Dissonant Soviet monuments in post-Soviet Lithuania

THE APPLICATION OF ARTISTIC PRACTICES

by **Rasa Goštautaitė**

The statue of author Petras Cvirka is located in central Vilnius.

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I n the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, remnants of past regimes were quickly changed with markers of new systems in most post-communist Eastern and Central European states. This initial impetus of decommunization has been revived in the last decade as the debates over Soviet-era legacy have intensified. Political monuments and statues have been at the center of the decommunization debate, often causing mixed reactions from different society groups. For example, in 2007, a riot broke out over the relocation of the Bronze Soldier statue in Tallinn, Estonia.[1] In 2015, a set of four socialist realist statues were removed from the Green Bridge in Vilnius, Lithuania.[2] More recently, in spring 2020, a monument to Soviet Marshal Ivan Konev was removed in Prague, the Czech Republic.[3] Alongside the disputes that arose in relation to individual monuments, some countries adopted more systemic approaches to decommunization. In Ukraine, following the 2014 revolution,

abstract

This article theoretically overviews the disputes related to two heritage sites located in Vilnius, Lithuania – the Green Bridge statues and a monument to Petras Cvirka. The change in the culture of memory – from a Soviet to an independent Lithuania – has created the appropriate conditions for certain objects of such heritage to reveal dissonance. Common actions applied to mitigating the disputes that occur in relation to the Soviet-era legacy include the removal of such statues or monuments and/or their relocation. Meanwhile, alternative solutions such as memorial/information plaques and artistic interventions aimed at reinterpreting and decontextualizing the object in question are less widely endorsed.
KEYWORDS: Soviet monuments, the Green Bridge statues, monument to Petras Cvirka, Lithuania, dissonant heritage.

public spaces (streets, squares etc.) were renamed and communist monuments and symbols were dismantled. Within one year of the start of the revolution, 504 statues of Lenin were removed.[4] The legal grounds for decommunization in Ukraine were created in 2015 through the adoption of four decommunization laws that established the mandatory decommunization of public space.[5] In Poland, a memory law was passed by parliament in 2016 obliging local authorities to remove the names of public spaces that symbolized communism.[6]

While the removal or relocation of such contested/dissonant monuments are dominant strategies, the application of alternative measures such as the installation of memorial/information plaques or artistic interventions are employed less widely to address the dissonance of such sites. This theoretical article focuses on the political monuments and statues built in Lithuania during the Soviet period but which remained following the collapse of the system.[7] By discussing two case studies in Vilnius – the Green Bridge statues and a monument to Petras Cvirka – the article aims to examine the discord that emerged regarding their values, the strategies applied to mitigate the disputes related to them and the role of artistic practices in such processes.

THE ARTICLE SEEKS TO tackle the following questions: What kind of management practices are applied to mitigate the disputes that emerge in relation to political monuments and statues from the Soviet period? What is the role of artistic approaches in such processes? Why is the application of artistic practices a less-widely endorsed strategy in such disputes? To achieve this, the article first examines the theoretical grounds for analyzing the Soviet-era legacy in modern-day Lithuania by engaging with dissonant heritage and related theories. It discusses the official collective memory that was consolidated in different republics during the Soviet period, and the construction of a new culture of memory in independent Lithuania. By reflecting on the cases of the Green Bridge statues and the monument to Petras Cvirka, the article considers the common practices applied to mitigating the disputes that emerged in relation to the dissonance of these sites, including the role of artistic approaches.

Soviet-era legacy as dissonant heritage

Dissonant heritage, a term introduced by John E. Tunbridge and Gregory J. Ashworth, is "a discordance or a lack of agreement and consistency" between different interpretations of the same heritage site.[8] Tunbridge and Ashworth consider this dissonance to be a universal feature of heritage and a natural outcome of the process of making history to heritage.[9] Due to the selective nature of heritage creation, each heritage site can hold dissonance, which can be strengthened and unfolded through its use as a cultural, political or economic resource.

As a political resource, heritage often reflects the ideas proposed by state-supported historical narratives and cultural memory.[10] Heritage plays an important role in giving permanence to cultural memory and the narratives that it endorses.[11] Monuments, landscapes, museums or archives act as "sites of memory" (*lieux de mémoire*)[12] that are deliberately created to facilitate the process of remembering. Given this link between heritage and the construction of national identity[13], messages communicated by the heritage of past regimes may become irrelevant or conflicted in a new context.[14] In the case of Eastern and Central Europe, the changing geopolitical situation and the demise of the Soviet Union meant that the heritage created by the communist governments has been abandoned and misplaced. Such transmission of messages that no longer fit the needs of the dominant ideology is referred to by Tunbridge and Ashworth as a dissonance that is implicit in the messages of heritage,[15] and which can lead to the "obsolete transmission" of messages.[16]

The Soviet government relied on state-sanctioned historical narratives and collective memory to consolidate and legitimize its rule in occupied states. The hallmark of the official Soviet memory, as noted by different scholars, was the victory in the Great Patriotic War (a Soviet term for the Second World War).[17] In Soviet Lithuania (1945–1990), the representation of the official cultural memory in public space, like in other Soviet republics, encompassed large memorials and monuments related to the sacrifice and victory in the Great Patriotic War, as well as monuments to local party leaders and prominent communist figures.[18] Whereas the motif of the Great Patriotic War was to symbolize the unifying events of the different Soviet republics, the latter – local communist figures – had to support the narrative of a "legal" incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

> **"THE ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA IN 2014 TRIGGERED A REVISION OF SOVIET MONUMENTS IN OTHER POST-SOVIET AND POST-SOCIALIST COUNTRIES."**

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the independent Lithuanian state formed a new official historical narrative and memory culture that emphasized the motif of victimhood and fight for independence. Characteristic of such memory culture have been events associated with Lithuania's occupation by the Soviet Union (e.g. the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, Soviet deportations) or the anti-Soviet resistance movement (e.g. partisan warfare).[19] The legitimacy of a new state has also been grounded in the first Republic of Lithuania, which existed during the interwar period, as well as the Lithuanian Grand Duchy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

THE CHANGE IN THE CULTURE of memory – from a Soviet to an independent Lithuania – has created the appropriate conditions for some Soviet-era heritage and legacy to reveal dissonance. It was found that the circumstances of the creation of such heritage and the initial values communicated by it contradicted the narrative of the re-emerged new state, thereby leading to the misplacement of some Soviet-era heritage and its subsequent
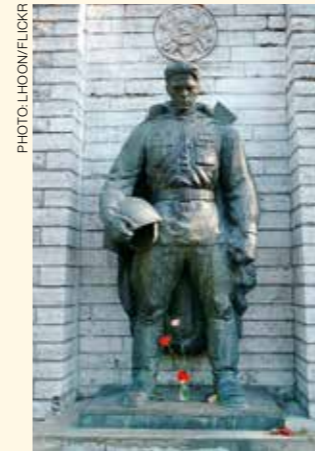

A riot broke out in Tallinn following the relocation of the Bronze Soldier statue in 2007. Right: the removal of statues of Lenin in Ukraine 2014.

decommunization. A Lithuanian scholar, Rasa Baločkaitė, has separated this decommunization process into two waves of historical revisionism.[20] During the first wave, which took place in the 1990s, major ideological monuments and other communist insignia that explicitly transmitted the regime's message (such as monuments to Lenin and other party leaders) were immediately removed from the public space in Lithuania. However, not all Soviet legacy has been perceived as being equally dissonant. Some monuments and artefacts, which at the time had been recognized as being less ideological and had been left in place, have gradually gained contested meaning in the 21st century. R. Baločkaitė has linked this "second wave of revisionism" to factors such as physical deterioration, renovation needs, changing urban infrastructure, the political and cultural Westernization of former Eastern bloc countries and Russia's international politics.[21] In particular, the annexation of Crimea in 2014 triggered a revision of Soviet monuments in other post-Soviet and post-socialist countries.

The decommunization of public space accurately points to the discord that is intrinsic to the content of messages and the political use of heritage, as discussed by Tunbridge and Ashworth. It is worth emphasizing that the monuments that were disputed in light of the second wave of revisionism do not encompass the entire Soviet legacy. Monuments to artists, memorials, burial places of Soviet army troops, decorative elements and allegorical sculptures that have now attracted dispute, often embody ambivalent meanings and values. While holding both ideological/political and other (historical, aesthetic, etc.) values, this legacy is not interpreted in a straightforward way. Ambivalence remains regarding the values communicated by this heritage, its ties to the Soviet period and whether it continues to act as "sites of memory" of the former regime, or how such heritage sites should be managed and interpreted.

It is worth noting that although highly significant, ideology is not the only determinant to hamper the preservation of Soviet-era heritage, particularly its architectural legacy. Aesthetic and physical aspects also play a significant role.[22] Soviet-era

buildings were constructed with poor-quality materials, impacting their posterity. To counter these difficulties, it has been suggested to separate from traditional ways of evaluating the architectural heritage from a specific period by focusing on the intangible dimension of the Soviet legacy. This includes understanding Soviet-era architectural heritage as a "cultural reference" system that can mark the development of certain past events and ideas (e.g. modernization).[23] Never-theless, there are significant differences between the Soviet-era architectural heritage and monuments or sculptures that carry more political connotations. Attributing intangible value to Soviet-era political monuments and artefacts (e.g. assigning value for being evidence of past events) can be more difficult to endorse.

While the memory cultures of the Soviet Union and the independent Lithuanian state, as well as the decommunization processes, have been researched more widely, this article focuses on the responses to the disputes arising in relation to dissonant Soviet-era monuments and statues.

Managing the disputes related to dissonant heritage

The dissonance of some heritage may be more trivial and spark less major public disputes over the course of their existence across generations. However, certain monuments can be particularly divisive and even cause disengagement with heritage or have the potential to hinder social cohesion. Tunbridge and Ashworth argue that there are more effective strategies for dealing with the dissonance of heritage than neglect, elimination or abandonment.[24] They distinguish three main strategies for how such sites or types of heritage could be managed in order to mitigate the disputes that arise in relation to them.[25] These include the "inclusivist", "minimalist" and "localization" approaches.

The "inclusivist" approach embraces multiculturalism by incorporating a multitude of interpretations, narratives, and heritages put forward by different groups. Due to the totalitarian nature of communist regimes, Soviet-era heritage does not qualify for the multiculturalism of the "inclusivist" strategy. Yet,

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The four sets of statues symbolize archetypical Soviet society groups: *Youth of education, Industry and construction, Guarding peace* and *Agriculture*. They were installed on the Green bridge in Vilnius in 1952, and removed in 2015.

the "inclusivist" approach may to some extent be adopted by incorporating the diverging viewpoints of different society groups regarding the same heritage object. However, the addition of new forms of heritage or the incorporation of multiple interpretations do not imply any balance of elements and an agreement, which is sometimes the end goal. An opposite strategy would be the "minimalist" approach, which focuses on those aspects of heritage and history that are common to most of the inhabitants (e.g. natural heritage, peacebuilding role). The "localization" approach involves bounding certain heritage objects to a geographic location where it is unlikely that the dissonance of such heritage objects will cause disputes. Communist statue and monument parks such as the *Grūtas Park* near Druskininkai, Lithuania or the *Memento Park* near Budapest, Hungary, could be examples of the latter – "localization" – strategy. Yet, the application of these strategies to the Lithuanian and the broader post-Soviet and post-socialist context is not straightforward. A large share of Soviet heritage is immovable, making it difficult, if not impossible, to apply the "localization" strategy.

However, as noted by different scholars, Tunbridge and Ashworth's theory may at times suggest that the management approaches proposed can eliminate dissonance, despite it being an integral part of heritage.[26] Some scholars point out that the concept of mitigating dissonance suggests that a state of ideal heritage that holds no contested meanings can be reached. Hence, the management approaches by Tunbridge and Ashworth should be perceived as responses to the consequences of dissonance and the mitigation of the disputes that arise from this discord rather than mitigation of the dissonance itself.

The goal of these management strategies could also be questioned as different authors have noted that not only is it difficult to reach a complete consensus, the process of discussing the dissonance may also yield positive outcomes. James E. Young, who coined the term "counter-monument", points out that the process of remembering and memorialization is often more important than its end result – monuments and memorials.[27] The works of Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper, who has conducted research into contested heritage sites in Germany and beyond, echo the latter thought. She notes that "a monument that is argued about becomes precious *because* it does not embody cultural and social consensus on historic or present events".[28] According to Dolff-Bonekämper, such disagreement is a natural part of heritage construction and all memory sites can embody arguments about present-day values, becoming "sites of disputes". She suggests that there is value in such disagreements as they play a role in coming to terms with the past.

As shown by recent developments in the region, dealing with dissonant monuments often entails them being dismantled or relocated. The monument built in 1980 to Soviet Marshall Ivan Konev in Prague in the Czech Republic is quite characteristic

of the fate of other communist-era statues. In 2018, the original plaque, describing the role that Ivan Konev played in liberating Prague from Nazi occupying forces in 1945 was removed from the monument.[29] A new plaque was installed, describing Konev's involvement in suppressing the Hungarian uprising of 1956 and the Prague Spring of 1968. This resulted in a negative reaction from the Russian Embassy.[30] However, the installment of a new plaque has not resolved the ongoing dispute. The monument was eventually dismantled in April 2020 and there are plans to exhibit it at the future museum of the 20th century.[31] However, the Russian authorities have requested that the statue be moved to Russia.[32]

WHILE REMOVAL or relocation prevail as the dominant strategies, alternative approaches are also employed. Such monuments can be deprived of their ideological and almost sacral meaning by using their space for trivial, everyday activities. For example, skateboard ramps were installed next to the Monument to the Soviet Army in Sofia, Bulgaria.[33] Monuments and statues are also decontextualized by applying artistic approaches and installations, which are often created against the background of the ongoing debates on heritage values and interpretation. As impermanent solutions, they can often act as communication tools that raise questions and facilitate debate. For example, the 2008 intervention project – *Carousel Slide Swing* – by Polish artist Kamila Szejnoch involved installing a swing on one of the communist memorials commemorating Warsaw's liberation by Soviet troops in the Second World War. The aim was to enable a debate and give the monument a contemporary function.[34] Public art can also be merged with more permanent installations such as the establishment of anti- or counter-monumental practices, combining art with memorialization.[35] One of the many examples of an anti-monument is a monument against Fascism (1986/1996) in Hamburg, Germany. It was designed by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz with the aim of provoking the local community to reflect on past events. A counter-monument, on the other hand, involves dialogic approaches, juxtaposing an old monument with a new monument.[36]

To further reflect on dealing with dissonant Soviet monuments and statues, two case studies are discussed below. Notably, since the discussions relating to the Green Bridge statues and the Petras Cvirka monument are complex and span the course of several years, the overview below only provides some of their key moments.

The Green Bridge statues

The Green Bridge statues are four sets of socialist realist sculptures that were installed on the newly rebuilt bridge,[37] named after the Red Army General Ivan Chernyakhovsky, in 1952.[38] These sculptures portrayed archetypical Soviet society

> **"THE REMOVAL OF THE STATUES ALSO RECEIVED SOME SUPPORT ON A POLITICAL LEVEL, SPARKING MORE DISCUSSIONS ON THE COMMUNIST LEGACY."**

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The Lithuanian writer Petras Cvirka, to the right in the picture, actively supported Lithuania's incorporation into the Soviet Union. A monument in his name was erected in 1959. Lately, demands that the statue should be removed has caused debate.

groups – students, workers, farmers and soldiers – and were designed by Lithuanian artists (Bronius Vyšniauskas, Napoleonas Petrulis, Petras Vaivada, Bernardas Bučas, Juozas Mikėnas, Juozas Kėdainis and Bronius Pundzius). Although the bridge with the four statues survived the first wave of revisionism and were inscribed on the Cultural Heritage List [lith. *Kultūros vertybių registras*] in 1993,[39] these statues maintained some dissonance throughout the years, raising questions regarding their necessity. This dissonance was particularly strengthened in 2010 when Vilnius municipality and other authorities started discussing the issue of restoration, as the sculptures were in a poor condition and were rusting.[40] The Russian institutions also engaged in this discussion and offered the help of Russian specialists to restore the sculptures. This offer of help was declined by the Lithuanian authorities.[41] It has been argued that the elevation of this topic coincided with the 2011 election and the pro-Russian propaganda that had increased during the pre-election period.[42] These sculptures had received widespread media coverage, which contributed to the exploitation of the statues in the political rhetoric of the different parties.[43] In 2014, following Russia's incursion in Ukraine, the political aspect of the statues strengthened. A particular emphasis was placed on one of the four sets of sculptures, called *Guarding peace* [Taikos sargyboje]. It portrayed two Soviet soldiers and was associated with the Soviet victory in the Second World War which, for Lithuania, marked the beginning of the second Soviet occupation (1944–1990).

Regarding popular sentiment, there were calls for both the removal of the statues and for maintaining the *status quo*. For example, in 2014, a petition for the removal of the statues was launched and some civil society groups demanded that the statues be removed as they perceived them as being offensive and bearing strong ideological connotations.[44] In contrast, a number of academics and heritage/cultural professionals have stated that these statues are unique decorative elements of the bridge and the only remaining examples of such bridge sculptures in Lithuania.[45] The potential of these sculptures to fulfill an educational

role and teach the younger generation about the Soviet period was also highlighted.

The removal of the statues also received some support on a political level, sparking more discussions on the communist legacy. For example, in 2014, the Minister of Culture passed legislation stipulating that objects featuring Soviet or Nazi symbols cannot be inscribed on the Cultural Heritage List.[46] In July 2015, following the decision by Vilnius municipality and supported by the Department of Cultural Heritage, the sculptures were removed from the bridge for restoration work, without removing their legal protection.[47] The sculptures were moved to a storage facility but have yet to be restored. In 2016, according to a decision by the Department of Cultural Heritage, the legal protection for the bridge and its sculptures was removed.[48] Part of the evaluation commission that made this decision agreed with a proposal that the sculptures could be exhibited in a museum at some point in the future.[49]

NOTABLY, ALTERNATIVE approaches to legal means were also applied to dealing with this issue. In 2013, an informational board was unveiled underneath the sculpture of two soldiers.[50] The board contained information on the Soviet occupation, including statistics on the number of people who were deported, murdered and repressed in Lithuania during this period. It subsequently transpired that the board was not sufficient to conclude the discussions.

Regarding artistic approaches,[51] after Lithuania regained its independence, Gitenis Umbrasas suggested surrounding the sculptures with soil beds and using them to grow vine-type plants that would climb up the sculptures.[52] In 1995, a temporary art intervention, created by Gediminas Urbonas and called *Coming or Going*, was installed on the bridge. It involved mirror cubes reflecting the sky, which were installed on the heads of one of the sets of sculptures (the male and female farmers).[53] In 2010, a new sculpture *The Chain*, designed by Kunotas Vildžiūnas and Martynas Lukošius, featuring a metal chain, was installed beneath the bridge. It was part of a series

of sculptures that were hung from the bridges in Vilnius and symbolized moments in Lithuanian history. The chain reflected the system's corruptness and oppressiveness.[54] It has been argued that this sculpture was a good attempt at resolving this issue without destroying the original statues, but providing an additional layer of meaning.[55] During the latter discussions that took place between 2010 and 2015, the endorsement of artistic ideas was less prevalent. For example, Audrius Ambrasas' project *Reduction of sculptures* (2014) suggested the temporary placement of metal cages onto the sculptures, thereby transforming them into museum artifacts.[56] The goal of this intervention was to neutralize the ideological pathos of the sculptures while still preserving the architectural integrity of the bridge, i.e. to transform these sculptures into a museum artefact of the city. The metal cages were intended to allude to containers, symbolizing that the sculptures were being prepared to be taken away. However, this idea did not receive any official endorsement.

IN 2018, THE MUNICIPALITY announced a contest for temporary artistic installations and projects to be placed on the Green Bridge during 2019. Two projects were selected – *Megareality goodness activator* by artist Saulius Paukštys and *Family* by artist Donatas Norušis – which decorated the bridge for six months each,[57] suggesting that there were no plans for the return of the sculptures to their original location in the near future. One of the projects submitted to this contest but not selected also tackled the question of the Green Bridge statues that had been removed ("They will try and act like victims", author Eglė Grėbliauskaitė). The project suggested that replicas of the removed statues could be hung under the bridge and that these replicas could shift their position upon activation.[58] The project aimed to activate historical memory and provide an opportunity to discuss it. Thus, the artistic installation could become an educational tool that could allow people to learn from the past, seeking to create conditions for rethinking history.

The monument to writer Petras Cvirka

The second case study is the monument to Lithuanian writer Petras Cvirka (1909–1947). When Soviet forces occupied Lithuania in 1940, Cvirka joined the Communist Party and actively supported Lithuania's incorporation into the Soviet Union, representing the "will" of Lithuanian artists during the visit of the official delegation to Moscow.[59] After the second Soviet occupation in 1944, Cvirka was elected as chairman of the Union of Writers in Soviet Lithuania in 1945. He held this position until his death in 1947. After Cvirka's death, a monument was erected in his name in one of the central squares in Vilnius in 1959. It was designed by Lithuanian sculptor Juozas Mikėnas and architect Vladislovas Mikučianis.[60]

Like the Green Bridge statues, the monument was inscribed on the protected monuments list in Soviet Lithuania. After the demise of the Soviet Union, this monument was confirmed as being a part of national heritage as it was re-inscribed on the new Cultural Heritage List in 1992.[61] However, this did not guarantee a uniform interpretation as there had been discord. For example, there were demands to rename the bus stop and the street adjacent to P. Cvirka square that were also named after the writer, as well as some requests to remove the monument.[62] The discussion became particularly poignant after the removal of the Green Bridge statues and the elevation of this topic in the media by a number of civil society groups. There has also been increased discussion in recent years on the revisionism of historical figures who collaborated with the Nazi regime (e.g. Kazys Škirpa and Jonas Noreika-General Vėtra).[63] It has therefore become a highly contested subject.

In 2018, the Working Group for Memory Culture at Vilnius municipality proposed to the Mayor of Vilnius that the monument should be removed because of Cvirka's role in strengthening the Soviet occupation of Lithuania during the Second World War.[64] It was stressed that the working group tried to separate between Petras Cvirka the collaborator[65] and Petras Cvirka the author. The suggestion to remove the monument has further fueled a multifaceted discussion, some layers of which constitute his personality, the extent of his collaboration, the value of his writings, the educational potential of the monument to reflect on the role of intellectuals and cultural elites in consolidating the regime,[66] or the uncertainty of what might happen next to the public space in light of the urban development.[67] Currently, the future of the monument and the square in which it is located is still being discussed.

DURING THIS PERIOD, there were several attempts[68] by artists to challenge the prevalent opinions via public installations or exhibitions. For example, in 2018, Eglė Grėbliauskaitė created the public installation *A cold wall wake up hit* that aimed to rethink the personality of Salomėja Nėris a contested Lithuanian poet who glorified the Soviet regime in her poetry, also touching upon the memory of Petras Cvirka.[69] This installation included a portrait of Salomėja Nėris, placed on the balcony of the building facing the square that contains the Petras Cvirka monument, thereby juxtaposing images of the two artists. The project aimed to raise questions about the role of artists during the Soviet period and the complexities of the choices they had to make. According to the project description: "Art serves as a cache of memories of the times and can help to retreat from the preconceptions and partly become an educational tool to learn from the past."[70]

In spring 2019, a discussion was organized in MO – a modern art museum – where artists were invited to pitch their suggestions for reconceptualizing the Petras Cvirka monument.[71] In

> ## "THE FUTURE OF THE MONUMENT AND THE SQUARE IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED IS STILL BEING DISCUSSED."

November 2019, as an outcome of this discussion, an exhibition called "Monument and censorship: to remove or leave" opened in the Vitrina&Bench gallery in Vilnius.[72] The exhibition, which featured six ideas and a sound installation[73], was curated by Paulina Pukytė and Dainius Liškevičius. Using visual arts, it aimed to reconceptualize the Petras Cvirka monument by offering an alternative to the "populist" suggestions of leaving or removing the monument and allowing citizens to digest and understand the past themselves. Prior to the exhibition, some of the project's images were published in a cultural weekly. These images attracted the attention of a member of Cvirka's family, who found them disruptive to the writer's memory and demanded that they be removed, adding another layer to the contestation of this topic.[74]

IN 2020, THE Lithuanian Council for Culture awarded funding for a project called "Space for public discussions: conversations about P. Cvirka's square" proposed by the landscape architecture and public space design studio, *Studio Space/Time*.[75] According to a statement released by the studio, the project has reacted to the ongoing discussion in society regarding the Soviet-era heritage of public space. It seeks to create a hybrid platform that would host discussions, lectures, surveys and other events on the topic of temporary design interventions and the post-Soviet regeneration of P. Cvirka's square.[76] The project's authors expect that such a platform could become a model for negotiating solutions for similar spaces. A particular emphasis has been placed on society engagement in negotiating the disputes that arise regarding public space. However, the awarding of funding has attracted some media attention, the main concern being the purpose of the discussions that had to be organized under this project, and the amount of funding dedicated to it.[77] The media focus on the funding of this project has highlighted the different narratives that are colliding, not only regarding this particular monument but other kinds of Soviet-era legacy and heritage in public spaces.

However, the proposals to remove the monument do not provide a clear solution regarding how a broader P. Cvirka legacy and the heritage associated with it should be evaluated. Unlike the Green Bridge statues, which are allegorical sculptures, this monument is an object that is tightly interwoven with the biography of a specific person. Although legal protection for another monument dedicated to Petras Cvirka in Kaunas had already been removed in 2016,[78] several streets named after him, as well as protection for his homeland or his grave remain. This further highlights the ambivalence of the disputed monuments of the above-mentioned "second wave of revisionism", as it remains unclear what role such disputes play in evaluating the broader Soviet legacy.

Conclusion

The Soviet-era heritage can be perceived as a misplaced heritage, with a dissonance that is implicit in the content of its messages. The political and ideological purposes that determined the creation of sites such as the Green Bridge statues or the monument to Petras Cvirka have now become dissonant in a new political setting and memory culture. For example, the program for nurturing Vilnius memory culture, which was introduced by Vilnius municipality in 2017, supports the narrative of a multicultural city that played a pivotal role in Lithuania's struggle for independence.[79] In such context, the messages communicated by the Soviet-era legacy do not fit the current political setting, leading to what Tunbridge and Ashworth refers to as an "obsolete transmission" of messages. Notably, not all Soviet-era heritage has been equally disputed, as there is often ambivalence regarding some monuments to artists, memorials, burial places of Soviet army troops, decorative elements and allegorical sculptures, etc. that can embody both ideological/political and other (historical, aesthetic etc.) values.

The dissonance of the two cases discussed in this article has been made urgent gradually. The dissonant quality of the Green Bridge statues, which at first was more silent, gained particular attention in 2010 when the need to define their values occurred in light of the questions surrounding their restoration. Meanwhile, the monument to Petras Cvirka has become a particularly urgent topic in recent years, following proposals to remove it. The two cases, although sharing contestation associated with their Soviet past, also bear some differences. Unlike the Green Bridge statues that are allegorical sculptures, the Petras Cvirka monument is dedicated to a specific historical figure, whose biography and writings face diverse evaluations. The subject of dispute is made more concrete and is not only focused on broader concepts of ideology but also on the evaluation of a specific person's actions. There is a lack of agreement as to whether such monuments and statues should be viewed as political or cultural objects.

ALTHOUGH THERE WERE attempts to re-interpret the meaning of the Green Bridge statues, these efforts were not successful and the statues were eventually dismantled. Ideology has surfaced as an important strand in these discussions. However, Skaidra Trilupaitytė points out that the ideological meaning of these statues has tended to be amplified. During the Soviet period, the statues had a representational value but were not as highly significant attributes of Soviet culture as portrayed by the media and the debates that took place prior to their removal in 2015.[80] Being in the height of media attention, these objects have become particularly poignant embodiments of a hostile system to the current memory culture. Although artistic approaches tended to offer ways of decontextualizing these statues, they

were not enough to limit their dissonance. Alternative solutions, such as the artistic approaches that were actually realized, have tended to comply with and reinforce the dominant memory culture (e.g. hanging a chain under the bridge).

Meanwhile, the debate about the Petras Cvirka monument is still ongoing with no final decision being made yet. The artistic reflections on the subject (e.g. installations, exhibitions) fall into a more ambivalent space in relation to the dominant memory culture by calling for discussions.[81] The values promoted by the artistic projects discussed here have tended to highlight memory as something to be engaged with by members of society. The educational potential of such monuments has also been highlighted as they can act as markers of past events and regimes (e.g. shedding light on artists' collaborations with an occupant state). Drawing upon Tunbridge and Ashworth's management approaches that were previously discussed, alternative solutions to removal may be perceived as promoting the "inclusivity" of different views. However, the addition of new forms of heritage or the incorporation of different interpretations into the narrative does not ensure balance of elements and a consensus (not to state that this should be the goal of the different interventions) resulting in some authorities opting for more common approaches such as dismantling or relocation. Nevertheless, the removal of such monuments and sculptures often does not offer answers to questions related to how the broader Soviet-era heritage should be evaluated and handled. ×

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10   Jan Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory," in *Cultural Memory Studies*, eds. Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nuenning (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 109–118.

11   Astrid Erll, "Travelling memory," *Parallax* 17, 4 (2011): 14.

12   Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–25.

13   Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006).

14   Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage,* 23–29.

15   By drawing on a marketing science perspective based on the relationships between resources, products and consumers, Tunbridge and Ashworth argue that heritage dissonance may be implicit in its commodification, place production, multi-use or in its messages. Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage*, 20–29.

16   Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage*, 27–29, 54.

17   Nina Tumarkin, "The Great Patriotic War as Myth and Memory," *European Review* 11, 4 (2003): 595–611, DOI:10.1017/S1062798703000504.

18   Rasa Čepaitienė, "Miestas kaip ideologinis tekstas: teoriniai ir interpretaciniai aspektai [City as an ideological text: theoretical and interpetational aspects]," *Atminties daugiasluoksniškumas: miestas, valstybė, regionas* [Multilayered memory: city, state, region], ed. Alvydas Nikžentaitis (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2013), 63, 72.

19   Alvydas Nikžentaitis, "Atminties ir atminimo kultūrų modeliai: Lietuva, Lenkija, Rusija, Vokietija [Models of memory and remembrance cultures: Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Germany]," in *Nuo Basanavičiaus, Vytauto Didžiojo iki Molotovo ir Ribentropo: atminties ir atminimo kultūrų transformacijos XX-XXI amžiuje* [From Basanavičius, Vytautas the Great and Molotov-Ribbentrop: transformations of memory and remembrance cultures in 20–21st century], ed. Alvydas Nikžentaitis (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2011), 456.

20   Rasa Baločkaitė, "Sovietinis paveldas vidurio rytų Europoje – antroji revizionizmo banga [Soviet heritage in central eastern Europe – the second wave of revisionism]," *Kultūros barai* 2 (2016): 18–19.

21   Ibid., 19.

> **"THE SOVIET-ERA HERITAGE CAN BE PERCEIVED AS A MISPLACED HERITAGE, WITH A DISSONANCE THAT IS IMPLICIT IN THE CONTENT OF ITS MESSAGES."**

22 See for instance: Kozyrska, "Decommunisation of the Public Space in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine," 132.

23 Vaidas Petrulis, *Paveldas kaip konfliktas: metodologinės Lietuvos XX a. architektūrinio palikimo vertinimo prielaidos* [Heritage as conflict: methodological assumptions of the assessment of Lithuania's 20th century architectural legacy] (Kaunas: KTU leidykla, 2019), 181.

24 Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage*, 263.

25 Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage*, 219–222.

26 Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006), 82; and Višnja Kisić, *Governing Heritage Dissonance: Promises and Realities of Selected Cultural Policies* (Amsterdam: European Cultural Foundation, 2016), 29.

27 James E. Young, "The Stages of Memory: Reflections on Memorial Art, Loss, and the Spaces Between" (lecture given at Kaunas Biennial 2017, Oral Program "Contested Memory | Contested Places"), accessed April 27, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GbW143l798.

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29 Robert Tait, "Statue Must Tell True Story of Soviet 'Hero', Say Czechs," *The Guardian*, August 5, 2018, accessed April 22, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/05/soviet-hero-konev-statue-prague-spring.

30 Tait, "Statue Must Tell True Story of Soviet 'Hero', Say Czechs".

31 "Prague Removes Statue of Soviet General Konev," *Deutsche Welle*.

32 "Russia Asks Prague for Dismantled Statue of Soviet General Konev," *Deutsche Welle*, April 10, 2020, accessed April 22, 2020, https://www.dw.com/en/russia-asks-prague-for-dismantled-statue-of-soviet-general-konev/a-53089585.

33 Jonathan Bousfield, Matt Willis, *DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Bulgaria* (London: DK Eyewitness Travel, 2017), 81.

34 Pinar Noorata, "Playing on a Monumental Swing," *My Modern Met*, April 16, 2012, accessed April 27, 2020, https://mymodernmet.com/kamila-szejnoch-carousel-slide-swing/.

35 Quentin Stevens, Karen A. Franck, Ruth Fazakerley, "Counter-monuments: The Anti-monumental and the Dialogic," *The Journal of Architecture*, 17, 6 (2012): 951–972, DOI:10.1080/13602365.2012.746035.

36 Ibid., 962.

37 The history of the Green Bridge dates back to the 16th century. It was destroyed in 1944 during World War Two, rebuilt by the Soviet Lithuanian Government in 1952 and named after the Red Army General Ivan Chernyakhovsky. After 1990 it was called the Green Bridge again.

38 Rasa Baločkaitė, "The New Culture Wars in Lithuania: Trouble with Soviet Heritage," *Cultures of History Forum*, April 12, 2015, DOI: 10.25626/0034, 2.

39 "Žaliasis tiltas su skulptūromis [The Green Bridge with sculptures]," Kultūros paveldo registras [Cultural Heritage List], accessed April 27, 2020, https://kvr.kpd.lt/#/static-heritage-search.

40 Skaidra Trilupaitytė, "Medijų kultūra ar 'atminties transformacijos'?: Žaliojo tilto atvejis ir kiti paminklai [Media culture or "transformation of memory"?: The case of the Green Bridge and other monuments]," in *Nacionalinis tapatumas medijų kultūroje* [National identity in media culture], eds. Žilvinė Gaižutytė-Filipavičienė, Vytautas Rubavičius (Vilnius: Kitos knygos, 2011): 84–102.

41 Ibid., 84.

42 Ibid., 87–88.

43 Ibid., 88–89.

44 Baločkaitė, "The New Culture Wars in Lithuania", 6.

45 Rasa Čepaitienė, "Disonuojantis, erzinantis, nepatogus? Pasmerktųjų politinių režimų palikimas Europoje [Dissonant, irritative, inconvenient? The legacy of condemned political regimes in Europe]," in *Patogus ir nepatogus paveldas. Mokslinio seminaro-diskusijos medžiaga* [Convenient and inconvenient heritage. Material from an academic seminar discussion] (Vilnius: LR Valstybinė kultūros paveldo komisija, 2016): 20–21.

46 Lietuvos Respublikos Kultūros ministras [Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania], *Įsakymas "Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Kultūros ministro 2005 m. balandžio 15 d. Įsakymo Nr. ĮV-150 „Dėl nekilnojamųjų kultūros vertybių vertinimo, atrankos ir reikšmingumo lygmens nustatymo kriterijų aprašo patvirtinimo" pakeitimo* [Order "Regarding the amendment to the April 15, 2005 order of the Minister of Culture No. ĮV-150 "Regarding the confirmation of the criteria description for the assessment, selection and identification of the significance level of immovable cultural properties"]," November 12, 2014, No. ĮV-813, Vilnius.

47 "Ant Vilniaus Žaliojo tilto prasidėjo parengiamieji skulptūrų rekonstrukcijos darbai" *Vilnius.lt*.

48 Kultūros paveldo departamento prie Kultūros ministerijos pirmoji nekilnojamojo kultūros paveldo vertinimo taryba [First immovable heritage assessment council of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture], *Aktas, 2016-03-01, Nr: KPD-RM-VT/7.1* [The Act, March 1, 2016, No. KPD-RM-VT/7.1], accessed May 28, 2020, https://kvr.kpd.lt/#/static-heritage-search.

49 "Vieningai balsuota už teisinės apsaugos panaikinimą Žaliajam tiltui su skulptūromis (papildyta) [Unanimous vote in favor of the abolition of legal protection for the Green Bridge with sculptures (updated)]," *Kultūros paveldo departamentas prie Kultūros ministerijos [Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture], March 1*, 2016, accessed September 3, 2020, http://www.kpd.lt/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=2217&cntnt01returnid=213.

50 Vilniaus miesto savivaldybės administracijos direktoriaus pavaduotojas [Deputy director of Vilnius city municipality administration], *Įsakymas "Dėl leidimo įrengti informacinę lentą ant Žaliojo tilto"* [Order "Regarding permission to install an information board on the Green Bridge], August 13, 2013, No. A30-2158, Vilnius, accessed May 31, 2020, https://aktai.vilnius.lt/document/30228000.

51 The text discusses several examples of artistic practices that were well covered by the media. Other artistic installations or suggestions for interventions may exist but have not been covered here as they have not attracted as wide media coverage or received much critical or popular acclaim.

52 Lijana Natalevičienė, "Seniausias Vilniaus tiltas per Nerį [The oldest bridge over the Nėris in Vilnius]," *MO muziejus*, accessed May 1, 2020, http://www.mmcentras.lt/seniausias-vilniaus-tiltas-per-neri/79055.

53 Natalevičienė, "Seniausias Vilniaus tiltas per Nerį".

54 Violeta Grigaliūnaitė, "Vilniaus Žaliasis tiltas neteko dar vienos skulptūros – nukabinta apačioje kabėjusi 'Grandinė' [Vilnius Green Bridge has lost one more sculpture – the "Chain", which had been hanging underneath the bridge has been taken down]," *15min.lt*, August 5, 2019, accessed April 29, 2020, https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/vilniaus-zaliasis-tiltas-neteko-dar-vienos-skulpturos-nukabinta-apacioje-kabejusi-grandine-56-1183970#_.

55 Rasa Čepaitienė, "Kultūrinės atminties sovietizacija: Vilniaus ir Minsko atvejai [Sovietization of cultural memory: the cases of Vilnius and Minsk]," in *Atminties daugiasluoksniškumas: miestas, valstybė, regionas* [Multilayered memory: city, state, region], ed. Alvydas Nikžentaitis (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2013): 298.

56 "Audrius Ambrasas Architects," accessed April 29, 2020, https://www.ambrasas.lt/lt/works/green-bridge/info?show=selected.

57 While the "Megareality goodness activator" aimed to foster important societal values, the installation "Family" sought to consider the relationship between the family and the urban environment; see: "Pamatyk, kaip sausi atsinaujins Žaliasis tiltas! [See how the Green Bridge will be renewed in January!]," *Vilnius.lt*, September 27, 2018, accessed May 28, 2020, https://vilnius.lt/lt/2018/09/27/pamatyk-kaip-sausi-atsinaujins-zaliasis-tiltas/.

58 "Egle Grebliauskaite," accessed November 15, 2020, http://www.eglegrebliauskaite.com/Egle_Grebliauskaite/DESINFORMATION.html.

59 LGGRTC, "Petro Cvirkos veiklos 1940–1947 metais apžvalga. Istorinė-archyvinė pažyma [Review of Petras Cvirka's activity from 1940–1947. Historical archival certificate]," *Genocid*.lt, December 11, 2019, accessed May 1, 2020, http://genocid.lt/UserFiles/File/Titulinis/2019/20191211_cvirka_istorine_archyvine_pazyma.pdf, 2–4.

60 Zita Žemaitytė, *300 kultūros paminklų* [300 cultural monuments] (Vilnius: Mintis, 1980): 57.

61 "Petro Cvirkos paminklas [Petras Cvirka monument]", Kultūros paveldo registras [Cultural Heritage List], accessed April 27, 2020, https://kvr.kpd.lt/#/static-heritage-search.

62 The first reference to such demands that was found in the media dates back to 2003. See: https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/siuloma-pervadinti-petro-cvirkos-stotele.d?id=2802533.

63 Conflicts related to the memorialization of Nazi collaborators in Lithuania showed that a consistent stance regarding how figures who collaborated with totalitarian regimes should be evaluated is lacking.

64 Monika Gimbutaitė, "Rašytojų sąjungoje keltas klausimas – kodėl Petro Cvirkos paminklas sostinėje turėtų išlikti? [A question was raised at the Union of Writers – why should the Petras Cvirka monument in the capital remain?]," *15min.lt*, July 18, 2019, accessed August 18, 2019, https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/naujienos/rasytoju-sajungoje-keltas-klausimas-kodel-petro-cvirkos-paminklas-sostineje-turetu-islikti-1104-1175790?.

65 In 2019, the Committee for Memory Culture at Vilnius municipality consulted with the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania regarding Petras Cvirka's biography. The Centre has evaluated Petras Cvirka's activities and confirmed that he was a collaborator with the Soviet regime. See: LGGRTC, "Petro Cvirkos veiklos 1940–1947 metais apžvalga".

66 Gimbutaitė, "Rašytojų sąjungoje keltas klausimas – kodėl Petro Cvirkos paminklas sostinėje turėtų išlikti?".

67 The latter uncertainty is also tightly linked to current urban developments. There are plans to build a new concert hall in the vicinity of the monument. The concert hall is due to open in 2023. There are also plans to build a pedestrian bridge that will be connected to the both the hill on which the future concert hall will be located and the P. Cvirka square. See: Vilniaus planas, *Tauro kalno parko teritorijos tvarkymo projektas, Aiškinamasis raštas* [Project for the development of Tauras hill park territory, Explanatory note], accessed May 29, 2020, https://vilnius.lt/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/TAURO-KALNO-PARKAS_PP_1.pdf, 24.

68 Similar to the case of the Green Bridge statues, the text discusses a few examples of artistic practices that were well covered by the media or have received critical or popular acclaim. There may be other artistic installations or proposals for interventions that are not discussed here.

69 "Vilniaus gatvės prabilo Salomėjos Nėries eilėmis [Vilnius streets spoke in the verses of Salomėja Nėris]," *15min.lt*, November 16, 2018, accessed April 27, 2020, https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/vizualieji-menai/vilniaus-gatves-prabilo-salomejos-neries-eilemis-929-1060748.

70 "Egle Grebliauskaite," accessed November 15, 2020, http://www.eglegrebliauskaite.com/Egle_Grebliauskaite/DESINFORMATION.html.

71 Rūta Miškinytė, "Petro Cvirkos paminklo epopėja (II): 2019 m. diskusijos įkaito iki raudonumo [The opopee of the Petras Cvirka monument (II): in 2019 the debate became really heated]," *15min.lt*, November 12, 2019, accessed May 1, 2020, https://www.15min.lt/ar-zinai/naujiena/idomi-lietuva/petro-cvirkos-paminklo-epopeja-ii-2019-m-diskusijos-ikaito-iki-raudonumo-1162-1229036.

72 Monika Gimbutaitė, "Paroda 'Paminklas ir cenzūra. Pašalinti ar palikti': kaip į P. Cvirkos paminklą siūlo pažvelgti menininkai? [Exhibition "Monument and censorship. Remove or leave': how do artists suggest viewing the Petras Cvirka monument?]," *15min.lt*, November 13, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/vizualieji-menai/paroda-paminklas-ir-cenzura-pasalinti-ar-palikti-kaip-i-p-cvirkos-paminkla-kviecia-pazvelgti-meninkai-929-1231710.

73 The projects presented in the exhibition include proposals to install lasers in the statue's eyes that could follow the passersby (author Liudas Parulskis), covering the monument with a stand made of paintings by P. Cvirka's wife (author Marta Vosyliūtė), splitting the monument in two (author Dainius Dirgėla), lowering the monument below the ground that could be elevated above the surface upon payment (author Dainius Liškevičius), covering the monument in a white shroud (author Paulina Pukytė), as well as molding the monument in silicon representing a pillar of salt (author Paulina Pukytė). The exhibition also included a sound installation by Dainius Liškevičius and Mindaugas Mikeliūnas.

74 Paulina Pukytė, *Monument and Censorship (To Remove or Not To Remove)*, accessed May 29, 2020, http://www.pukyte.com/styled-23/styled-39/.

75 Lietuvos kultūros taryba [Lithuanian Council for Culture], "Sprendimas dėl kultūros rėmimo fondo lėšomis finansuojamos programos "Kultūros ir meno organizacijų naujų produktų ir (ar) paslaugų kūrimas" (tarpdisciplininio meno sritis) projektų dalinio finansavimo 2020 metais, 2020 m. liepos 28 d. Nr. 1LKT-77(1.2), Vilnius [Decision regarding co-financing of projects under the program "Development of new products and/or services by cultural and art organizations" (interdisciplinary art) financed by the Culture Support Fund in 2020, July 28, 2020, No. 1LKT-77(1.2), Vilnius]," accessed September 1, 2020, https://www.ltkt.lt/files/tarpdisciplininio-meno-sritis-kulturos-ir-meno-organizaciju-nauju-produktu-ir-ar-paslaugu-kurimas0700.pdf.

76 Studio_Space/Time, "Viešųjų diskusijų erdvė: pokalbiai apie P.Cvirkos skverą [Space for public discussions: conversations about P. Cvirka's square]," accessed September 1, 2020, https://space-time.studio/Viesuju-diskusiju-erdve-pokalbiai-apie-P-Cvirkos-skvera.

77 Augustas Stankevičius, "Šalies vadovai abejoja dėl diskusijų apie P. Cvirkos paminklą kainos [State leaders question the price of discussions about P. Cvirka's monument]," *15min.lt*, August 19, 2020, accessed November 2, 2020, https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/salies-vadovai-abejoja-del-diskusiju-apie-p-cvirkos-paminkla-kainos-56-1363596.

78 "Petro Cvirkos paminklas [Petras Cvirka monument]," Kultūros paveldo registras [Cultural Heritage List].

79 "Vilniaus miesto atminties kultūros puoselėjimo programa [Program for nurturing the memory culture of Vilnius city]," accessed May 4, 2020, https://atviras.vilnius.lt/viesinimas/vilniaus-atminties-kulturos-programos-pristatymas-visuomenei.

80 Trilupaitytė, "Medijų kultūra ar 'atminties transformacijos'?", 93–94.

81 Notably, this article has covered several examples of artistic practices and proposals for interventions. There may be other artistic installations or proposals in relation to these two cases that have not been covered here.