Možemo!*” political party, has made certain efforts to promote the city's antifascist history, for example through sponsoring the annual celebration of Partisan liberation of the city on 8th May 1945, “Trnje bonfires” (*Trnjanski kresovi*). However, such policies are far from systematic or as comprehensive as they might be given the resources at disposal of the city government.

tifascist past. However, this “falling to” should not be taken literally, as some sort of passive (or natural) acceptance of a certain political strategy. “That did not come by itself, it did not just fall into the lap of the Serbian minority,” as Vladimirov put it. Repair and protection of antifascist monuments, organising commemorative events, lobbying for greater inclusion of material on the NOB and the socialist period in history textbooks, are some of the means by which organisations such as SDSS and SNV have contributed to preservation of antifascist history and heritage. This is in part due to the aging makeup of the majority-Croat antifascist groups such as SABA, prompting greater involvement from SNV and local activists.

Of course, participation of the League of Antifascist Fighters was assured — although before it was to a much greater extent than today — when it comes to that material, monumental antifascist heritage. But the first forms of commemoration were, in fact, volunteer labour actions. This were organised by SNV, and would draw a lot of people. And then those people would then dig in on that vast area around the monument, where there's really a lot of work to do. But, through that format, which is [characteristically] Yugoslav — I mean, even before SFRY people helped each other, had collective harvests or built houses. So yeah, that spirit of collective physical labour, which very quickly during the day results in visible change — which must have been very encouraging to all participants — materialised on Petrova gora up until about 2012. I am not sure how long exactly, but at least five or six years. And here we have that sort of ethos, how should I call it, Kordun ethos, which is interesting. I am not sure I could explain that thoroughly, but I would say that these are often self-confident people, who really do think with their own heads, and [...] are politically also very diverse (A. Vladimirov).

An ethos of mutual assistance and persevering in the face of adversity was stressed by several speakers during the official programme, invoking heroic figures such as Karlovac-based Nada Dimić, the Zagreb-based Jewish antifascist physician Marija Schlesinger, and the work of the Central Partisan Hospital in general. The latter was singled out by Zoran Pusić, speaking as

a representative of SABA, who emphasised the hospital's enduring ethical significance as a symbol of “brotherhood and unity” and underscored the relevance of interethnic solidarity in the present political climate. A performer from the SKD “Čudina” used her address to advocate for tolerance, reconciliation, and the safeguarding of memorial sites, while criticising both the European resurgence of fascist ideology and persistent hostility toward socialist symbols “integral to the Croatian state's constitutional identity.” Lyrics of the Partisan songs calling to arms, performed by the group from Split, were thus contextualised as not simple background noise for the merriment of gathered visitors, but as genuine inspiration and a call to action.

So far, as has been said, that call is being heeded mostly by organisations affiliated with the Serb ethnic minority in Croatia, which provide the bulk of financial and logistical support for initiatives such as commemorations on Petrova gora. One reason for the political decision to safeguard antifascist memory, in the face of neglect or hostility on the part of mainstream Croatian political parties and civic organisation, is a sense of historical responsibility. After the destructive effect of Serbian nationalism during the war, and the role it played in disruption of local communities, this turn to antifascist heritage represents a critical reckoning with the past, and a constructive engagement with one's complex and shifting role in it.

I would not talk about guilt, but about an attempt to take responsibility. Because I am certain that many [people in Banija and Kordun] remember, either from others' stories, or from personal experience, a sort of humiliation and human failure. I mean, those [paramilitary] marauders treated their own the same way, both Croats and Serbs, but I think it is probably even more difficult to remember an active role, or being a bystander in a situation in which some Croats are being humiliated, let alone those situations when they killed — for example — Croat Partisans in Banija, people who were seventy or eighty years old at the time (A. Vladimirov).

The need for turning a new page by all ethnicities and political parties in Croatia was stressed also by Boris Milošević, President of SNV, during his speech at the commemoration. He discussed the historical legacy of the Third Session of the ZAVNOH council held on Petrova gora in 1944, highlighting its early commitments to gender equality, religious freedom, and progressive

governance. Milošević denounced historical revisionism and the erasure of antifascist achievements, called attention to stalled restoration initiatives on the mountain, and concluded by reciting poetry by Vladimir Nazor. While before and during his speech dark clouds had been gathering over the mountain, threatening rain, during Milošević's citing of Nazor the clouds began to break up, prompting Vladimirov to jest that Nazor's emancipatory poetry had dispersed the storm and saved the day.

## / Conclusion

The case of Vojin Bakić's Monument to the Uprising of the People of Banija and Kordun illuminates the complex interplay of memory, ideology, and material culture in post-socialist Croatia. Once envisioned as both a symbol of antifascist resistance and a beacon of socialist modernity, the monument is today a ruin, in both a physical and symbolic sense. Yet, as this study has demonstrated, its dereliction does not equate to disappearance, in spite of persistent forgetting and neglect on the part of mainstream nationalist politics. Rather, its presence — scarred, appropriated, and re-signified — continues to shape and be shaped by competing memory practices that reveal unresolved (perhaps unresolvable) tensions underpinning politics of remembering and forgetting in contemporary Croatia. The empirical findings demonstrate that the monument's fate is not the result of passive decay, but of active neglect and selective forgetting of the country's cultural heritage and history. Croatian state and local authorities have consistently withheld resources from the site, making forgetting unwritten official state policy. This “calculated ignorance” reflects a broader strategy within Croatian politics of memory: the suppression of antifascist heritage that contradicts restorative nationalist imaginaries of the past, which aim to achieve “reconciliation” of different political forces while marginalising ethnic minorities. At the same time, the monument's enduring materiality resists this attempted erasure. Its sheer physical scale, combined with the emotional and symbolic attachments sustained by diverse actors, prevents its full consignment to oblivion.

Against a backdrop of institutional neglect and superficial commercial exploitation of the monument, grassroots campaigns and guerrilla acts of international solidarity have emerged as central to keeping the site alive.

Ethnographic observation of commemorations, fieldwork among visitors, and analysis of artistic and activist interventions all underscore the ways in which memory is continually re-inscribed onto the site. Commemorative events organized primarily by the Serb National Council (SNV), local anti-fascist associations, and allied political parties exemplify this. They bring together diverse participants –local residents, minority organizations, visitors from other former Yugoslav countries, and even diplomatic delegations – to reaffirm the monument's role as a locus of international antifascist solidarity. These gatherings combine conventional means such as speeches, music, and choreographed performances that deliberately evoke Yugoslav historical heritage, while simultaneously articulating critiques of contemporary nationalism and historical revisionism.

The second vital element of the monument's continued life as a memory-place are the cultural and aesthetic reappropriations of the site. Artistic projects such as those initiated by the collective WHW, or the international attention garnered by its inclusion in exhibitions and film productions, highlight its value as both a work of architectural modernism and a contested heritage object –although conflicted views about the exact manner of restoration exist, both among the artists themselves and in contrast to political activists. Even the graffiti spattered all over the interior of the structure, once dominated by nationalist slogans, have become a vehicle for alternative political imaginaries. The recent wave of anti-fascist and anti-nationalist inscriptions, including expressions of solidarity with refugees and calls for global struggles against exclusionary politics, demonstrates how the ruin can serve as a canvas for reflexive nostalgia. Rather than restoring the monument to an imagined original wholeness, these practices embrace its decay as an opening for new forms of critical remembrance and political creativity. The ethnographic interviews further reveal how individuals relate to the monument in personal, affective, and often ambivalent ways. For older generations with lived experience of socialism, visits to Petrova gora elicit both nostalgia for a lost home and a critical reflection on its limitations. For younger generations, many without direct memory of Yugoslavia, the monument serves as an enigmatic artefact that invites curiosity, imagination, and identification with broader emancipatory struggles. Visitors' accounts portray the monument not simply as a relic of the past, but as a potential site for envisioning alternative futures rooted in solidarity, interethnic cooperation, and resistance to authoritarianism.

It needs to be noted that the gathered ethnographic and archival data only pertains to the organised commemorations and politics of memory promoted by antifascist and Serbian minority organisations. Beyond this official space exists an even more multifaceted social memory of the surviving local Serb minority population, which was glimpsed through interviews and interactions with the visitors to the 17th May commemoration. Further and more extensive ethnographic research in the local communities is warranted in order to paint a more complete picture of the meaning that Bakić's monument holds for this crucial demographic.

Ultimately, the findings affirm the utility of Svetlana Boym's (2001) distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia. Restorative nostalgia underpins nationalist projects that seek to overwrite socialist heritage with homogenized, exclusionary narratives, effacing Petrova gora's history of Partisan struggles in favour of mythical medieval kings. Reflective nostalgia, by contrast, thrives in the decrepit halls of Bakić's monument, where decay itself becomes a prompt for critical engagement. The commemorations, graffiti, and grassroots restoration initiatives illustrate how reflective nostalgia operates: not in denial of loss, but in recognition of history's irreversibility and in an openness to reinterpretation. In this sense, the Petrova gora monument exemplifies David Gross's notion of relative noncontemporaneity, embodying traces of a past that refuses to fade neatly into history, and instead persists as a resource for meaning-making in the present. Bakić's monument has been variously celebrated, neglected, vandalized, repurposed, and reimagined, each moment reflecting broader dynamics of political transformation. By tracing these shifting interactions ethnographically, this case study helps illuminate how collective memory is not merely preserved or erased, but continually negotiated in practice. Petrova gora thus endures not only as a monument to antifascist struggle, but also as a monument to memory itself: fragile, contested, yet persistently alive.

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VIKTORIJA ČURLIN

## Relativna nesuvremenost i refleksivna nostalgija: studija slučaja Spomenika ustanku naroda Banije i Korduna

*Ovaj rad istražuje memorijalni kompleks na Petrovoj gori kao studiju slučaja za razumijevanje dinamike politika sjećanja u postsocijalističkoj Hrvatskoj. Fokusirajući se na Spomenik ustanku naroda Banije i Korduna Vojina Bakića, sagrađenog 1981. godine, rad proučava kako promjene u značenju spomenika odražavaju šire procese pamćenja, zaboravljanja te reinterpretiranja socijalističke baštine. Nekada ključno mjesto jugoslaven-skih antifašističkih komemoracija, spomenik danas utjelovljuje sukob narativa: državno zapuštanje te nacionalističko brisanje s jedne strane, a s druge napore za očuvanjem te kritičkim suočavanjem s prošlošću. Koristeći etnografski terenski rad, intervjuje, te analizu medijske građe, studija izlaže kako komemorativni rituali, kulturalne intervencije te upotreba grafita upisuju značenja u prostor. Tipologija restorativne i refleksivne nostalgije Svetlane Boym upotrijebljena je kako bi se ukazalo na način kako ruševine — artefakti nesuvremenosti — oblikuju kolektivno sjećanje, omogućujući ostvarivanje kontinuiteta s prošlošću te zamišljanje alternativnih političkih budućnosti ukorijenjenih na antifašističkoj solidarnosti.*

**KLJUČNE RIJEČI:** politike sjećanja, refleksivna nostalgija, postsocijalizam, socijalistički spomenici, Petrova gora