

The shift in typology of the Vojin Bakić's solution – *The Memorial to the Victory of the Revolution of the People of Slavonia*, in Kamenska

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After an introduction about the development of Vojin Bakić's sculptural reflections, by which he had led the Croatian sculpture and monumental plastic into the realm of high modernism abstraction, we will take a closer look into a shift in typology of the Bakić's solution of the monument task, which he displayed in creating the Memorial to the Victory of Slavonian people's Revolution in the Kamenska near Požega, completed in 1968. We will analyse the process of tender implementation, the reception of the critique, the genesis of the plastic solution, and the symbolic meaning of the form and material of the monument. The monument was destroyed in 1992. Since no documentation about the construction or the project has been found, the article cites the extensive testimony of the only surviving monument designer, Boris Medja, Ph.D., about the process of design and construction.

KEY WORDS: Vojin Bakić, monumental sculpture, *Memorial to the Victory of the Slavonian People's Revolution*, modernity, Socialist Yugoslavia

Vojin Bakić is one of the greatest names of the Croatian modernist sculpture, one who had won the freedom and autonomy of artistic creation after decades of struggle. Starting from academic realism, close to sculptor Frano Kršinić, through a brief phase of socialist realism, he abandons those principles in the 1950s, only to, through the reduction of the redundant, come to the full, concise volume, one that will bring him to pure abstract forms. In the Memorial to the Slavonian people's Revolution, Vojin Bakić had significantly changed the course of the official monument sculpture of Socialist Yugoslavia and made it a part of European high modernism. The change in typology of the monument solution happens for Vojin Bakić by the end of the 1950s, after an almost fifteen-year-long creation and research. It emerges from the formal solutions he had researched and found in the field of chamber plastic, but also from the changed socio-political and cultural climate that had happened as a result of the separation of Yugoslavia from the Soviet Union's politics in 1948. We will present his early years of creative work briefly, together with the changes in the field of sculptural creation by which he introduces modernism into sculpture and monument plastic.

EARLY WORKS IN THE TRADITION OF ACADEMIC REALISM

During his studies and the years of war, in terms of themes and form, Bakić creates within the frameworks of the then-prevalent academic realism. He graduates from sculpting in 1939 at the State Art Academy in Zagreb. The first two years he studies in the class of professor Frano Kršinić, and the following, under professor Robert Frangeš-Mihanović. Both teachers left an important mark on Bakić's early sculptural formation. During his studies, he was fascinated by Meštrović's monumental sculpture inspired by national myths, but in his personal reflections, he was not drawn to the sculpture of great gesture. At that time, he was studying art monographs, and was particularly impressed by the works of Rodin, Maillol and Bourdelle. He models in clay and carves in stone figures of women

bathing, female portraits and nudes, makes models of animals and a few compositions of Europa and the Bull. The harmonious and enclosed volume of the female body emanates gentleness and lyricism, and the delicate treatment of the tense surface shows softness and transparency of light on its surface.

MONUMENTS AND PORTRAITS IN THE SPIRIT OF PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

With the end of the war, great changes appear in the field of artistic production and reception. The artists are expected to take on an active role in the cultural and social progress of the Socialist Yugoslavia nation. Artists are supposed to create in the service of the society and ideology, so Bakić, too, accepts new tasks, in accordance with socio-political needs. After the end of war, he finds out about the tragic destiny of his four brothers who had been executed in Jadovno concentration camp in 1941, and introduces a new theme in his design repertoire – designing monumental solutions, with the aim of contributing to the social remembrance of the victims of fascism.

He completely abandons the themes which were then, under the influence of the Russian socialist realism doctrine, being connected with the civic, bourgeois art, i.e. nudes, mythological themes, idealized female portraits. He participates in tenders for public monuments (i.e., Marko Orešković, Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević) and models portraits of national heroes (i.e., Nikola Demonja, Rade Končar, Marshal Tito)

The most successful of all is his portrait of Ivan Goran Kovačić (1946), which was soon to be seen as one of the best “engaged” portraits of the postwar period. Instead of empty rhetoric and pathos, the portrait is filled with psychological characterisation, and an emphasized dynamics of the surface, which the sculptor articulates with the play of shadow and light. Awards, but also many new commissions, will follow. In 1946, the citizens of Bjelovar commissioned a memorial to the victims of National Liberation Struggle.

He makes the Memorial to the shot - a Call for an Uprising, popularly dubbed the Bjelovar man, and presented it to his hometown in the memory of the four of his executed brothers. Despite of the realistic portrait of a young revolutionary, the monument stood up in its high quality from other monumental solutions that sprang up in large amounts at that time. The decisive gesture of its raising hands, the expression of his face that calls for a military fight, the quality of the composition solution, the authenticity with which the author approached the task and the heroism that did not succumb to pathos, brought it immediate recognition as one of the most successful monuments of the after-war period. Bakić received for it an award of the Government of Federative National Republic of Yugoslavia, and new commissions.

A TURN IN FORM AND CONTENT

The cooling of the relations with the Soviet Union in 1948 created the preconditions for the liberation from the canon of Socialist realism in the iconography of the postwar art.

In 1950, Bakić completes the monument for Kolašin in Monte Negro and works on a monument for Čazma (Croatia), but simultaneously, feels a strong need to let go of the realism. “(...) I have immediately felt that the danger lied precisely in that realism, in that, if you will, easiness with which you can fall into mannerism, a sort of repetition, an empty rhetoric. And this is exactly what happened with my monument in Kolašin, which I wish I hadn’t made at all. (...) After the Kolašin monument, I felt the need to return to the sculptural principles. And what did I do? I took nudes, my older ones, and started working on them. And this had been nothing but a return to the sculptural discipline.”¹ With

¹ Bek, Stjepan. Razgovaramo sa umjetnicima: Vraćanje skulptorskim principima. Vojin Bakić, kipar. // 4. Jul / Beograd, 2. rujna 1969.

this decision, Bakić intuitively opts for modernism, the autonomy of artistic expression, innovation and a quest for new features in sculptural expression. He goes back to the themes that he had been examining in the pre-war and war period, – torso, female nude, portrait, animalism, and searches for new design solutions. In this process of a persistent search for a new path, in a brief phase that begins in 1951 and lasts until 1954, he makes sculptures of simplified volume, whose surface is defined by flat surfaces which collide in sharp edges, reminiscent of the cubist construction of forms (Selfportrait, 1952, a study for a monument to Marx and Engels, 1950 - 1953, the Agitator, a study for a memorial to Stjepan Filipović, the monument in Gudovac). Bakić is drawn to the simplicity of volume and the flatness of the surface, which he discovered and fell in love with in the early works of Arhipenko.

Following the tracks of these achievements in the design of the memorial to Stjepan Filipović for Valjevo, he consorts to the composition solutions he applied in the Bjelovar man, but, significantly monumentalizing and modernizing it. The figure is placed in an accentuated verticality with its arms raised high, its form simplified, devoid of detail or descriptionism. The monument was inaugurated in 1960, the same year when Vojin Bakić applies for the tender for the monument in Kamenska.

PUBLIC TENDER FOR THE *MEMORIAL TO THE VICTORY OF THE SLAVONIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION*

A general, Yugoslav and anonymous tender for a Memorial to the Victory of the Slavonian people's Revolution at the hill of Blažuj in Kamenska village, was announced in 1960. The investor was the Coordinate committee of the Union of Fighters in NOR (People's Liberation War) of the Slavonia and Baranja region, for the construction and preservation of the National Liberation Fight monuments in Slavonia.² "The contesters had a task to project a monument which had to unequivocally reflect, in its concept and idea, the greatness and specificity of the Slavonian people's fight, to be representative and to preserve with its idea, a lasting memory of the fight, the heroism, the sacrifice and the final victory of the people of this part of our homeland" (from the tender propositions).

In terms of urbanistic and formal conditions, the contesters were given complete freedom, with the sole prerequisite that the grave of the national hero Nikola Demonja, buried according to his own wish, were not to be moved from the hill Bržuj, where the monument was to be erected.³ The members of the Jury were mostly prominent people from political and social circles, and, from artistic circles, Josip Vaništa i Ivan Sabolić.⁴

The tender committee received 25 works, from which 4 hadn't met the propositions (im. 1). The first prize was not awarded, the second was shared between the code "Papuk", used by the sculptor Vojin Bakić and architect Josip Seissel contested, and the code "550506", used by sculptor Miodrag Živković and architecture graduate Vasilije Janković, and Vojin Bakić was assigned the performance/ construction of the monument.⁵ The third prize was won by the sculptor Stevan Luketić and architect

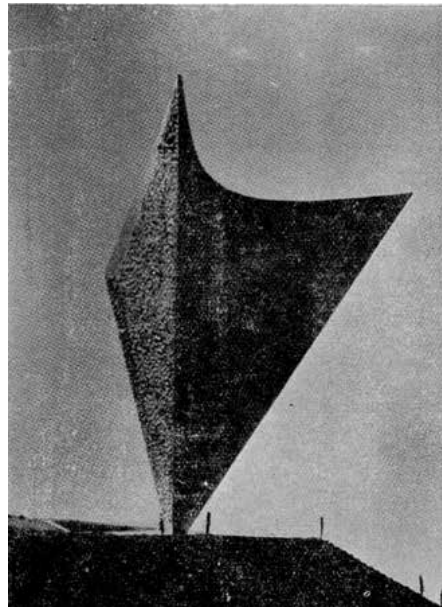
² Ljubljanović, Srećko. Izložba idejnih projekata za Spomenik pobjedi revolucije u Slavoniji. Zagreb : Muzej revolucije naroda Hrvatske, broj 1, 6.–21. 1. 1961.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Andrija Mutnjaković, the fourth by sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect Fedor Wenzler.⁶ Six contract awards were given, as well.⁷



1. Prize-winning entries in the competition for the Victory Memorial: 2. Vojin Bakić and Josip Seissel – second prize, 2. Miodrag Živković and Vasilije Janković – second prize, 3. Stevan Luketić and Andrija Mutnjaković – third prize, 4. Dušan Džamonja and Fedor Wenzler – fourth prize

The configuration of the terrain on the hill of Blažuj, together with the tender propositions, have determined the usability of a smaller terrain surface for the monument. Therefore, all rewarded authors proposed solutions which had its full realization in its vertical growth. Vertically accentuated forms branch out from a narrow base and expand radially towards the ends of the sculpture. Abandoning the previously dominant descriptive, narrative models of representation in shaping monument solutions, the authors of the four rewarded conceptual solutions reached out for an abstract form of associative features, so that they would depict, by universal symbols, devoid of any banality and pathos, all the power and triumph of the Revolution. Bakić further develops the monument into a 30 m (98.5 feet) tall leaf-like form, which was completed in 1968. With this artistic achievement, he

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Otkupne su nagrade dodijeljene grupi autora Vladimiru Ivanoviću, Branku Ružiću, Zlatku Movrinu i Dragutinu Kišu, grupi autora Vjekoslavu Rukljaču, Josipu Frankolu i Leli Rotkvić, autorskom dvojcu Momčilu Krkoviću i Svetislavu Ličini, autorskom dvojcu Branku Petroviću i Branku Vasiljeviću, arhitektu Borisu Cikalovskom sa suradnicima, te arhitektu Ninoslavu Kučanu. Ljubljanski, Srećko. Nav. dj.



decisively breaks off with the up-to-that-moment dominant canons of realistic depictions of memorials to the victims of anti-fascist struggle in the territory of Yugoslavia, and creates a unique synthesis of pure abstract form and symbolic content in a monumental form, which he himself elevates to a universal symbol of victory (fig. 2)

THE RECEPTION OF CRITIQUE

The exhibition of the conceptual projects for the Memorial Victory of the Slavonian people's Revolution was held from 6th to 21st January 1961 at the Museum of Croatian people's Revolution in the Meštvoić Pavillion. The exhibition presented all the works that have completed the prerequisites of the public tender (21 conceptual project). The awarded works were displayed at the exhibition with all the applied materials, while the tender documentation of the rest of the projects was not presented integrally.⁸ The magazine *Architecture* presented the tender results, followed by different critical reviews and explanations for the works of the awarded authors. (im. 3) Architect Darko Venturini expresses his satisfaction at the general spirit of the tender that had confirmed loyalty to a new sculptural idea.⁹ The majority of the works applying to the tender envisioned a 30 m tall memorial, so that the monumentality would emphasize the ideological dignity of the tender task – the fight, the heroism, the sacrifice and the victory of the people of Slavonia. In analyzing the tender solutions, Zdenko Kolacio points to a relationship of the monument and its surrounding area. He notices that the restored area at the foot of the hill of Blažuj is in a spatial and visual conflict with the large memorial complex, and states that the access from the main road to the top of Blažuj is steep, with a difference in height of over 40 m (131 feet).



⁸ Ljubljanović, Srećko. Nav. dj.

⁹ Venturini, Darko. Simbol revolucije – pobjeda ideje. // *Arhitektura: časopis za arhitekturu, urbanizam i primijenjenu umjetnost*, 1-2 (1961.) / Zagreb, 1961., 20.

He states that in the elaboration of the solution neither the majority of the authors, but nor the Jury, assigned a lot of attention to “any kind of relation towards the location, overcoming the height difference in the terrain, the relationship of location-monument regarding the points of view of the visitors, or the funds available to the commissioner”¹⁰

The photographs of the completed Vojin Bakić’s monument (fig. 4) show a disproportion between the size of the monument and the configuration of the gentle hilly landscape, while the steepness is overcome by a staircase that used to lead to the monument. However, the monumentality of the sculptures had a significant symbolic function, and a justification in the political and ideological task to celebrate the revolutionary uprising of the Slavonian people. Kolacio justly expresses his doubts about the planned funds being sufficient for the completion of the entire complex in the amount of 60 million Yugoslav dinars. Shortly after the opening ceremony of the monument, there will be writings about debts and the exceeded costs of construction in the press. Even by the end of 1969, the investor had not covered the high costs of the construction, so the Požega constructor “Industrogradnja” sued the investor at the court in Osijek. The investor, on its part, claims that the claimings from the assemblers were unrealistically high and that the monitoring body had not signed the hand-over of the facility. They state the lack of funds as one of the reasons for not covering the costs. To be specific, the funds were raised from voluntary contributions of the workers’ organizations and individual citizens of Slavonia, but also from the republic funds.¹¹

Art historian Milan Prelog has been following the work of Vojin Bakić since the early fifties. In the aforementioned edition of the magazine *Architecture*, he analyzes the impact of two types of Bakić’s monuments to the Revolution – the *Monument to Stjepan Filipović*, built in Valjevo, and the project for the *Memorial to Victory in Kamenska*.¹² He believes that both monuments decisively negate the conventions that had previously dominated in monument designs, and represent “(...) a certain critical negation of an immediate tradition – a negation that emerged as a result of an individual artistic evolution (...)”¹³ Prelog compares the sculpture with the winged goddess “Nike” and emphasizes the aspect of its simple expression.¹⁴ Prelog’s writing in the defense of the need for a freedom of creation is a famous one, in his article from 1953, where he analyzes the reasons and the repercussions of Bakić’s proposal for a monument to Marx and Engels at the square by the same name in Belgrade.¹⁵ The controversies arising in effect in the professional circles helped to create the first systematic and critical rethinking of the values and character of the previously dominant design of sculptural plastic in Croatia. Due to the excessive production of monuments all around Yugoslavia, which were erected under the authority of SUBNOR () but without a critical artistic judgement of their value, the federal SUBNOR reacted with an initiative. They proposed a bill, and in 1954, a Federal Law on Veterans’ Graves was passed, one that would enable the republics to regulate their

¹⁰ Kolacio, Zdenko. Spomenik pobjedi narodne revolucije u Slavoniji (Kamenska). // *Arhitektura: časopis za arhitekturu, urbanizam i primijenjenu umjetnost*, 1–2 (1961.) / Zagreb, 1961., 20–21, 20.

¹¹ Milošević, A. Spomenik pred sudom. // *Večernji list / Zagreb*, 8. prosinca 1969., 5.

¹² Prelog, Milan. Dva vida spomenika revoluciji. // *Arhitektura: časopis za arhitekturu, urbanizam i primijenjenu umjetnost*, 1–2 (1961.) / Zagreb, 1961., 4–6

¹³ Isto.

¹⁴ Isto.

¹⁵ Prelog, Milan. Djelo Vojina Bakića. // *Pogledi*, 12/I (1952.–1953.) / Zagreb, 1952.–1953., 912–919.

respective laws on cemeteries and monuments.¹⁶ The national republic of Croatia passed the Law on building memorials to historical events and persons in 1968, by which they established an obligation to call for public tenders.¹⁷

THE GENESIS OF THE PLASTIC SOLUTION, THE SYMBOLISM OF THE FORM AND MATERIAL

After he was entrusted with the realization of the monument, Vojin Bakić and Josip Seissel went on to further develop the concept of the monument solution. The concept has emerged from the elaboration of the formal elements that he had been exploring in 1958 within the cycle of sculptures “Leafy forms”, which represent a turning point in Bakić’s contemplation of plastic design. This is when the sculptor starts to experiment with the negatives, and both the positives and negatives of the sculpture become equally important to him. At the very beginning of this process, his forms still invoke an anthropomorphous source, and are close to the sculptures of Alberto Viani. The volume is reduced to a thinned down surface which folds like a sea shell in a rhythmical convex-and-concave movement, while the space becomes an equally important artistic element.

Speaking about the concept of the awarded sculptural solution, Bakić recalls: “It started somewhere around 1958, when I made the first sketches. That was the era of my leafy forms. Those were the years when there was a lot of turmoil around Marx and Zmaj. I have broke off with the tradition of the old sculpture of full volume and many people could not understand it. And I decided to take part in the contest, among other reasons, because there was something new and exciting in it. And that is, this contest also had a content that was precisely defined in it. I began doing the first proposals with architect Josip Seissel. But nothing that we did did not satisfy us. And that is when we decided to do something with the already mature form which was finished and to which we felt we had a distance, one that was close to the theme by its expression, but also allowed us the possibility to work on it more elaborately all the way to the dimensions of a monument (...)”¹⁸ (fig. 5, 6, 7) A free-flowing vertical form that develops from a condensed base and branches into a winged form was suitable for expressing the symbolic values that the monument was supposed to represent. I have expressed the essence of the monument by a realistic form, wingedness and I believe that this is a contemporary way of sculptural expression. That’s how I got the sharpness, the dynamism and a complete content. The idea for this monumental sculpture came to me, says Vojin Bakić, almost ten years ago.¹⁹

Bakić envisioned a monument with a reflecting, luminous surface, and during the work on the project, it was decided that they use a revetment of high polished stainless steel, which, with its properties, could best represent the symbolic meaning of the monument (fig. 8) The monument ascends into the sky in accentuated winged verticals, and the surface which reflects the light seems like a flash and a source of light that completely dominates the lonely hilly landscape. Bakić reached for the metaphysical and archetypal symbolism of light as a principle contrasted to darkness, a symbol of new life, renewal, a just victory over fascism, and, ultimately, humanism and positive values. The

¹⁶ Horvatinčić, Sanja. Prijedlog modela problemske analize spomeničke plastike iz razdoblja socijalizma. // *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti*, 37 (2013.) / Zagreb, 2013., 217–228, 222.

¹⁷ Isto.

¹⁸ Đorđević, B. To je ono što sam htio. Vojin Bakić o svom djelu i svojim suradnicima. // *Večernji list / Zagreb*, 11. prosinca 1968.

¹⁹ Stanivuković, P. Krilati spomenik krilatom narodu. // *Glas Slavonije / Osijek*, 7. travnja 1968.



5. 6. *Model for the Memorial*

7. *Plaster model (property of the Glyptothek of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts)*

8. *Memorial to the Victory of the Revolution of the People of Slavonia (photo: N. Gattin)*

search for light, betterment and progress is part of the modernist utopia that he had shared with his contemporaries who strived to create a better and more humane world in post-war Yugoslavia. Light marked his whole creative opus, and an introduction of pure abstract forms and contemporary materials with the ability to reflect light and the surrounding space with their polished surfaces meant an end to a phase of a long search. In the field of chamber plastic he achieved this with the sculptures of the “Lightbearing forms” cycle (1963 - 1963). In all the monumental solutions that he worked on since the 1960s, the luminous and reflecting surface, and design solutions, are the bearers of distinct symbolic and metaphysical qualities. With the central monument to the Zagreb victims of fascist terror at the entrance to the forest of Dotrščina, next to the Zagreb park Maksimir (1965), he came up with, through research, a perfect abstract, but also symbolic form of crystal, and the six crystal shapes in stainless steel make, with their pure geometrical forms and luminous surface, the main motif of the luminous-plastic spatial composition of the Valley of Graves. The monument to Goran in Lukovdol (1964) belongs to the same group, and later he will apply the same principles in designing the outer shell of the monument on the Petrova gora and in the Šumarice near Kragujevac, which are inaugurated in 1981 and represent the last of the monuments Bakić had made. The monument on Petrova gora is a morphological genesis of plastic research of the sculptures from the Developed Cut-through Surfaces cycle. The monument of the people of Croatia to the victims of Karlovac, in the memorial park of Šumarice, Bakić designs (sculpture Vojin Bakić, landscape architecture: Josip and Silvana Seissel) using the theme of luminous forms which he makes in a horizontal sequence. The seven circles symbolize the victims who fall under the bullets.

THE GREAT CONSTRUCTIONAL AND BUILDING UNDERTAKING

The collaborators on the conceptual project of the Bakić’s monument in Kamenska were the architects Berisla Radimir, Aleksandar Dragomanović, Tea Ložnik (they are mentioned as collaborators on the conceptual project, but are not mentioned in the development of the implementation project any more), and for the horticulture Silvana Seissel. Lela Rotkvić also collaborated on the project of horticulture with Silvana Seissel. The sketch for the landscape architecture is kept in the Planoteca of the Institute for Art History in Zagreb.²⁰ In order to transform the 85 centimeter model into a 30 meter tall monument, Bakić sought the help of the engineer Boris Medja and Borislav Vajić, and later Frano Tomljenović was also invited into collaboration. Those are the experts with which he successfully

²⁰ Nacrt je objavljen u: Horvatinčić, Sanja. Nav. dj., 222.

collaborated on the installment of the Monument to Stjepan Filipović in Valjevo.²¹ The designers were to solve a series of difficult problems in construction, building and formwork of the monument.

During the preparation of the retrospective exhibition of Vojin Bakić “Lightbearing forms”, which took place in the Museum of Contemporary art from December 12, 2013 to March 3rd 2014, we have searched for the original projects for the monument and the living collaborators who could evoke memories of the construction of the monument. The available sources were insufficient (i.e., newspaper articles, radio interviews with Bakić, tv shows), and insofar, no original projects were found, since they were most likely lost or destroyed by insufficient care. Thanks to the courtesy of a Shipbuilding Institute employee, Nina Subašić, we have found the only living designer of the monument, a retired employee of the Institute, Boris Medja, Ph.D, who had been working with the sculptor from 1958 to 1988 on the monuments for Valjevo, Kamenska and Kragujevac. He responded with great enthusiasm to the invitation to share his memories on the construction of the monument. The interview held with him in the Museum of Contemporary Art in October 2013, with the participation of Vojin Bakić’s granddaughters – Ana Martina Bakić and Vjera Bakić, was exceptionally informative, and it was recorded in audio and transcript form. In mid-September 2014, Mr. Medja sent his recalls in the written form, parts of which I will, with his kind permission, quote in this paper.²²

I believe that the fact that he is the sole living designer of the monument which was destroyed by mining on February 22 1992, justifies a more elaborate citing of his testimony about the course of the design and construction of this profoundly complex monument.

Boris Medja: “(...) In the summer of 1962, I leave the university for a new duty at the Shipbuilding Institute Zagreb. At that time, Vojin Bakić showed me and Borislav Vajić, in his atelier in the Rokova Street, a polished 85 cm bronze model of the future monument in Kamenska, and asked us if we could make a complete project for this monumental 30 meter steel sculpture, meaning, not only the inner load-bearing construction, obviously having faith in our capabilities, since we had successfully passed the exam of the monument in Valjevo.

Since we have agreed to accept the Bakić’s proposal, shortly after that we have signed the agreement with the Coordinate Committee of the Union of veterans of Anti-fascist struggle of Slavonia and Baranya, led by the national hero Ivan Krajačić Stevo, the president of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia, one of the most powerful men of Yugoslavia at the time, while his right hand was the national hero Pero Car, president of the Aviation Union of Croatia and Yugoslavia, whom Vajić and I had already knew from before. By this contract, we were to receive two or two and a half million Yugoslav dinars upon the completion of the work, and as an advance, we were immediately paid the sum of 300,000 dinars, which was equal to a dozen of my payments at the time.

After signing the contract with the Committee, we didn’t immediately set to work on the project, but we arranged, a year later, with Bakić, for him to make a wooden model equal in size to that in bronze.

When the wooden model was finished, Vajić and I took it to the Aircraft Technical Institute in Žarkovo near Belgrade and arranged in detail with the engineers there how it should have been examined in an air tunnel. We arranged that each wing of the wooden model should be cut horizontally at the height of two meters, and that at the place of the cut, as well as on the base of the model, measurement elements should be placed. These measurement elements (i.e., metal profiles of

²¹ Inženjeri su za postojeći aluminijski spomenik projektirali klupicu, betonski temelj i konstruirali nosivu čeličnu konstrukciju, koja je izvedena u tvornici oružja i municije »Krušnik« u Valjevu.

²² Transkript intervjuja, zvučni zapis i pisano svjedočanstvo pohranjeni su u Informacijsko-dokumentacijskom odjelu Muzeja suvremene umjetnosti, kutija Vojin Bakić.

square section with a strain gage) would connect the cut part of the wooden model. Then the model would be placed into a wind tunnel and acted upon by an air current would, while changing the course of the air flow by rotating the model for 30 degrees at the time. The forces acquired on the measuring elements would in the end be calculated into a real result, or the forces that act on the monument in reality at a given maximum speed of wind. We acquired the results only after three years. It was obviously not part of the everyday Institute's work, since it was quite different from the standard testing of an airplane model.

However, we did not start with the realization of the work on the project all until 1966, because the Committee didn't collect enough money that was collected in voluntary contributions around Slavonia. In the meantime, our enthusiasm was fading because we were realizing more and more that we had made a hasty decision and that we may not even be able to make it, and even if we did, it wouldn't be possible without the help of a large team of technicians and draftsmen. However, when the Committee collected enough financial funds, they announced a tender, in accordance with the newly adopted regulations. We, of course, sighed with relief and decided to return the advance payment, but to our regret, none of the Zagreb architects or construction offices responded to the tender, explaining either that such a work was impossible to be made or that they did not know how they would do it. There's no need to explain how we felt, because we knew very well what awaited us. Naturally, Pero Car invited us to an agreement. Vajić comforted me that he would do the talking, and I should just keep quiet. He would state a much higher new price, with an excuse of inflation and how we didn't fully comprehend the size of the job ahead of us when we were signing the contract. He stated three times the amount, around six million dinars, convinced that the Committee would not accept it. To our horror, without a word they accepted it. Now Vajić attempted to increase this amount some more, stating various additional costs, so the amount was raised for another half a million, but nothing helped, they agreed to everything. Finally he grasped at the last straw, asking what will happen to the advance, but the answer was – forget about it! What could we do now? Firstly, I remember how Bakić was begging us, saying: "Guys, please don't leave me now, get to work, because if you don't nothing will come out of my project!" and secondly, the contract obliged us to do the job. Mainly because of Vojin we set to the realization, comforting one another that, if we put all our efforts into it, we will make it.



9. *Wooden model, h. 3 meters*

In the second half of 1966, we finally set off to, today I can definitely say, an adventure of a life time. At that time, Bakić received an assignment from us to create a 3 meter wooden layered model, composed of horizontal wooden boards with a thickness of 45 mm, which he, quite displeased, accepted (i. 9). This model was supposed to serve us for making the drafts for theoretical ribs on a scale of 1:10, and after that, for both the construction of the internal load-bearing structure and for the construction of the structures of the external formwork of the monument. Vojin Bakić performed this task really flawlessly.

The first assignment was to design the reinforced concrete foundation of the monument on the basis of the received results after the testing of the model in the Aerospace technical institution in Žarkovo. These results were supposed to be calculated to the most unfavorable weather conditions possible on the Blažuj hill near the village of Kamenska. For the project of the foundation, what was important were the results of measurements at the base of the model that were acquired in Žarkovo, i.e., the magnitude of horizontal forces and bending moments depending on the course of the wind action on the monument. The calculation and the drafts for the base were made by engineer Frane Tomljenović. Immediately upon the completion of this project, we set to construct the foundation. If I remember correctly, the foundation was 7 meter long, 4 m wide, and 3 m tall, with a “neck” of approximately 3 x 3 x 1 meter, protruding from the ground surface. The mass of the foundation with concrete steel weighed around 200 tones.

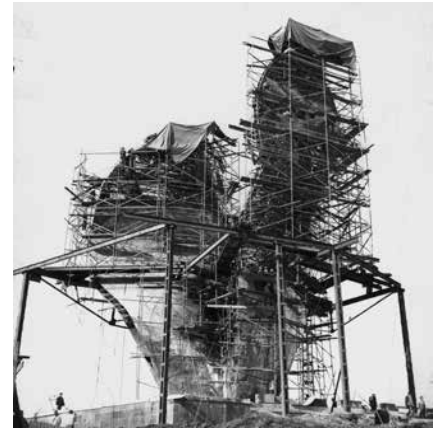
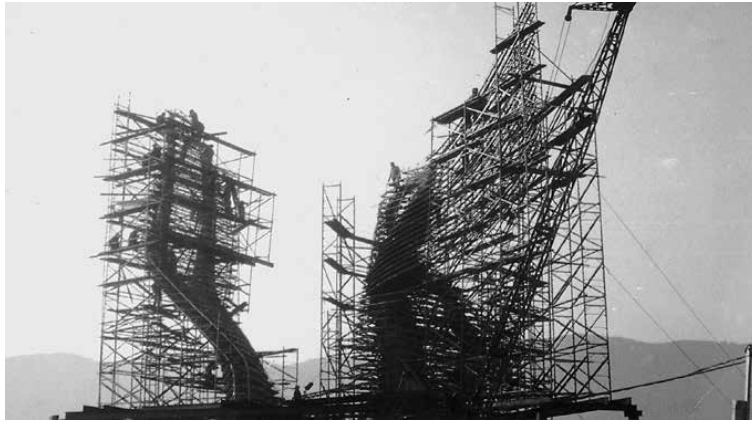
Our next step was to find a free space for our temporary design office. Thanks to Vajić, we were given a large room in his friend’s apartment, located on the third floor of Trg bana Josipa Jelačića no 3. We arranged with engineer Frano Tomljenović to help us this time also with the creation of the very internal steel construction, and not only with the design of the foundation as in the case of Valjevo, since he was a very experienced civil engineer of the INA. Besides him, I also hired Marian Ljubetić, shipbuilding engineer of the Shipbuilding Institute and his shipbuilding technicians Franko Cetinić, Antun Vljčević and Lenko Koludrović, together with draftswomen Paula Prezel and Ivanka Bujas. That is how, by the end of 1966, we organized the job at the design office on the Jelačić square and, at the same time, brought the Bakić’s three-meter wooden model in pieces there, where we also assembled it. Every afternoon, including the weekend days, the three of us engineers would be working (Vajić, Tomljenović and me), and, usually on the working days, the engineer Marijan Ljubetić and his team (the shipbuilding technicians and draftswomen). Such a schedule, with minor changes and interruptions, remained in place until the fall of 1968, or until the completion of the construction of the complete monument.

The first thing we had to do was to make a photo of the ribs, or each particular layer of the three meter wooden model, to a hard drawing paper on the floor beneath the model. Here we encountered of problem how to do this correctly, and there were many suggestions, but we eventually decided to make a small pendulum in the shape of a water drop with a spike on its lower spherical part. The pendulum will be hanged on a thread and fastened around the point of the rib, .i.e. the layer we wanted to transfer on the ground plan on the drawing paper at the floor of the room. When the pendulum becomes still by lighting the thread, it will fall exactly vertically below the given point. Each point of the rib or the layer will be marked on the model with a specific number, same as the point in the ground floor.

In order to be able to draw a particular rib later in the process, at least two points of this rib had to be put down. When we marked all the points of all the ribs, we disassembled the model. Each rib, i.e., each layer we put on the drawing paper in a way that the corresponding point on the ribs matched the corresponding point obtained by a pendulum, end then transferred the contour of the rib into the ground plan, i.e., drawing paper.

The ground plan of the model we got in this manner was nor exactly ideal, so it needed further work with polishing the shipbuilding boards in the same way as it was done, at that time, with the lines of the ship’s hull. This is where the shipbuilding technician Frano Cetinić proved to be a real master of his work. This is how we obtained a model of the monument, drawn in ground plan, and now we could begin with the construction of the main supports, on or two, into every wing of the monument.

We decided to design these main supports (we called them primary monument construction) in the shape of hollow box-shaped supports made of steel sheets, 20 mm thick, 1000 x 1000 mm size at the bottom of the monument, in the place where they are fixed to the concrete foundation of the monument, and above, thinner and smaller in cross-section.

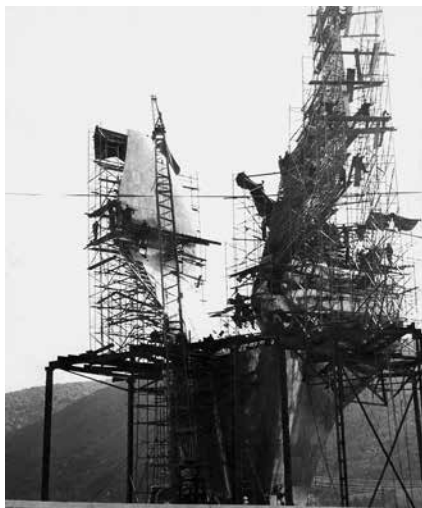


10. *Construction of the Memorial*

11. *Construction of the Memorial*

Such large dimensions were required under the calculation which I had made, and it was done on the basis of the model testing in Žarkovo and the possible maximal wind speed with a safety factor of 2.

In addition, in the lower central part of the first third of the monument, the main supports of both “wings” are mutually connected by a box-shaped steel construction. While I was constructing the structure of the monument, I also worked on the strength calculation, particularly the one of the primary supports and the grid-like ribs. There were a lot of troubles with how to “pull through” the primary supporters through the cavity of the monument, so at some point we had to ask permission from Bakić to expand a little the existing thinned part of the monument, to which he agreed. After we had finished the construction of the primary supports, we continued to work on the secondary supporters, i.e., the ribs (im. 10, 11). We have constructed the ribs in the shape of grids comprised of welded steel profiles L 50 x 50 x 5 (though I am not sure if that very profile was later used), while they are located inside of a theoretical rib (the external form of ribs). The drawings of primary and secondary supports were drawn on tracing paper and copied in 5 copies on Ozalid paper.



12. *Construction of the Memorial*

The coordinate committee selected the Zagreb company Industromontaža as a contractor, and the steel parts of the primary and secondary supports themselves were produced in the “Pionir” Požega company, and then transferred to the construction site on the hill Blažuj, where they were assembled. The last ribs were constructed during the actual construction of the monuments. The grids of the ribs were welded in “L” profiles to the primary supporters, and one to another in vertical and cross “L” profiles, so that we produced a very rigid grid construction. Since this grid construction was located

inside the theoretical, i.e., external form of the monument, it was necessary to mount tertiary supporters in the shape of flat profiles the size of 30 x 5 mm, to which the monument's formwork was attached with explosive rivets. For this purpose, we had 30 x 5 mm flat steel offshoots welded on the rib grids, and on this flat steel, we attached, using screws, an "L"- shaped extension which could be shifted, or rather, regulated in horizontal direction. Then we welded the flat steel profiles on these extensions which made the bases of the triangular stainless steel sheets.

The modeler of the Shipbuilding Institute Pero Marojević stood out here. He worked in the same technique as the shipbuilding technician Frano Cetinić before on a three-meter model, meaning, he polished the external surface of the monument with wooden slats, i.e., he pulled in or pulled out the extensions as needed.

In the end it was time to do the revetment of the monument, which was ingeniously solved by the sculptor Ante Jakić (i. 12). He proposed to cover the monument in triangular sheets of stainless steel so that the dimensions of the sheets would cover every two ribs in height. By using these triangles we could almost seamlessly follow the form of the monument without having to bend the triangular sheets too much. For the formwork, about 600 m² of stainless steel sheets were used, 3 mm thick in the bottom part of the monument up to a 2,7 or 3,6 m in height, and further towards the top, 2 mm thick, so about eight to ten tons of formwork were placed in total. The stainless steel was imported from the Soviet Union and Sweden. I remember how we encountered various problems because, since we took different suppliers, not all of the sheets had the same color, so it was decided that the sheets of different color were to be placed at the top of the monument where they would be less noticeable. As far as I know, Bakić decided to have sculptor Ante Jakoć supervise the work on the construction site on his behalf, and his role became especially important in the final stage of placing the framework on the monument.



13. Poster on the marking of the 25th anniversary of the VI Slavonia Corps

14. Tito and Jovanka Broz at the Memorial inauguration ceremony, Vojin Bakić (middle), 9 November 1968, property of the History Museum of Yugoslavia

15. Tito at the inauguration ceremony, 9 November 1968

I remember how, upon finishing the mounting of the primary supports, Pero Car took me to his side reproaching me for making such a mistake in calculation that, instead of my 100 tons by calculations, the contractor claims he had used 200 tons, and, under the contract, they had to pay for the amount of steel installed. After I did the calculation again, I calculated that 80 tons of steel was installed. Of course, the Committee acknowledged only those 80 tons, and the contractor made excuse that this was the amount of steel including the waste parts.

The monument was built relatively quickly. Not counting the construction of the base, it was erected in six months altogether. A 150 people worked on the installation, in two shifts, each lasting for 12 hours. The monument was inaugurated marking the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Sixth Slavonian corps, it was ceremonially unveiled by President of the SFRY Josip Broz Tito, on November 9th 1968, in the presence of top government officials, many citizens from all parts of the country, and, with special honors, the veterans of the corps, many friends and artists (fig. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).



16. Access road on the eve of the Memorial inauguration ceremony, 9 November 1968

17. Designer Boris Medja, 1980

It was planned to build a little info-house next to the monument, where all the original documentation and other information were to be kept. Since this was not done, we were told that these were kept in private archives. We drew all the designs on tracing paper and then copied in five copies in ozalid paper. We handed over all the copies to the contractor, and kept the original designs with us in our construction offices. All the documentation on the construction of the design that I have kept for some 20 years ended up destroyed due to inappropriate conditions of storing it, moisture, etc, so in the end I had to dispose of it.”

The data quoted from the extensive record of Boris Medja, match, in many elements, with the writings in the newspapers where Bakić describe the process of the construction and lists his associates, therefore we will not quote them here, they will be available in the note instead.²³

²³ Špeletić, Krešo. Kako je nastala monumentalna Bakićeva skulptura »Pobjeda revolucije« u Kamenskoj. // Start / Zagreb, 14. srpnja 1971.

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CULTUROCIDES IN THE NINETIES

With this work Vojin Bakić has significantly changed the course of the development of the official monument sculpture of the Socialist Yugoslavia and placed it in the fold of Europe's high modernism. The monuments, symbols of collective rituals and collective memory of socialist Yugoslavia, were, in the early nineties, massively devastated or mined. In the year 1991, Bakić's monuments in Bjelovar, Gudovec and Čazma were mined. The Monument to Freedom was repeatedly mined in 1992, and its remainings, the expensive plating of stainless steel was blown up, sold away or used as secondary material (fig. 18, 19). Any interest in the restoration or conservation of the institutions in charge lacked and the perpetrators were not found nor punished. Today, only the remainings of the concrete base, whose granite formwork was taken away, can be found on this unfortunate place. (fig 20).



18. *Remains of the Memorial following mine explosions, 1992*
19. *Remains of the Memorial following mine explosions, 1992*
20. *Remains of the monument base, October 2013 (photo: Z. Maković)*

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SUMMARY

CHANGE IN TYPOLOGY IN VOJIN BAKIĆ'S MEMORIAL TO THE VICTORY OF THE REVOLUTION OF THE PEOPLE OF SLAVONIA, KAMENSKA

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Vojin Bakić is one of the greatest Croatian modernist sculptors, who found freedom and autonomy of artistic creation after decades of searching. Having started off with academic realism close to Kršinić's and having gone through a short phase of socialist realism, in the 1950s he departed from those principles and, by reducing the superfluous, came to a full, concise volume that was to lead him to pure abstract forms. An innovative sculptor, with his Memorial to the Victory of the Revolution of the People of Slavonia Bakić considerably changed the course of development of official monument sculpture in socialist Yugoslavia and placed it in the fold of Europe's high modernism. Following the introductory presentation of Vojin Bakić's artistic creation, which modernized Croatian sculpture and monument sculpture, the article addresses the change in typology in Bakić's approach to the memorial project that he achieved with the Memorial to the Victory of the Revolution of the People of Slavonia in Kamenska near Požega. The results of the competition called in 1960 are analysed, as are the criticism reception, the genesis of Bakić's sculptural solution, and the symbolic meaning of form and material. With the monument, which was inaugurated in 1968, Bakić made a clean break with the ruling canon of monuments dedicated to the People's Liberation War and achieved a unique synthesis of pure abstract form and symbolic content in a monumental form, raising it to the universal symbol of victory.

Seen as a symbol of collective rituals and the social memory of socialist Yugoslavia, the monument was destroyed in repeated explosions during the war, in late February 1992, and the remains were taken away to be used as secondary material. The relevant institutions have not shown interest in its reconstruction and the perpetrators have not been found or punished. Since neither the construction documents nor the design are available, the article provides a comprehensive description of the design and construction project, a testimony of the

only surviving designer of the monument, Dr. Boris Medja, which has so far not been presented in such detail.

Key words: Vojin Bakić, monument sculpture, Memorial to the Victory of the Revolution of the People of Slavonia, modernism, socialist Yugoslavia