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As above, so below: communicating foundational myths through monuments. A comparative study of Piłsudski Square (Warsaw) and Independence Square (Kyiv)

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Abstract

Between 2014 and 2015, Ukraine and Poland experienced drastic political reconfigurations, when the former saw the Revolution of Dignity conducted by grassroots groups, and the latter saw the electoral triumph of the conservative party Law and Justice. The two new powers, contrasting in their nature and goals, almost immediately began to perpetuate political myths that legitimised their rule through various tools of politics of memory, which was etched into the urban cultural landscape of Kyiv and Warsaw, not exclusively, by means of the erection of new monuments.

This study explores the discourses communicated by monuments originating on the opposing sides of power relations in order to disclose to what extent the messages that the monuments convey are similar. To do so, the research applies the Social Semiotics approach from Critical Discourse Analysis to the analysis of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site located in Independence Square in Kyiv, and the monuments dedicated to Lech Kaczyński and the victims of the Smolensk Air Crash of 10 April 2010 located in Piłsudski Square in Warsaw.

The results have shown a high degree of resemblance in the discourses communicated by monuments through various semiotic modes, the main one being the sacredness of what constitutes the power holders' foundational myth. Other discourses, including grievance and martyrdom, despite the fact that they both belong to the religious domain, demonstrate diverging traits. However, put together these discourses perfectly blend into the common canvas of new post-Communist mythologies regardless of the status of the political agents who are in charge of the creation of those foundational myths.

Key words: Poland, Ukraine, Social Semiotics, Critical Discourse Analysis, monuments, foundational myth.

Introduction

Listen!

If stars come out at night —

could it mean someone needs them?

Could it mean someone wants them?

Could it mean someone calls those little spits

pearls?

Vladimir Maiakovskii, Listen!, 1914[1]

Although it is not known what exactly is euphemised by the notion of stars in one of the most famous poems written by a Russian and Soviet poet Vladimir Maiakovskii, its wording eloquently addresses the fact that everything appears for a reason. What if we extrapolated this metaphor to mundane affairs, what would those pearls from the skyscape be on earth? In my view, this may stand for certain landmarks that emerge in the landscape at someone's discretion to perform certain functions and meet someone's needs.

One of the immediate associations of such things is monuments. It is difficult to spot a human settlement in any place of the world absent of (im)movable reminders that mark the community's historical past. They are deeply enshrined in the habitat that we experience on a daily basis when running our errands. However, they do not sporadically emerge in the city landscape, rather they are objects of urban planning that exercise multiple functions and communicate certain narratives. Yet the aspect of deliberate urban planning should not be misleading in a way that the erection of monuments necessarily comes from the upper stratum of the society and therefore it bears an exclusively official connotation. Alternatively, the emergence of monuments can be elemental and come from the lower regions of the social hierarchy. Either way, monuments relating to the community's historical past exist to

[1] There are several existing translations, however, I find the one tailored by me and provided as an epigraph the most appropriate.

communicate the agent's political will that concerns this past and portrays their interpretation in the most favourable light.

Matching the two ends of the source of this political will, I intend to look into the discourses communicated by monuments originating on the opposing sides of power relations in societies that have recently experienced drastic political reconfigurations. In particular, I would like to find out to what extent these discourses may differ, if they differ at all, and see if a vertical delimitation of political agents plays a crucial role in the framing of their political vision in monuments.

In other words, the research aims at answering a research question which consists of two parts. Firstly, it will answer the following: what are the messages conveyed by the monuments under review? Secondly, it will seek out the answer to the following: how similar are those messages?

To help answer these questions I consider the case study of three monuments located in two squares in the centre of Warsaw and Kyiv, the respective capitals of Poland and Ukraine. The choice of monuments lies in the nationwide events that took place at relatively the same time and changed the socio-political paradigm in these two countries, which was shortly reflected in the restructuring of the urban landscape by means of erecting monuments representing the new power. The key pretext for these transformations in each country varied: Ukraine saw the so-called Euromaidan on the cusp of 2013 and 2014, which resulted in the Revolution of Dignity and the seizure of power by liberal pro-European, predominantly grassroots, political forces. With regards to Poland, in 2015 the conservative party, Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość,* or *PiS*), legitimately won the Parliamentary elections, and Andrzej Duda, previously a PiS party member, became the President.

In case of the former, the perpetuation of the memory of the protesters led to the creation of an initially chaotic commemoration site dedicated to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes that later was significantly complemented with monumental components and validated by obtaining the status of a historical monument 'of city significance' (Maino, 2018). The latter is comprised of two monuments, the statue of Lech Kaczyński and the Monument of the Victims of the 2010 Smolensk Tragedy, both closely affiliated with the ruling party not only politically but also by the family bonds of the party leader and the late President. These three monuments constitute the scope of my research.

This research consists of six chapters. In the first chapter I provide the theoretical contextualisation of the study of monuments and the conceptual framework of the study. In

particular, I look into the forms that monuments take and the functions that they perform with a focus on their capacity to disseminate dominant political discourses. This aspect is followed by the introduction of the concept of politics of memory, an open approach in Memory Studies. This approach studies a variety of tools, including monuments, used by political forces to affirm particular interpretations and mnemonic manipulations of historical events as dominant. Put together, these manipulations work to constitute a political myth, the spiritual core of a political agent. The chapter is concluded by the formulation of the central statement on the similarity of discourses communicated by monuments imposed by political agents regardless of their position in the vertical power structure.

The second chapter is concerned with the elaboration of the methodology which provides the guidelines to the solution to the posed research puzzle. Given that the research is articulated on the study of discourses of foundational myths communicated by monuments, I opt for a Social Semiotics approach within Critical Discourse Analysis, where the subject is analysed from the perspective of semiotic modes incorporated by the subject. Each semiotic mode carries certain meaning potentials and appears as a separate category of analysis. Having provided the description of each of them, I outline the method which applies to the case study, as well as the limitations of the research.

The third chapter puts the study in the spatial and historical context, where an overview of the sociocultural and political settings of each of the two squares, followed by their juxtaposition, demonstrates their importance for the representation of a respective foundational myth and, thus, relevance to the case study.

In the fourth chapter I begin the analysis of monuments located in Piłsudski Square according to the method provided in the second chapter. The fifth chapter on the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site in Independence Square is constituted in the same way. At the end of each of them, the discourses of the foundational myths are determined in conformity with the analysis of semiotic modes and identification of their meaning potentials. The last chapter discusses the overarching findings by juxtaposing results from chapters four and five and provides final conclusions that encapsulate the solution to the research puzzle.

Chapter 1. Theoretical and conceptual background

1.1. Types and functions of monuments

To better understand monuments as objects pertaining to physically augmented cultural reality, several disciplines have carried out research on particular aspects of the essence of monuments. There are different approaches to the study of monuments, which have developed various definitions of them, 'ranging from purely aesthetic built forms to powerful tools to reproduce authority and control' (Bellentani and Panico, 2016, p.29). The study of monuments has gone beyond the realm of Humanities and Social Science, and they have also been researched as, for example, ecosystems that harbour forms of flora and fauna (Macedo et al., 2009). However, the conceptualisation of monuments used in my research shall remain within the socio-political context, because monuments have been primarily analysed drawing on the social settings that oblige them to participate in public life by performing different socio-political functions.

The traditional understanding of monuments can often be found in multiple government regulations. With minor country-specific differences, most national heritage acts interpret monuments as (im)movable objects protected by the state and of certain value, be that archaeological, architectural or artistic. However, the mission of the monument through the lens of those protecting it is much more sophisticated and, bearing in mind the Orwellian vision of art as propaganda, the principle *is fecit cui prodest* should always be taken into account.

Researching the relationship between monuments and politics and building upon both theoretical and practical assumptions about the operation of monuments on the political agenda, Viktorija Rimaitė has identified several functions that monuments perform, being subjects of political debate. According to her, monuments form and maintain historical and collective memory; consolidate the narrative that maintains the dominant power relations; legitimatise the dominant political elite; mobilise and educate a certain political community; reveal and create a narrative presenting the identity of the state, those being the directions of the political agenda (Rimaitė, 2019, p.67). In the process of my analysis each of these functions has been reiterated, which will be shown in more detail in the following chapters, therefore this categorisation of functions performed by monuments proves relevant to the understanding of monuments as of power channels that communicate dominant narratives.

The communication of dominant narratives is typically exercised through monumental objects, in the sense that they are 'colossal' or 'stupendous'. In *The Penguin Dictionary of Art & Artists* by Peter and Linda Murray, the notion of 'Monumental' is as follows:

> The most overworked word in recent art history and criticism. It is intended to convey the idea that a particular work of art, or part of such a work, is grand, noble, elevated in idea, simple in conception and execution, without any excess of virtuosity, and having something of the enduring, stable, and timeless nature of great architecture. The word may properly be applied to the Pyramids, the paintings of Poussin or Piero della Francesca, and some few other works of art. It is not a synonym for 'large' (Murray and Murray, 1983, p.279).

However, the very last statement when applied to monuments as objects of power relations is debatable. In most cases these power communication channels have been effective by virtue of, among other characteristics, their size, considerably exceeding the dimensions of those human beings interacting with monuments. It has been so since the emergence of the early civilisations of the Near East and Ancient Greece, and documented in the list of Seven Wonders, and has not changed since then. Regardless of the type of the conventional monument, be that memorial, statue, stele, obelisk, column or some other type, they have been designed as landmarks marking rulership over a particular territory.

Monuments may take other, unconventional forms, and a number of factors pertaining to one of the monuments considered in the research, namely the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site, allows the classification of it as a so-called counter-monument. Counter-monuments feature some of the characteristics opposing those of traditional monuments, for example, being 'transitory rather than permanent and actively engaging viewers' attention and participation (Osborne, 2017, p.167). With reference to Moshenska, Osborne notes that scholars view counter-monumentality as dynamic, 'a disjunctive process of performances in which the past and present are brought violently together', rather than the observation of static works of art (Moshenska, 2010, p.21-23 cited in Osborne, 2017, p.167). An archetypical example of a counter-monument is the 1986 Monument against Fascism, War and Violence – and for Peace and Human Rights in Harburg, where passers-by could declare their stance against fascism by writing their names on the column. According to the creators of the monument, it meant 'not to console but to provoke; not to remain fixed but to change; not to be everlasting but to disappear; not to be ignored by its passersby but to demand interaction; not to remain pristine but to invite its own violation and desanctification; not to accept graciously the burden of memory but to throw it back at the town's feet' (Sander, 2001 cited in Stevens, Franck, Fazakerley, 2012, p. 952).

Another important 'counter' component that defines such monuments as counter-monuments is the absence of affirmation that is usually characteristic of traditional monuments. While

traditional monuments tend to solemnly celebrate ideologies, victorious events in history and political leaders reaping the benefits of those, counter-monuments are about the dark side of ideologies and events that resulted in insufferable losses among common people.

Building on that, Stevens, Franck, and Fazakerley argue that counter-monuments seek to represent parts of societies that have been marginalised within traditional narratives, thus contesting official histories (Stevens, Franck, Fazakerley, 2012). *Stolpersteine* ("Stumbling stones") epitomise such a pattern, being small brass plaques embedded in the pavements or walls of houses where Holocaust victims used to live. A memorial project similar to Stumbling stones is *Poslednii adres* ("The last address") that aims to commemorate the victims of Stalinism.

Drawing on the two above-mentioned examples, it is evident that another difference that makes counter-monuments stand out from the monument family is their size, which I will discuss in more detail in the empirical part of my research. At the same time, this parameter has a much broader implication that concerns the association of the size of the monument with a certain form of government. Thus, a number of scholars argue that authoritarianism has a thirst for larger dimensions, whereas democracy enjoys architectural humility (Murawski, 2019, p.36). This aspect will be particularly evident when juxtaposing the Polish and the Ukrainian cases, which underlines the importance of introducing the concept of counter-monumentality.

1.2. Politics of memory

Monuments may be conventional or unconventional, but all of them are united by the etymology of the very word which stems from a Latin word *monere*, meaning 'to remind'. Without discarding the categorisation of monuments outlined by Rimaitė, it is important to pinpoint the primary function of monuments encrypted in its name, which is to call to memory, remind of something.

Thus, it will be necessary to specify the definition of 'memory' utilised here, as this will be of great importance to the understanding of the underlying research puzzle. The concept of collective memory, authored by Maurice Halbwachs in the 1920s, refers to the memory shared by a group of people and conditioned by social frames, as opposed to something remembered by an individual. He gave birth to a completely new discipline, known as Memory Studies, which re-emerged and was reinvigorated only in the late 1980s, owing to Pierre Nora and his study of national memory. Since then, the Memory Studies scholarship has developed a way

to classify different types of memories and ways to approach them. For instance, memory may be explained as the selection and dissemination of discourses of a country's past formulated by political elites in order to forge identities that strengthen social cohesion (Lebow, Kansteiner, Fogu, 2006). For future reference, the use of collective memory by political agents is used under the name of politics of memory.

At the same time, Kubik and Bernhard argue, that the scholarly approach to the politics of memory is not coherent, but often a diverse, open approach in Memory Studies that does not provide systematic theories and lacks systematic comparative studies (Bernhard and Kubik, 2014). While attempting to fill in these breaches, they established a theory of politics of memory which expands upon Lasswell's categorisation of elements that define politics (Lasswell, 1950). These elements include answers to the questions *who gets what, when* and *how.* Kubik and Bernhard effectively added *why* to the list of questions to be answered and their theory encompasses the systematisation of mnemonic actors, an ensuing typology of memory regimes, their formation of mnemonic actors based on mnemonic strategies, and the impact of the different memory regimes on the quality of democracy. Without getting into the details of the differentiation between several types of mnemonic actors, it is important to underline, that in fact anyone is subject to being a mnemonic actor, be those individuals, political parties, international organisations, and other forms of social communities. Therefore, intentionally or not, everyone participates in the politics of memory (Bernhard and Kubik, 2014), even if their stance is confined to mnemonic abnegation, that being resistance to being involved in memory politics.

It is also important to distinguish between politics of memory as a scholarly approach and as a social practice. The latter wields a variety of tools used by political forces to affirm particular interpretations and mnemonic manipulations of historical events as dominant. In this regard, I would like to go back to Pierre Nora's early disciplined inquiry. He is generally known for the introduction of the idea of sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*). As Pierre Nora himself defines *lieu de mémoire,* it is 'any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community' (Nora, 1996, xvii). Thinking of sites of memory, we are also thinking of the tools that politics of memory operate. These can be any of the following and beyond: monuments, museums, flags, films, or videogames.

Among all of these and more, monuments stand out (Sherman, 1994, p.186 cited in Mitchell, 2003, p.443). Political elites use monuments as the sites communicating selective discourses and historical narratives that prioritise interpretations favourable for the political elites. It is argued to be particularly evident in the post-Socialist city, for the transition period in most post-Communist societies was accompanied by reconstruction, removal, relocation, rededication or alteration of the monuments that signified the rule of the previous era (Tamm, 2013 cited in Bellentani and Panico, 2016, p.29; Niven, 2008, p.39). At the same time, the transition period was accompanied by the restoration of erased memory through the re-erection of monuments demolished during the previous era, an action considered to be an interruption in the societal continuity and development in post-Communist countries. Consequently, this variety of changes depending on a given memory regime, deeply embedded in the politics of memory, makes monuments salient markers of political and cultural changes in a given society.

1.3. Myths

As mentioned above, one of the monuments' key functions is the legitimisation of the dominant political elite as well as reinforcement of the official narrative which elite power is built on. In this light, it is appropriate to introduce 'political myth', a narrative-related overarching concept that constitutes the spiritual core of a particular political actor.

The scholarly conceptualisation of myth, beyond Allegorical and Euhemerist theories of myth developed with respect to classical antiquity, began with the figure of Ernst Cassirer and the domain of the philosophy of cognition, the ways of understanding and interpreting reality. In contemplating our cognition, he defined five categories, or 'symbolic forms' that condition our way of thinking, those being by religion, science, language, art and myth (Cassirer, 1946, p.45 cited in Tudor, 1972). Elaborating on the latter, he noted that cognition through the prism of myth can be natural or artificial. With regards to the latter, he underlined that in the 20th century, the peak of the Modernist perception of the world, myths originating from the past gained the potential to turn into powerful political tools:

> The new political myths do not grow up freely: they are not wild fruits of an exuberant imagination. They are artificial things fabricated by very skilful and cunning artisans (Cassirer, 1946, p.282).

One more important thing to draw from Cassirer is the connection between myth and language. He argued that the latter is a socially transformative and performative cognitive instrument

rather than descriptive. Similarly to myths, language creates labels and thus creates a specific view of the world. However, Cassirer drew attention to the perceptive difference between these two instruments. Language is naturally logical and rational, although becomes an instrument of the creation of illusion. Myth, from the very beginning, is irrational and illogical, and, furthermore, it 'originates not in the virtues but in the vices' (Cassirer, 1946, p.18). The latter usually stand for moments of crises or instability that threaten the security of Self.

Mircea Eliade mostly considered myth in the context of religion. He argued that there are narratives around sacred power which have nothing in common with religion but appear to be incorporated in the cultures of humanity (Eliade, 1961). That is to say, myths of the sacred that originate in minds of 'homo religious' have a structure that is maintained when detached from religion, while transcending into objective secular aspects of life like politics, sports or literature.

Kołakowski's view of the myth is similar to that of Eliade. For him, myth would be the transcendence of objective human experience by attributing it meanings that go beyond the borders of human beings' empirical reach (Kołakowski and Czerniawski, 1989, p.2). In fact, it is necessary for human beings to be transcendental and penetrate the reality to survive as a group. 'Myth reveals the real need for controlling the world of experience by a meaning-giving interpretation' (Kołakowski and Czerniawski, 1989, p.5). There are three reasons in favour of the need for the mythological construction of the world that Kołakowski outlines: 1) to see the world having a sense, 2) to keep the permanence of human values, 3) to see the world as being continuous (Kołakowski and Czerniawski, 1989).

Building on the universally applicable provisions of myth by Eliade and Cassirer (not by Kołakowski because the first edition of the *Presence of Myth* was published in the same year), Tudor defines features of the political myth, the one that I am going to apply in my research. However, Kołakowski's definition of myth as 'giving meaning to reality' proves best for prompt references to the essence of myths, because it plainly determines their essentiality for a proper and prosperous functioning of the society.

Speaking in the categories of a collective myth-maker, Tudor associates political myths with ideologies, which in my research will be understood in Gramscian terms as sets of beliefs serving a hegemonic function in the sense that they are designed to reproduce and cement the power held by elite groups (Gramsci and Buttigieg, 1992). The set of beliefs behind the myth-maker's argument may be simple and persuasive, but the cultural context within which the

myth-maker operates is often extremely complex. Tudor stipulates that myth should comply with the dominant culture of its time, which is the only way to secure its incorporation within the framework of a general ideology (Tudor, 1972, p.120). 'It goes without saying that the more the myth-maker can rely on traditional beliefs and established historical truths the better' (Tudor, 1972, p.124).

Lastly, I would like to introduce one of the concomitant extensions of the umbrella concept, those being foundational myths. Tudor briefly mentioned them, describing many myths as foundational ones, because they tell a story how political societies came to be founded (Tudor, 1972, p.65). However, bringing a fresher look to the matter, Blustein advanced a more detailed conceptualisation of foundational myths. Defining them as serving a unifying function in the establishment of a group identity, he took on the social functions that they feature. Those are to provide 'symbolic resources for underwriting present identity-constituting values, institutions, ideals', to 'connect group to its own past and help to distinguish it from other groups in the eyes of group members', and to 'embody norms that serve as organizing principles of social life, norms that are capable of generating not only intellectual assent but emotional commitment' (Blustein, 2008, p.198). He adds that 'these features are all essentially independent of the historical truth of what the myths relate, and they explain both the value and the peril of collective memory' (Blustein, 2008, p.198).

This concept interpreted by Blustein is noteworthy for two of its features, given that the rest falls under the conceptualisation of 'standard' myth. The first is the foundational myth's appeal not just to the commitment of a society to the interpretation of reality by certain national elites but also the emotional attachment to what is supposed to be considered as native, although Kołakowski also described the connection between the mythical and the emotional. Secondly, he points out the interplay of foundational myths and collective memory.

Moving on from the general provisions on the conceptualisation of myth, I would like to treat the concept of political myth with a more empirical approach to post-Communist Central and Eastern European countries. One of the most prominent works in this regard is *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist States* by Vladimir Tismaneanu, a study exploring post-Communist societies' spiritual reactions to their frustration over the transition. Speaking of the political myths that emerged in the post-Communist countries, he recalls the Cassirer's perspective on myths as stories initially negative, originating in the vices rather than the virtues. He argues that political myths are 'responses to the

sentiments of discontinuity, fragmentation, and the overall confusion of the post-communist stage' (Tismaneanu, 1998, p.6).

Tismaneanu considers post-Communist mythologies to be ideological substitutes that feature, to different extents and not exclusively, the adaptation of long-denied religious values (often to only conserve their power), resorting to traditional forms of nationalist manipulation and mobilisation, minimising individual rights, imposing the demagogy of 'the fatherland in danger' (Tismaneanu, 1998, p.7). Besides, he distinguishes the post-Communist mythologies' capitalisation on legitimate aspiration and grievances and a tendency to indulge in self-pity on account of being a victim of Communism or of Western betrayal (Tismaneanu, 1998, p.7). The characteristics of post-Communist mythologies were identified by Tismaneanu in 1998, when most countries from the Eastern Bloc had not marked ten years since their transition to democracy yet. Respectively, it would be interesting to investigate to what extent these characteristics transformed over the past two decades. Carrying out such a research would demand the use of significant resources; however, I believe, that considering and comparing just two from the perspective of the discourses of foundational myths communicated by monuments in such societies can indirectly find an answer to this line of enquiry.

1.4. Research puzzle

When it comes to post-Communist mythologies in Central and Eastern Europe, I find two neighbouring countries with similar historical experiences particularly intriguing, namely, Ukraine and Poland. Despite the fact, that their political advancement has been different since the fall of Communism, the countries' approach to the communication of new foundational myths has shown a number of similarities in recent years. The key pretext for these transformations in each country varied: Ukraine saw the so-called Euromaidan on the cusp of 2013 and 2014, which resulted in a revolution and the seizure of power by liberal pro-European, predominantly grassroots, political forces. With regards to Poland, in 2015 Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość,* or *PiS*), a party with evidently authoritarian ambitions legitimately won the Parliamentary elections, and Andrzej Duda, previously a PiS party member, became the President.

Following pivotal political changes in the Polish and Ukrainian societies, the countries' brand-new foundational myths emerged, precisely in the moments of instability, be those substantial

or ostensible. The point of reference for the Polish foundational myth was the 2010 Smolensk Air Crash, that took the lives of 96 victims including the incumbent President, Lech Kaczyński. As for the Ukrainian foundational myth, this would be the Heavenly Hundred Heroes, 107 people killed during the 2013-2014 Euromaidan.

Both foundational myths stem from tragic events, however there are several cardinal differences between them. Firstly, and most importantly, they originated in different strata of society. The creator and the major lobbyist of the Polish myth is Law and Justice, whose head until recently was Jarosław Kaczyński, the late President's twin brother. Therefore, the imposition of the Smolensk Air Crash myth was purely top-down owing to the efforts of the party authorities currently controlling all three branches of government. In Ukraine the driving force behind the Heavenly Hundred Heroes myth was grassroots, including those who had protested against Yanukovich's broadly unpopular political decisions, and those who eventually took power.

This first major difference presupposes the second one, that is the extent of the acceptance of these myths among the two societies. The Smolensk Air Crash is a crucial moment in the political mythology of Poland (encompassing references to Katyń massacre), although it does not happen to be the only consolidating mythology for a notably divided Polish society. By contrast, in the case of Ukrainian society, there is a general consensus concerning the role and significance of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes to the consolidation of the post-Euromaidan society, and the approval of the solidification of their memory by the new government.

The new governments, both in Poland and Ukraine, came to power by different means, and immediately began to perpetuate political myths that legitimised their rule through various tools of politics of memory, and as discussed before, monuments stood out. The most famous sites of memory for both myths found themselves at places of great spatial significance in the centres of the capitals. However, the monuments reflecting the political myths of the states are radically different not only because of their origin, but also by virtue of their principles. Everything about the Polish monuments (location, design and so on) was deliberately planned by the state-appointed Commission, whereas the Ukrainian memorial chaotically emerged during the time of troubles and would be classified as a counter-monument opposed to the incumbent regime and commemorating marginalised protesters.

Yet there is one crucial thing that unites the Polish and the Ukrainian monuments regardless of their multiple differences. The discourses that they communicate demonstrate a certain

resemblance regardless of their numerous differences (top-down vs bottom-up, monument vs counter-monument, planned vs chaotic). Therefore, the above discussed differences between the essence and the functions performed by monuments and counter-monuments can be counterposed by their utilisation of similar discursive modes and common themes vis-à-vis their foundational myths in post-Communist new democracies.

On the basis of the foregoing, I would like to put the following research hypothesis:

The discourses of foundational myths enshrined by political agents in the monuments under study may demonstrate a certain resemblance regardless of the political agents' societal status.

This implies that a number of important factors which are usually taken into account when assessing monuments, for example, political agency; form of government; type of monument, and other, do not radically differentiate the discourses of foundational myths produced by the listed factors, as long as they emerge in societies with similar socio-historical settings, where a post-Socialist one dominates in the case of my research.

Chapter 2. Methodological framework

In the previous section I have briefly outlined the plenitude of existing approaches to the study of monuments as aesthetic built forms, their utilisation as urban landmarks, and as tools that communicate authority and control. Given that I focus on the communication of discourses of foundational myths through monuments, I find Critical Discourse Analysis to be the best way of conducting such an analysis.

Unlike other fields in the Social Sciences, CDA is not seen to be an academic discipline that operates standard research methods. As Van Dijk puts it, it is 'a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods and agenda', that share 'an interest in the semiotic dimensions of power, injustice, abuse, and political-economic or cultural change in society' (Fairclough, Mulderrig, Wodak, 2011, p.357). The self-explanatory name of the moment defines its main goal, that is to analyse 'discourse', 'an analytical category describing the vast array of meaning-making resources available to us' (Fairclough, Mulderrig, Wodak, 2011, p.357). Therefore, it is evident that the use of CDA is an appropriate way to access the discourses of foundational myths enshrined by political agents in monuments, earlier defined as a category of tools that reproduces authority and control.

As mentioned above, there are several major approaches within CDA that focus on different aspects of research in the public sphere. The one that I opt for in my research is the Critical Linguistics model, the precursor of CDA itself, coupled with a Social Semiotics approach. The tradition of Critical Linguistics originated in the exploration of ways in which the language not only describes the world but also constitutes it through its encrypted ideological puissance. It stems from structuralist tenets, predominantly in Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*, where language communication is represented by specific language (*parole*) and a system of language (*langue*). *Langue* refers to the rules that structure what we can do and say, whereas *parole* are individual speech acts (Saussure, 1959). This provision is crucial to analysing meanings, however, it is devoid of the social context within which communication is carried out.

The gap has been filled by one of the most prominent tenets of this field, a 'systemic' linguistic theory created by Michael Halliday. With regards to my research, I would like to highlight the importance of his vision of how languages evolve as systems of 'meaning potential' (Halliday,

1978, p.39). This idea later laid the foundations for the notion of 'social semiotics' and an eponymous approach that considers the means of communication that people operate in a specific social context. In other words, Social Semiotics is a 'reciprocal three-body system' that entails the intertwinement of language, meaning, and society (Hodge, 2016). At the same time, Hodge defines meaning as the key element in the triad, by arguing that 'analysis of language is a gateway to analysis of meanings, social and referential. Analysis of meanings is a portal into social processes and the versions of reality' (Hodge, 2016, p.23).

With regards to the ways of analysing meanings within Social Semiotics CDA, some of the most influential works in this sphere were made by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen. They introduced the concept of 'multimodality' that concerns the interaction between different representational modes, where each mode stands for a certain form of meaning-making. These modes vary and go beyond the realm of the traditional understanding of text, including images, sounds, colours, spatial arrangement and others. Modes serve various social purposes, and the use of one mode or another is 'guided by socially determined intentions and realizes group interests, subjective points of view or ideological stances' (Stockl, 2007, p.10 cited in Serafini, Clausen, 2012, p.3). That said, it is important to reiterate that modes do ideological work in characteristically different ways, however none of them convey meanings in their entirety (Kress, 2010) and essentially depend on the social context within which they emerge.

Despite the fact that Kress and van Leeuwen developed their grammar of visual design based on two-dimensional forms of visual communication like textbooks and magazines, they also mentioned that their descriptive framework may be applicable to three-dimensional objects, where monuments, being the focus of my research, find their place. One of the most successful examples of using this approach when studying monuments is the one carried out by Gillian Abousnnouga and David Machin. More specifically, they have analysed British commemorative war monuments from the perspective of Social Semiotics CDA, which resulted in a work called *Language of War Monuments* that views the commemoration as a socially constructed discourse and analyses meaning potentials communicated by the monuments. I am going to use their inventory of meaning potentials in 3D objects as a blueprint for my research.

However, before I break down each of these semiotic modes' meaning potentials, I would like to emphasise that the use of these modes allows us to analyse monuments in isolation from their whereabouts, which means that it is likely that valuable information drawn from the

monuments' interaction with surrounding elements can be left out of consideration. Therefore, in addition to those categories, I have extended the category of distance and highlighted the spatial arrangement of monuments, which describes how objects under study relate to objects located nearby and what meaning potential this relation creates.

2.1. Categories of analysis

In this subsection I provide the breakdown of each semiotic mode. When put together, these modes constitute the descriptive framework I am operating to analyse monuments. Not all of them are universally applicable, because not all of the monuments under study contain anthropomorphic elements like transitivity or gaze, therefore such semiotic modes are not available in their analysis. Therefore, these monuments will be analysed from the perspective of the remaining modes.

Abousnnouga and Machin have identified three major groups in which all semiotic modes can be divided. The first group considers semiotic resources that communicate social relations (between the subject and the viewer), that however can also be used in the interplay of the subject with objects nearby. The second group encompasses semiotic modes created by the monument's materiality, those being their physical characteristics. The third group entails two modes deriving from linguistics that explore the monument's modality and transitivity.

2.1.1. Semiotic resources that communicate social relations

a) Size

I begin with this semiotic mode because I have previously touched on its aspects in the previous chapter. It is also generally one of the first things taken into account when evaluating objects. Monuments may vary in size to different extents, and each parameter usually conveys a particular meaning potential. When it comes to anthropomorphic monuments, along with other types, it is important to pay attention to whether the monument is life-size, larger than the viewer or smaller. Life-size monuments suggest credible reflection of figures that do not enter any power relations terrain with the viewer. Magnified size of figures may communicate several meaning potentials that boil down to one thing: they have the power over the interactive participant and mark the rulership over the territory in which they have been erected, be they slightly bigger than life-size figures or considerably exceed dimensions of human beings. This parameter is closely associated with a previously discussed notion of monumentality and its

historical implication in monuments. However, the gigantean size of the national leader might have an alternative meaning potential, which has nothing to do with the ruler's cult as stipulated by Michalski, rather with national unity, as exemplified by the outsized statues of Stalin (Michalski, 1998, p.197 cited in Abousnnouga and Machin, 2013, p.43; Kruk, 2008 cited in Abousnnouga and Machin, 2013, p.43).

On the other hand, small-sized monuments frequently appear as counter-monuments, which emerged as means of standing against oppressive non-democratic regimes. There are numerous examples to cement this correlation, like *Stolpersteine* commemorating victims of Holocaust, or *Poslednii adres* doing so in relation to Stalinism victims, or *Krasnale*, figures of dwarfs that commemorate the Orange Alternative, a Polish anti-communist underground movement. In my analysis this will be particularly applicable to the Heroes of Heavenly Hundred memorial in Kyiv, which I consider to be one of a kind.

This stipulation leads to one more important note to be made in the description of this semiotic mode that comes from the theory of urban planning on the correlation between large public spaces and totalitarian regimes. Provided this, there is a widespread take on the fact, that 'democracy must necessarily equate to urban polycentricity and architectural humility; and authoritarianism to monocentricity and monumentality' (Murawski, 2019, p.36). This provision will be useful when evaluating differences between discourses of both top-down and bottom-up forces behind the erection of monuments, for the results will prove the legitimacy of such an argument.

b) Angle and elevation

Meaning potentials created by angle and elevation are identical to the ones of size. As for angle, this semiotic mode rests on the evocation of power relations and can be exercised in three major capacities: low, high, and equal angles. These capacities are achieved by means of the height of subjects; therefore, even though these modes exist separately, I treat them equally in my analysis.

In *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, Kress and van Leeuwen discuss meanings created by the layout of elements found on pages of both printed book and web-resources. They pose the question of how the elements' position relates to each other and the viewer and what information value 'zones' of the image (left vs right, top vs bottom, centre vs margins) carry (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p.177). Based on the examples of numerous images they

argue that the division between the upper and the lower parts of any image correlates with the dichotomy of the 'ideal' and the 'real'. Placing the object at the top does not only mean its physical elevation but also can be interpreted as elevating it idealistically, granting it a higher status. On the contrary, objects placed at the bottom tend to be of much lesser down-to-earth importance. Thus, such compartmentalisation inevitably creates unequal power relations.

It is possible to relate the same logic to the interaction between monuments and viewers, where the height of the monument affects the viewing angle. Drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen, Abousnnouga and Machin argue that a low-angle perspective view forces the viewer to 'look up to' to the subject, which makes the balance of power tip to the subject, whereas equal angle, meaning the position of eyes on the same level, suggests equality between the subject and the viewer, or 'placing the viewer in the position of power or the soldier [the subject] in the position of vulnerability' (Abousnnouga and Machin, 2013, p.43). In case of shorter subjects, as with some counter-monuments, or equally tall subjects placed below ground level, the meaning potential of vulnerability and fragility might be intensified, however it may also mean that the subject is inferior.

c) Gaze/interaction

Before I have considered the interaction between the subject and the viewer on a bodily level, however, the eye contact set up between the two is classified as a separate semiotic mode. Drawing on the Hallidayan speech acts, Kress and van Leeuwen looked at how images can perform them. According to the Halliday's *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, there are four basic speech acts possible: offering or demanding information and offering or demanding goods and services (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p.122). Despite that there are multiple subtypes of these communication types, Kress and van Leeuwen have simplified this system and limited their number in images to 'demand' and 'offer' only.

Offer-type pictures do not interact with the viewer through the eye contact; therefore, no response is required from them, and the viewer is allowed to feel disengaged. Abousnnouga and Machin notice that the meaning potential of this speech act points at the figure's not belonging to the earthly realm, rather aspiring to the future and high ideals (Abousnnouga and Machin, 2010, p.144). By contrast, demand pictures are designed in a way that they engage the viewer's attention by looking at her/him. The viewer's presence is acknowledged, and therefore, the response from one is demanded, like in a normal social interaction. This is

particularly evident among counter-monuments due to their size that creates a high angle vis-à-vis the viewer.

d) Distance/proximity

The last semiotic mode that communicates social relations to be considered in the analysis of the monuments is distance or proximity. From the viewer's point of view, monuments can be approached, touched, or vice versa, be inapproachable through being fenced off. Also, it is important to notice if the monument can be observed from different positions or just from a point that creates a certain view of it. The meaning potential of easy accessibility to the monument to the point of an ability to touch it may refer to a designed purpose of closer interaction between the viewer and the subject that implicates an opportunity to haptically become acquainted with history, and therefore make the viewer feel involved, rather than be a solemn onlooker. On the contrary, the subject's inaccessibility and 'closedness' adds to the power relations which do not work in favour of the viewer.

With these ideas in place, I would like to extend this category of analysis to an extent that Abousnnouga and Machin did not consider in their three-dimensional social semiotics CDA scheme. Namely, they mainly focused the interaction between the subject and the viewer within the historical framework of the subject, but at the same time in isolation from the actual surroundings of the subject. However, 'semiotic of space' can be understood as 'a descriptive process enquiring into the relevant significance of the relationships between objects and their spatial contexts' (Gaines, 2006, p.173), which largely draws on the Einstein's general theory of relativity stipulating that properties of space are not independent; neither space evokes a reaction until it serves as the background to something perceived as consequential (Einstein, 1961, pp.113-134).

For the sake of supporting this aspect, I consider these monuments in the context of the place in the city where they are located as well as in the context of monuments that are located nearby. In other words, I look at all of the above-mentioned semiotic modes (elevation, angle, gaze, size and proximity) in relation to not the viewer only but to other landmarks located nearby as well. Thus, their spatial arrangement might single out the significance of the monument under study and its place in history according to the political agent's vision.

2.1.2. Social Semiotics of Materiality

In this subsection I provide the list of semiotic modes associated with the monument's materiality. However, not all of them are can be described in an entirety such as those that communicate social relations, rather a short mention of what they might mean. Yet it is crucial to consider them in the analysis of multimodal ensembles.

Speaking of such modes as **curvature** and **angularity**, with reference to van Leeuwen's discussion of meaning potentials in typefaces, Abousnnouga and Machin suggest that round forms in both 2d and 3d objects can mean that these objects are 'smooth', 'soft', 'gentle', 'emotional', as well as 'fluidity', 'ease' and 'organic', whereas angular forms are 'harsh', 'technical', 'masculine', 'objective' (Abousnnouga and Machin, 2013, p.46). In addition, the evaluation of these meaning potentials may be either positive or negative, depending on the cultural association.

I find this semiotic mode useful not only in the assessment of the monument's shape, but also in the analysis of fonts that were used to provide textual monument-related information. Let alone size and colour that are described as separate semiotic modes, according to Machin's inventory of typographical meaning potentials, it is worth looking at such modes as weight, slant and framing (Machin, 2007). **Weight** concerns the appearance of a font affecting its salience and therefore visual representation of the significance of information provided. Meaning potentials of **slant** vary from 'formality' found in straight fonts to 'human touch' and 'involvement' in handwritten or oblique ones. **Framing**, generally speaking, either connects or separates different visual elements in multimodal objects and can be achieved through a variety of such design choices as colour, space, position within the objects and its proximity to other components.

Even though Machin described more semiotic modes in his analysis of textbooks, I do not find the rest of them necessary for my analysis. Namely, these are formality and flourishes. The former is partially achieved by the choice of slant and is not questioned when it comes to the monuments that commemorate tragedy on the national level. Flourishes are non-present in the monuments under study, therefore should not be considered.

Getting back to the materiality of semiotic modes in monuments, we look at their **regularity** or **irregularity**. This refers to how rational or organic the monument's design is, suggesting that regularity in forms has meaning potentials of 'conformity', 'seriousness', 'formality', whereas irregularity stands for the chaotic placing of monument-related attributes, hence they might be 'informal', 'non-conformist' and 'organic'. This can also be a reflection of the

circumstances, in which monuments were created, and political agents behind them, adding to the interrelation between the choice of modes and their historical context.

Having mentioned materiality, it is crucial to consider **material(s)** from which monuments have been crafted, because their choice often has a very symbolic capacity. Given that monuments are supposed to enduringly if not eternally communicated embedded narratives, materials are supposed to be accordingly durable. However, not all durable materials can be used in monuments. For instance, it is impossible to imagine a statue of a national leader made of plastic, even though plastic has a very long period of decay. Therefore, in addition to durability, there must be a connection to the Classical tradition, that one way or another, suggests associations with 'timelessness', 'high culture', 'antiquity', which is often communicated by marble, granite and bronze, due to their widespread use in the most ancient civilisations. At the same time these materials are not connoted with industrial production, rather manual carving, therefore such monuments must be ones of a kind.

Monuments under study are not entirely composed of the 'eternal' components and contain elements that began to be used relatively recently in the history of the humankind. One of them is glass, which as opposed to the 'eternal' materials, signifies 'openness' and 'modernity'.

However, it is not only materials that are important, but in what condition they are presented in the final product, meaning mostly their **surface**. Abousnnouga and Machin describe two major types of a monument's surface, and what meaning potentials they have, even though their interpretation can be contradictory and largely depends on the social context. They argue that granular surface can mean 'natural', 'functional', 'down-to-earth', but it can also mean 'rundown'. Polished surface can mean 'cared-for', 'vibrant', 'positive', 'man-made', however, the meaning potential of the monument being 'worn-out' is possible too. Based on these suggestions, this semiotic mode is meant to explain to what extent discourses communicated by monuments under study are true-life or, in contrast, lofty, which is achieved by means of shaping materials in a worldly or non-worldly manner.

Lastly, monuments can be either **soft** or **hard**. However, with regards to monuments, this parameter is not physical, rather achieved by means of choosing a material depending on their metaphorical haptics, how they appear visually. Lighter materials can communicate 'delicateness' and 'goodwill', whereas heavier choices may carry the meaning potential of 'solemnity' and 'mystery'.

2.1.3. Visual grammar

There are two more semiotic modes that stem from Hallidayan linguistics and are important in the analysis of monuments but do not depend on their materiality. Namely, these are **modality** and **transitivity**.

Modality stands for the extent to which figures and objects in the monuments are represented realistically or not, or in other words, how true to life they are. Therefore, meaning potentials vary based on the detailed elaboration of monuments, including their size, depiction of people whether they have wrinkles on their skin and creases on their clothes, or not.

Drawing on these provisions, there is a differentiation between 'high modality' (abundance of detail) and 'low modality' (lack of detail). Roughly speaking, high modality means that figures and objects reflected in monuments are depicted the way they would be in real life, whereas low modality refers to the unrealistic representation, therefore, idealises them.

Use of colour largely contributes to a monuments' modality. Moreover, comprehensive research in semiotics of colour could allow it to be singled it out in a separate category of analysis. However, monuments rarely appear in colour palette, rather monochromatically correspond to the material's colour, which adds to the monument's low modality (Abousnnouga and Machin, 2013, p.54). Otherwise, it is possible to analyse colour in the categories of its meaning to the pertinent culture, which is predominantly Christian in the case of my research and is largely interpreted according to religious vision. To name a few, white colour can mean 'purity', 'sacredness', 'blissfulness', black colour might stand for 'grievance', 'power', 'formality', and grey for the 'mediocre' or 'unknown'.

The last semiotic mode I consider in my analysis of monuments is transitivity, which concerns actions performed by the subject. Similar to many semiotic modes before, it originates in linguistics, namely, Hallidayan classification of verbal processes, however, it is applicable to anthropomorphic monuments too. In monuments this mode draws attention to what the subject is doing, is (s)he represented being active or passive, which helps to understand how a social practice reflected in the monument is reassessed.

2.2. Method

Based on the above-described semiotic modes the actual method suggested by Abousnnouga and Machin in analysing monuments consists of three steps:

1. Considering meaning potentials that designers have used to create social relations between monuments and viewers, as well as relations between monuments and surrounding objects. This is achieved by means of size, gaze, elevation, angle and distance.
2. Examining meaning potentials of the material form itself which includes curvature and angularity, weight, slant, framing, (ir)regularity, materials and surface.
3. Looking at the extent of 'visual truth' in monuments and social practices performed by figures or subjects in the monument.

The interpretation of these semiotic modes provides a set of meaning potentials communicated by monuments. Consequently, speaking in structuralist categories, grouping up similar meaning potentials appearing in monuments one way or another will create 'bundles' of similar elements, which according to Levi-Strauss are the 'true constituent units' of a myth (Levi-Strauss, 1968, p.211 cited in Tudor, 1972, p.56). Lastly, I evaluate to which extent the discourses of the foundational myths communicated by the monuments of my case study coincide and hence test my research hypothesis.

2.3. Other CDA approaches

There are other approaches within CDA that could be relatively related to my research. To name a few, there is a Fairclough's approach that has explored 'socially transformative effects of discursive change', meaning the correlation between changes in the society and changes in the discourse produced by various institutions (Fairclough, 1994). Another important approach is Discourse-Historical Approach, that has developed in the interdisciplinary study of racism, antisemitism and sexism. In particular, it is designed to monitor how prejudiced discourse has been historically created and transformed in a given society, for example, a study in post-war antisemitism in Austria (Wodak et al, 2009). Other main approaches include research in the legitimation of discriminatory rhetoric (Richardson, 2004), cognitive dimensions of discourse functioning (van Dijk, 1993), and various corpus-based methods of analysis (Mulderrig, 2011).

All of the above-mentioned approaches are critical in addressing numerous social problems, but none of them is applicable to the study of monuments as discourse communicating instruments due to their design. Of all listed above approaches, it could be possible to make an exception for the Fairclough's approach, because the monuments under study emerged in the moment of substantial political reconfigurations, and thus the discourses they disseminate are reflective of those changes. Yet, these monuments do not generate any discourses themselves,

rather it is done by agents at whose discretion these monuments are erected, therefore tracing the impact of the monuments' discourses on respective societies is problematic without analysing the decision-making, which is not the case in my research. Instead, I only focus the semiotic modes and then analyse how different they are when used by political agents of contradistinct nature.

2.4. Limitations

The list of semiotic modes used in my analysis is not exhaustive. Abousnnouga and Machin have pointed out a few more categories, but they are irrelevant to my research. For example, I cannot analyse monuments through the lens of 'static/mobile' parameter, because none of monuments in my case study can move, therefore they cannot be assessed by weight of such dichotomy. Similarly, the 'fixed/articulated' parameter is not applicable either, because none of the monuments' parts can be dismantled, which is often the case with monuments performing educational functions. I also cannot apply the parameter 'solid/hollow' to my study, because all monuments are solid, and the meaning potential of hollow figures that invite viewers to their inner world is absent.

Moving on from the semiotic modes, I would like to highlight limitations created by Critical Discourse Analysis that are general regardless of an approach with CDA.

Most importantly, Discourse Analysis is interpretative and explanatory, meaning that discourses can be interpreted in different ways depending on the sociocultural context. For instance, with respect to Social Semiotics, the 'Western' tradition of reading semiotic modes needs to be taken into account, because other cultures may have different rules of reading images and signifying colours, therefore the interpretation will be different. This limitation is addressed by CDA theorists who argue that the research process should be self-reflexive, and that the subjectivity of the researcher must be acknowledged. These recommendations will be observed accordingly throughout. It may also be noted that there exists the possibility within CDA studies that the analysis can be linguistically reductive, as signifiers may not entirely encompass the signified.

Chapter 3. Overview of squares within their socio-political panoramas

In this section, I provide an overview of Independence Square in Kyiv and Piłsudski Square in Warsaw in the context of their respective socio-political panoramas, in order to pinpoint their importance and relevance to the study of monuments as discourse-communicating tools. At the end of the section, I argue that despite divergent traits in the backgrounds the squares have, and functions they perform, they prove to be the places where spatial reflection of the political reconfiguration in respective societies is the most visible owing to their location and the objects they encompass.

Before I render the historical contextualisation of the squares, I would like to draw attention to their spatial commonalities. Owing to their location in their respective national capitals, the squares are able to easily communicate their intended messages, by virtue of being in a focal spot of cultural and popular significance. The fact that they are located in the capitals is equally important, because cities in general are 'the medium and the outcome of power', performing various administrative, economic and symbolic functions (Kong, 2008, p.13 cited in Krzyżanowska, 2016, p.465). This is especially the case with national capitals, where the concentration of power holders is the biggest, and the discourses once created and implanted there, orchestrate public life in the society.

3.1. Piłsudski Square

Marshal Józef Piłsudski Square (*Plac Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego*), or Piłsudski Square, is located in downtown Warsaw (*Śródmieście*). Its historical background originates in the beginning of the 18th century as the Saxon Palace's courtyard, which gave the square its name (*Plac* Saski) for many years to come. Almost a century later, the square became the place of practices that retained through the centuries, namely, those related to military life. It is known, that in 1807, the square was the place where Napoleon reviewed his French troops (Szwankowski, 1970, p.266). In 1815-1816, by the order of Grand Duke of Russia and a de-facto Viceroy of the Kingdom of Poland Konstantin Pavlovich, the square was paved for the purposes of carrying out military drills and organising military parades (Janczewski, 1971, p.198). This was not the only imposition of Russian influence onto the square's landscape. Throughout the 19th century, the square was enriched with several sights spatially and symbolically reinforcing the Russian rule in Poland. Those included the Seven Generals

Monument *(Pomnik siedmiu generałów)* commemorating seven senior military Polish officials who refused to break their oath to the Russian Emperor during the November Uprising in 1830 and consequently were killed by Polish insurgents. They also included the Russian District Command Headquarters, later the military court seat, in 1890 (Szwankowski, 1970, p.267), and the Alexander Nevskii Cathedral, a Russian Orthodox Cathedral built on the cusp of the centuries. Over the years only the Headquarters building survived, nowadays serving the Warsaw Garrison Command.

In the 20th century, the square was notorious for being the location of the Government District in Warsaw (*Dzielnica rządowa w Warszawie*), where German occupational authorities sat from 1939 to 1945, known under the name of Adolf Hitler Square (Gajewski, 1979, p.246). In between the years of German occupation, the Saxon Palace that initially gave birth to the square's existence was destroyed by the Germans during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, however, by 1946, the only surviving part of it, the Unknown Soldier Tomb *(Grób Nieznanego Żołnierza)* was cleared and restored (Forum Rozwoju Warszawy, no date).

The last remarkable fact about the square's history that has to be covered is St John Paul II's first pilgrimage to Poland. His mass carried out in the square on 2 June 1979, attracted around half a million of people, becoming one of the brightest symbols of Poland's fight for freedom from Communism (Forum Rozwoju Warszawy, no date).

Nowadays, Piłsudski square houses several important landmarks and serves as the sight of a number of commemorations that perpetuate the square's history in the national context.

The first site is the Unknown Soldier Tomb, the only remaining part of the Saxon Palace, which spatially separates the square from the Saxon Garden. The eternal flame is located in the very centre of the tomb, whereas the columns of the site are covered with the plates that commemorate all the battles where the Polish Army has ever taken part. The tomb is the only place in the square with a restricted access. Unlike other objects, the tomb enlists a set of rules concerning commemorative procedures by third parties and is subject to 24/7 protection served by guards of the Warsaw Garrison Command (Dowództwo Garnizonu Warszawa, no date).

Another object is the Piłsudski monument, dedicated to the first Marshal of the Republic of Poland and located on the eastern side in between the same-name square and Tokarzewskiego-Karaszewicza Street. The monument was unveiled on 14 August 1995, on the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw, won by the Polish Army under Piłsudski's command.

Moving from the east of the square to its centre, we find ourselves at the Pope's Cross, the place commemorating St John Paul II's mass in 1979. A 9 m tall white granite cross was unveiled on 6 June 2009, on the 30th anniversary of the Pope's mass (Warszawa Nasze Miasto, 2009). The landmark is adorned with a tile that has the following phrase engraved: "Let Your Spirit descend and renew the face of the Earth. Of This Land! " (*„Niech zstąpi Duch Twój i odnowi oblicze Ziemi. Tej Ziemi!"*). On top of that, two years later, the funeral ceremony of the Primate of the Millennium, His Eminence Stefan Wyszyński Venerable, was held in the same place, which, despite not being remembered as strongly as the Pope's visit, contributed to the strengthening of the religious meaningfulness of the place for post-Communist Poland.

The last two monuments located in Piłsudski square are the statue of Lech Kaczyński and the Monument of the Victims of the 2010 Smolensk Tragedy, also known as Smolensk monuments. In April 2010, the plane with the President of Poland Lech Kaczyński and other 95 passengers crushed near Smolensk, Russia, when on its way to mark 70 years of the Katyń massacre (BBC, 2016).

The President was a twin brother of Jarosław Kaczyński, the leader of Law and Justice, and when the latter seized the power in 2015, he, supported by his party adherents, turned his personal tragedy into the fulcrum of the new Polish foundational myth, which I will call the Smolensk Tragedy myth.

Considered to be a conservative right-wing Euroscepticist party, Law and Justice was not successful in domestic politics until 2015, when they took a victory lap in both executive and legislative branches of power. There are multiple reasons for their success. To name a few, those would be frustration over the economic dominance of Germany, the migration crisis and the influence of the Catholic Church (Smith, 2015). As a result, Andrzej Duda and Beata Szydło, the party's nominees for the seats of the President and the Prime Minister respectively, took control of the executive branch, and the party itself won a majority of seats in both the Sejm and the Senate (Hoffmann, 2018), which points at the entirely legitimate attainment of power by the party unlike the case of Ukraine.

If we get back to the topic of the Smolensk Tragedy myth, without doubting its status as a dominant myth, we may question to what extent it could be considered a foundational myth. The answer to this question lies in numerous clashes between two major rivals on the political scene, each representing a certain ideological vision of Poland. This rivalry figures in almost every aspect of socio-political life in Poland, however, what is of interest in the case of

foundational myths is the existing memory regime concerning the utilisation of certain interpretations of the past by political forces.

There have been several examples of such mnemonical and ideological clashes in Poland. Perhaps, the most prominent one, that combined both, was the issue of a wooden cross commemorating the victims of the Smolensk Tragedy which was erected in front of the presidential palace in 2010 and which revealed the sharp division of Polish society on many levels that stemmed from their opinion on the overlapping religious and commemorative functions of a cross (Ochman, 2013, p. 65). Another memory conflict involving similar opponents was about the commemorations of the events of 1989. One of the recent studies in relation to this matter was conducted by Juho Nikko, where he identifies the current memory regime in Poland as fractured as per Kubik and Bernhard's typology, which entails a high polarisation in society which itself inevitably reverberates through other spheres of public life and creates potential perils to democracy (Nikko, 2020).

Such strong political division, as illustrated by two vivid examples, facilitates favourable conditions for the nascence of a myth that would intend to reconcile the opposing sides and create a 'morally coherent' society. Moreover, the question of foundational myths does not concern whether there is a general consensus among the population on the initiatives taken by power holders or not, rather the imposition of the power holders' identity-constituting values backed by the emotional commitment coming from top party officials.

In this light, based on continuous rigorous and eventually successful attempts made by Law and Justice with the purpose of securing the memory of the victims of the Smolensk Tragedy in the urban cultural space, it is evident that this is the myth that constitutes the fundamental core of the ruling party's mnemonic agenda and thus can be considered to be foundational.

Geographically speaking, monuments to Lech Kaczyński emerged in numerous locations across Poland, even in those places where the late President never visited. However, none of them are as focal to the centre of social, cultural and political life as Piłsudski Square in Warsaw, the square most capable of potently disseminating the dominant discourse. On top of that, the erection of the Smolensk Tragedy monuments in Piłsudski Square hints at a potential framing of the myth by PiS as a popular one, given the square's historical record being a place of mass mobilisation centring around religious values and the growth of nationalism. Thus, the Smolensk monuments' entrance into a domain sacred for Polish identity has created the precedence of the PiS' attempt to spatially secure their leading positions in a politically

polarised society and square the 'right' vision of historical succession. This makes Piłsudski Square a plausible indicator of the political changes that involved spatial and symbolic rearrangement by means of the erection of the Smolensk monuments.

3.2. Independence Square

Independence Square, or *Maidan Nezalezhnosti*, lies in the very centre of the Ukrainian capital and is considered to be one of the city's must-visit places. Historically the square has had several names, and each of them was descriptive either of the epoch or the functions that the square performed. The square emerged in the 1830s and was called Khreshchatitskaia, stemming from the crossing of hollows where kniazs used to place their hunting nets (Sherotsky, 1917, p.313). The square located near the houses, predominantly of merchants, was therefore used mainly for economic purposes until 1876 when the guild lobbied the construction of the building of the Kyiv City Duma alongside a number of commercial facilities for easier dispatch of legal concerns, which gave the location a new name, which was Dumskaya Square (Drug, 2013, pp.184-185). This toponym lasted until the end of the Russian Empire, and in the follow-up to the October Revolution it yielded the right of way to standard ideological Soviet toponyms deprived of historical, spatial or functional significance, serving instead the purpose of eradicating reminders of the imperial fabric of society. Thus, throughout the Soviet era the square was called Soviet Square, or *Sovetskaia Ploshchad'* between 1919 and 1935; Kalinin Square, or *Kalininskaia Ploshchad'* between 1935 and 1977; and October Revolution Square, or *Ploshchad' Oktiabr'skoi Revoliutsii* between 1977 and 1991 (Pivovarov, 2018).

However, city toponyms are not the only components that transform together with the Zeitgeist. As befits a good square in a city with a rich past, there have repeatedly been material reminders of the ideology ruling in the territory. The first documented monumental figure which was central to the square was the Stolypin monument, erected in the aftermath of the assassination of the Russian Prime Minister Petr Stolypin in 1911. In revolutionary 1917, soon after Nicolas II's abdication, the Stolypin monument was dismantled, making room for the Karl Marx monument erected in 1922 as part of the Communist monumental propaganda. During the Civil War the monument was toppled by the White Army, however, once the Red Army secured its control over Kyiv, the Karl Marx monument was re-erected at a different spot in the square on 1 May 1922 (Proletarskaia Pravda, 1922) where it stood until it was removed by the Soviet authorities in 1933 due to unsuccessful design choices. Monumentally speaking, the square

was empty of monuments depicting leaders for over four decades, however similarly to the holy place that is never empty, the square became the location of a colossal granite figure of Lenin, and the square was named after the leader's greatest deed, the Great October Socialist Revolution.

During the Soviet era, the square continued to perform mainly public functions as it was originally designed. However, in 1989, it became the place associated with grief because of the collapse of the portico of the Central Post Office (*Glavpochtamt*) that took lives of 11 people.

The next and the main functional amendment to the square's record happened in 1990, when it saw its first protest act that went down in history as the 'zero maidan' or the 'Revolution on the Granite'. Seen as part of 'Velvet' revolutions that led to the toppling of Communist regime in Eastern European countries between 1989 and 1991, the Revolution on the Granite started as a people's response to the proposed renewal of the Union Treaty that aimed at replacing the 1922 Declaration and Treaty on Formation of the USSR (Onuch, 2017a, p.7). On top of it, protesters, students mainly, rallied for a new round of multiparty elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukraine SSR, ending compulsory military service of young Ukrainians, nationalisation of all the property of the Communist Party of Ukraine (*KPU*) and the All-Union Leninist Communist Youth Union (*VLKSM*), and the resignation of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, 1990 cited in Onuch, 2017a, p.8). Eventually, the strikers' demands were partially met and, more specifically, Independence Square became the central place of collective contention in Ukraine (Onuch, 2017b, p.137).

As Onuch argues, there was certain symbolism behind the choice of the October Revolution Square as the place of the protest act in 1990. The toponym predictably created a strong association with the 1917 October Revolution, hence protesting there would mean standing up against the 'Soviet colonial rule in Ukraine' (Onuch, 2017b, p.137).

October Revolution Square began to undergo significant changes shortly upon the declaration of independence of Ukraine in 1991. It was renamed Independence Square and the October Revolution Monument embodied by a nearly 9-meter granite Lenin was dismantled (Tsalik, 2016). Throughout the 90s, the square was under renovation until it was reopened on 24 August 2001, marking the 10th anniversary of the independence (Pivovarov, 2018).

The same day was notable for the unveiling of the Independence Monument in the centre of the square. It is a 61 m tall victory column made of marble with a cast bronze statue of a Slavic goddess Berehynia atop. The same year two more monuments were erected. One is the Lach

Gates (*Liadski vorota*) commemorating medieval city gates first mentioned in the 12th century and caped with the statue of the Kyiv's patron Archangel Michael (Sagaidak and Chernyakov, 2001). The second monument is dedicated to the Founders of Kyiv, legendary characters Kyi, Shchek, Khoriv and Lybid. According to one of the authors of the monument, Ruslan Kukharenko, each of the four figures represents one of the traits of the Ukrainian character alongside four elements: Kyi is a warrior symbolising Fire, farmer Shchek stands for Earth, Khoriv is a hunter embodying Air and Lybid is the progenitress, Water (KorrespondenT.net, 2001).

All this indicates that in 2001 Independence Square embraced several important features. Apart from being known as the site of protests, it became a site abundant with symbolism referring to the mythical origins of Ukrainians, the Slavic Native Faith, and the history of the city upon the adoption of Christianity, which implies that these are the fulcrums of Ukrainian genesis.

Since then, Independence Square has been stable in preserving the symbolism obtained in 2001 and growing in the meaningfulness of popular unrests. There have been multiple protests since 1990 but three major noteworthy ones took place in the new millennium. In 2000-2001, there was a protest campaign "Ukraine against Kuchma", the latter being the President of Ukraine accused of the misuse of authority. The second, this time successful, was the Orange Revolution of 2004-2005 that followed the Presidential elections that were beset by a massive electoral fraud ending in Viktor Yanukovych's victory. As a result of the protests, re-elections took place and verified the victory of Viktor Yushchenko, the Yanukovych's major rival. The third and the biggest protest of all times that Independence Square embraced was the Euromaidan.

The cusp of 2013 and 2014 saw the Euromaidan, public mass demonstrations that took place mostly in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities. Euromaidan is believed to have been initiated as the society's response to the governmental decision to reject to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement; however, it was only one of numerous reasons alongside corruption, poverty and other injustices (Yaroshinskaia, 2014).

The incumbent government at the time was run by Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions, whose line generally leaned towards Anti-Western, pro-Russian, and Centrist views (Kuzio, 2011). By contrast, protesters standing in Independence Square did not have a single political affiliation, rather shared heterogeneous stances that came down to two major driving forces of the Euromaidan. The former was the National Resistance Headquarters formed by

three political parties from the opposition: Batkivshchyna, UDAR and Svoboda, and the latter was the Ukrainian nationalist movement Pravyi Sektor comprised of several political organisations seen as far-right: UNA-UNSO, Trizub, Bilyi Molot and Patriot Ukrainy (Yaroshinskaya, 2014).

However, it would be very wrong to see the Euromaidan as a series of events that mostly involved stereotypical Ukrainian nationalists who were discontented with the pro-Russian and anti-European government. Conversely, the first to riot were liberal students. The peaceful stage in the Euromaidan did not last for a long time, and soon images of the bloodied faces of students were shown in the media irrespective of their political orientation, which provoked a mass response taking hundreds of thousands to the Maidan (Minakov, 2018, p.119). As the riot continued, the level of violence grew, and 22 December 2013 opened the score to casualties. As a result, 107 people fell victims of fierce conflicts between rioters and law enforcers and were later named the Heavenly Hundred Heroes (Nebesna Sotnia Website-memorial, no date).

The origin of the creation of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes myth remains unclear. From what is known, protesters' self-defence was organised into groups of ten people deemed 'capable of fighting', all adding up to 100 people *(sotnia)*, which represented a well-organised and well-structured "modern-day model of the Cossack army" (Risch, 2015 cited in Zelinska, 2017, p.5). Given this number roughly rounding the number of casualties on the protesters' part and a multitude of speeches and actions in Independence Square happening throughout the Euromaidan, it is likely that the metaphor was coined by an unknown author and spread across the ranks.

The first material commemorations of the fallen heroes were chaotic, scattered across the square, which was in line with the spirit of the protest. However, in 2014, upon putting Yanukovych to flight, the Ministry of Culture gave the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site located to the east of the Independence Monument in front of the Flower Clock the status of the 'historical monument of city significance' despite its transitory nature (Maino, 2018). Supposedly, back in 2014, the site already obtained the features of a permanent memorial; there is no available information on this. Most importantly, it seems to have been the first step made by Ukrainian authorities to embrace the bottom-up approach to the new unified Ukrainian post-Maidan society and the use of the Heavenly Hundred myth. The feasibility of this supposition is premised on the sociological inquiry into the perception of the Revolution of Dignity and the Heavenly Hundred Heroes which was carried out by the

Ukrainian Centre for Public Opinion Research in 2018 in all regions. This research found that five years after the Revolution of Dignity the overwhelming majority of respondents (72%) agreed that the Revolution-related events should be remembered and respected, and 71% of respondents named the Heavenly Hundred heroes (Maidan Museum, 2019). The legitimisation of the narrative by Ukrainian authorities and the continuous support of it by the majority of people across the country leave the question whether the Heavenly Hundred Heroes myth can be considered foundational or not beyond dispute, thus laying foundation to the creation of a morally coherent world.

3.3. Juxtaposing squares

At first appearance, there are more differentiating indicators than those that unite the two squares. Firstly, all of the objects overviewed in Piłsudski Square relate to real historical figures and events, whereas in Independence Square it is merely the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site, the rest appeals to different sorts of myths (folkloric or religious but not political).

Secondly, it is the difference in the performative functions that these squares fulfil. Piłsudski Square has a several centuries long continuity in performing national warfare-related procedures. In addition to the ones of the past mentioned, nowadays there are several regular commemorative events that take place in Piłsudski Square, for example, celebrations of the Polish Army Day on 15 August hailing victory over Soviet Russia in 1920, or 1 September that is the Veteran's Day of the Fight for Independence of the Republic of Poland *(Dzień Weterana Walk o Niepodległość Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej).* Independence Square also has its own kind of continuity in the protest-related procedures together with events commemorating the memory of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes that take place there.

The third difference is the 'aura' of the squares. By that, I mean the perception the place may create. Independence Square is the place of grief that keeps the memory of the shooting of protesters in 2013-2014 accompanied by the memory of the tragic collapse of the portico of the Central Post Office in 1989 and, which altogether creates a nexus between the commemorative, the mnemonic and the emotional. In this view, the Smolensk monuments cannot project the same, for Piłsudski Square was not the actual place where Kaczyński and other 95 passengers of the flight died.

Finally, the approaches to commemoration differ too. Landmarks in Piłsudski Square were suggested, negotiated, lobbied, and created by the authorities, which is an all-out top-down approach to commemoration. Conversely, putting aside all other monuments dimmed in their significance and relevance to the hot-button issues in the Ukrainian society, the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site emerged as a counter-monument from the grassroots. Moreover, it urged the authorities to accept the bottom-up approach advocated by protesters, which greatly enhanced the bottom-up spirit of the square overall.

This point is crucial in preconditioning the case study designed to solve the claimed research puzzle. On one hand, Piłsudski Square and Smolensk monuments represent the case of the place that disseminates the discourse of a foundational myth coming from power holders. On the other hand, Independence Square and the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site communicate the discourse that originated among grassroots.

The critical discourse social semiotic analysis of the monuments located in these two squares will show to what extent the discourses communicated by them are different, if different at all albeit multiple corollary divergencies.

Chapter 4. Analysing Piłsudski Square

The administrative actions regarding the erection of the statue of Lech Kaczyński and the monument to the victims of the Smolensk Air Crash were accompanied by a series of intricacies in domestic politics. Initially, Piłsudski Square was within the jurisdiction of the capital city, however, in October 2017, the square was handed over to the Masovian Voivode by the administrative decision of the minister of infrastructure, Andrzej Adamczyk. The official reasoning provided for this decision was the 'simplification of administrative procedures' regarding execution of commemorative events, for example, Armed Forces Day on 15 August or Independence Day on 11 November, given that the responsibility for the organisation of such events lies with the voivode (TVN24, 2017). However, according to the City of Warsaw's spokesperson, Bartosz Milczarczyk, the true reason was to change the regulations in order to avoid the City Council's mandatory involvement in the process of the localisation of the Smolensk monuments in Warsaw (TVN24, 2017). The party affiliation of the major public figures involved in this territorial rearrangement is unsurprising yet worth mentioning: Andrzej Adamczyk, the minister of infrastructure, and Zdzisław Sipiera, the Masovian Voivode, are

members of Law and Justice, whereas Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, the Mayor of Warsaw, belongs to Civic Platform, the main opponent of Law and Justice. Therefore, the case should not be interpreted as the redistribution of authority, rather a party clash taken outside of Parliament. This eventually revealed itself to be true as Zdzisław Sipiera confirmed that the monuments had to be erected somewhere in the said location for it was 'a matter that could not be put away for later' (TVN24, 2017).

In spite of the continuous debates concerning the precise location and the timeline of the construction of the monuments, they found themselves in Piłsudski Square. The Monument to the Victims of the 2010 Smolensk Tragedy was unveiled on 10 April 2018, the eighth anniversary of the air crash. As for the statue of Lech Kaczyński, its cornerstone was also unveiled on 10 April, however the ceremony of unveiling the statue took place on 10 November 2018, the day before the centennial of the Independence of Poland.

4.1. Lech Kaczyński monument

The Social Committee for the Construction of the Monuments of the late President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, and of the Victims of the 2010 Smolensk Tragedy did not set any particular rules for how the monuments should look. The purpose was plainly formulated as finding 'the best design concepts…in terms of conceptual, spatial and aesthetic solutions…to commemorate the late Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland' (Komitet Społeczny Budowy Pomników, 2017). With that in mind, I will look into the meaning potential of semiotic solutions materialised in the monument, designed by Stanisław Szwechowicz and Jan Raniszewski.

Figure 1. The Statue of Lech Kaczyński (image credit: Sergei Ukhov, taken on 7 August 2020)

4.1.1. Semiotic modes communicating social relations

It is generally accepted that the figures of people in monuments are slightly bigger than real-life people, but the difference does not usually go beyond one foot in height (Abousnnouga, Machin, 2010, 144). In the case of Lech Kaczyński, the height of the statue, and therefore its size is more than double the physical height of the late president (3.5m vs 1.68m). Coupled with the equal height of the pedestal, the 7m tall monument, found in one of the busiest spots of the square by the crossroads with Królewska Street and Wacława Niżyńskiego Passage, affirms the figure's grandeur.

The monument is comprised of two equally tall parts: the statue and the pedestal. It is not only worth mentioning the fact that the statue is dramatically raised above ground level, which may communicate such meanings as the belonging of the individual to the upper-class, their possession of high values, or their status as a visionary whose ideas stand out. The way the statue is raised above ground level is also of importance. The access to the monument from any

point is preceded by three steps, 12 cm tall each, which inevitably creates an association with the architectural element of Ancient Greek buildings referred to as crepidoma, a platform that consists of usually three levels and serves as the solid basis of the whole structure (Robertson, 1929, p.41). This aspect of elevation based on the heritage of the classical tradition enhances the noble meaning potential of the monument.

Another important semiotic mode communicating social relations is gaze. The key question behind this mode is whether a monument utilises the demand type of the image or the offer type. Subjects in demand images look at the viewer. They acknowledge the viewer's presence and thus urge the viewer to interact with the subject, to respond to it and the message the subject communicates. Offer images are the opposite: their subjects do not look at the viewer, they do not acknowledge the viewer's presence, and hence there is no social interaction. The viewer is no longer a participant of a dialogue, rather an onlooker.

The statue of Lech Kaczyński belongs to the latter. He does not interact with the viewer, he is considerably elevated above the ground, and his eyes are fixed on the horizon. Furthermore, they are wide open, which is atypical for national leaders, whose gaze tends to be strong-willed, often menacing. His gaze is nothing like this. Instead, it is revealing, sincere, the type of gaze a docile religious figure might have, incarnating humility before God. If we were to imagine Lech Kaczyński as presented using the demand image, his gaze directed downwards at us, the potential message of the monument would be unclear as we would not know exactly how to respond to it. Meanwhile, the fact that he looks into the distance creates an impression that he is supermundane, elevated with his own far-reaching vision of the future, which only contributes to the monumentality of the statue.

In this regard, the idea behind this element can be well explained in the interview of Marek Suski, the Committee's treasurer and concurrently a Law and Justice party member:

> Red granite carpet is a thing connecting the two monuments [Kaczyński statue and Smolensk Tragedy monument]. It will be a bit of a suggestion that Mr. President, while walking on this red carpet, goes up the stairs, which are, on one hand, the plane ladder, and on the other hand, are a stairway to heaven. A symbol of this ascension to the stars, to heaven, to the nether world (Piekarski, 2018).

However, for some reason no red granite has been paved yet. Perhaps, nowadays it would be an imprudent strategic design choice given that the Smolensk Air Crash monument was installed perpendicularly to Lech Kaczyński, which would make the red granite road curved.

4.1.2. Social Semiotics of materiality

Stemming from Panofsky's tenets on iconography, forms and materials can communicate attitudes characteristic of the time and culture within which they are deployed (Panofsky, 1972). The statue of Lech Kaczyński is of bronze, and bronze has been one of the most traditional materials for sculpture since the ancient Greeks, hence bronze communicates 'tradition' or 'timelessness' (Abousnnouga and Machin, 2010, p.145). The same can be said of the granite that forms most of the Kaczyński monument pedestal. The use of these two materials directly influences the perception of the monument from the perspective of the semiotic mode describing the soft/hard dichotomy. The dark bronze part of the monument used in the making of the statue and the relief appears to be heavier and harder that the light granite pedestal by the effect of the choice of the colour, which underlines the President's solemnity.

The components of the pedestal of the monument merit detailed consideration. The pedestal consists of several blocks; however, its biggest part is a stable stocky cuboid block that generates readings of the monument as being significant yet down-to-earth. This is in contradistinction to the values highlighted by the thin round-shaped columns widely used in the classical tradition of elegance and nobility. The absence of ornate forms points at officiality and straightforwardness in the monument's appearance without belittling its elevation in both material and idealistic senses.

The four layers of different size constituting the pedestal could make an impression of the monument being irregular, which implies non-conformist connotations that do not correlate with the status of the late President. However, when looking at the pedestal as a whole, one can notice that its shape approaches that of a cubist vessel, or more precisely, a lantern similar to those found at funerals, being an integral part of the remembrance of the departed in the Polish tradition. In fact, for better visualisation of the similarity, Figure 1 depicts the monument shortly after the commemoration of the Warsaw Uprising. Despite the fact that the procedures of public commemoration which involve the monuments under study are not within the scope of this research, the lantern and the wreath (delivered on behalf of the President of RP, Andrzej Duda, to every important site located in the square) do demonstrate a symbolic continuity and contribute to the understanding of the Lech Kaczyński monument as of a site of veneration.

Having addressed the non-textual components of the analysis, we may look into the only piece of the monument that contains text. It is a bronze flag-like relief on the front side of the pedestal

with the following description: “LECH KACZYŃSKI, THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, THE MAYOR OF WARSAW” („*LECH KACZYŃSKI PREZYDENT RP, PREZYDENT WARSZAWY”*). The letters are salient, vertical, bold and strong, thus more stable than fonts that are lighter and slimmer. With reference to Van Leeuwen, such typefaces can be interpreted ambiguously: on one hand, they can suggest something ‘overbearing and immovable’ as opposed to something ‘more subtle’ (Van Leeuwen, 2005 cited in Abousnnouga and Machin, 2010, p.136). On the other hand, they can be attributed to the strong character of the figure whose name they bear, as well as their solidness and steadiness. Besides, the bronze material of the relief communicates the same meaning potential as the figure of Lech Kaczyński – timelessness.

The organisation of the text of the relief contributes to the above-mentioned meaning potential. The text is divided vertically into three parts. The name of the President Lech Kaczyński occupies the top line, being depicted in the largest font size present on the relief. Below, the positions in the government that he held, namely, the President of the Republic of Poland and the Mayor of Warsaw, are substantial too but smaller in size. This, together with the syntax of the text, suggests that the roles associated with his figure are less significant than Kaczyński himself, as an individual. On a related note, the relief does not mention either his life years, or the years of his service in either of the offices. Time constraints are omitted; time is irrelevant for someone who has left a mark in history.

4.1.3. Visual grammar

Despite the fact that according to the classification of semiotic modes the surface of a monument is concerned with its materiality, it explicitly influences the modality of the monument, via its articulation of detail. Applying this unit of analysis, one can observe a highly detailed elaboration of the figure of the President, seen in the numerous creases in his clothes and skin, salient knuckles and hair depicted in detail. This means that the monument’s modality is enhanced, thus the representation is realistic. The meaning potential coming through this true-life component may be to make the memory of the President more vivid.

Speaking of the monument’s transitivity, several curious details can be found in Kaczyński’s pose. One of them is the fact that the monument is dynamic. The statue’s left foot is placed farther in front of the right foot, whereas the upper half of the body remains still, which evokes the sensation of motion, otherwise such a pose could only be considered static if representing

the Orthodox stance (as in, for example, some sports). Thus, he allegedly makes a move towards something.

The second element of the pose concerns his hands, as each delivers a different meaning potential. His right hand is placed on his chest, a gesture that can be interpreted in at least two ways. The first would mean being sincere, truthful, genuine, a widespread phenomenon encrypted in many languages as an idiom, for example, 'with hand on heart' in English or *'z ręką na sercu*' in Polish. At the same time, this gesture is one of a few widely used in many countries during official events that involve listening to the national anthem or pledging allegiance to the nation with the President's oath, thus, it becomes an integral symbol of patriotism. This meaning potential was confirmed by Stanisław Szwechowicz, the author of the monument, who said that it would be best if this element could 'remind a fragment from an oath of office' (Polsat News, 2018), which does not necessarily exclude the first meaning potential.

As for the left hand, it is put down by his side. It is slightly relaxed yet straight and nestled to his trousers, which is not natural and takes some effort. This may be analogous to a soldier standing at attention, meaning being disciplined and ready for action.

4.2. Monument of the Victims of the 2010 Smolensk Tragedy

Unlike the monument of Lech Kaczyński, the Monument of the Victims of the 2010 Smolensk Tragedy designed by Jerzy Kalina was erected on the day of the eighth anniversary of the air crash.

Despite the fact that the Lech Kaczyński monument and the Smolensk Tragedy monument should be considered as two parts of one monumental ensemble, their architectural styles are not identical. While the former is doubtlessly monumental, the latter can be broadly defined as eclectic. Understanding eclecticism as a 'deliberate policy of selection and combination of the forms and concepts, often mutually incompatible, characterizing the style of their predecessors' (Murray and Murray, 1983, p.68), it is possible to find features of at least three styles put together. One is the monumental style, the same as in case of the Lech Kaczyński monument. It is represented by simplicity and regularity in its geometrical form, which is a semiotic mode itself suggesting the seriousness and formality of the depicted. It is coupled with the intended evocation of 'feelings that are in sympathy with its purpose' through the object's permanence, dignity, form (Elliott, 1964, p.52). Another style that the monument features is modernist

architecture. This involves the same use of geometric forms, embraces minimalism or absolute absence of ornamentation, and creates a feeling of spaciousness (RIBA, 2021). The third style to be found in the monument is high-tech. This style can be described as one that utilises new advances in technology and building materials by extensively using materials like glass and steel, ‘a contemporary functional design…informed by an awareness of the invisible, ephemeralized, informational energy and environmental revolutions that have subsequently created a new post-industrial world’ (Pawley, 1991, p.27).

The high-tech thing about the monument is the autonomous power station that accumulates electricity received from the solar battery placed on top of the monument and transferred to light 96 candles located under the grid and the glass floor at the bottom of the monument (Dziennik, 2018).

Following on from the design of the monument, it is not possible to apply the very same units of analysis used in the analysis of the Lech Kaczyński monument because it does not feature any anthropomorphic traits, therefore such semiotic modes as gaze, modality and transitivity are not available. However, as any other commemorative site it is full of symbolism which is communicated through remaining semiotic modes.

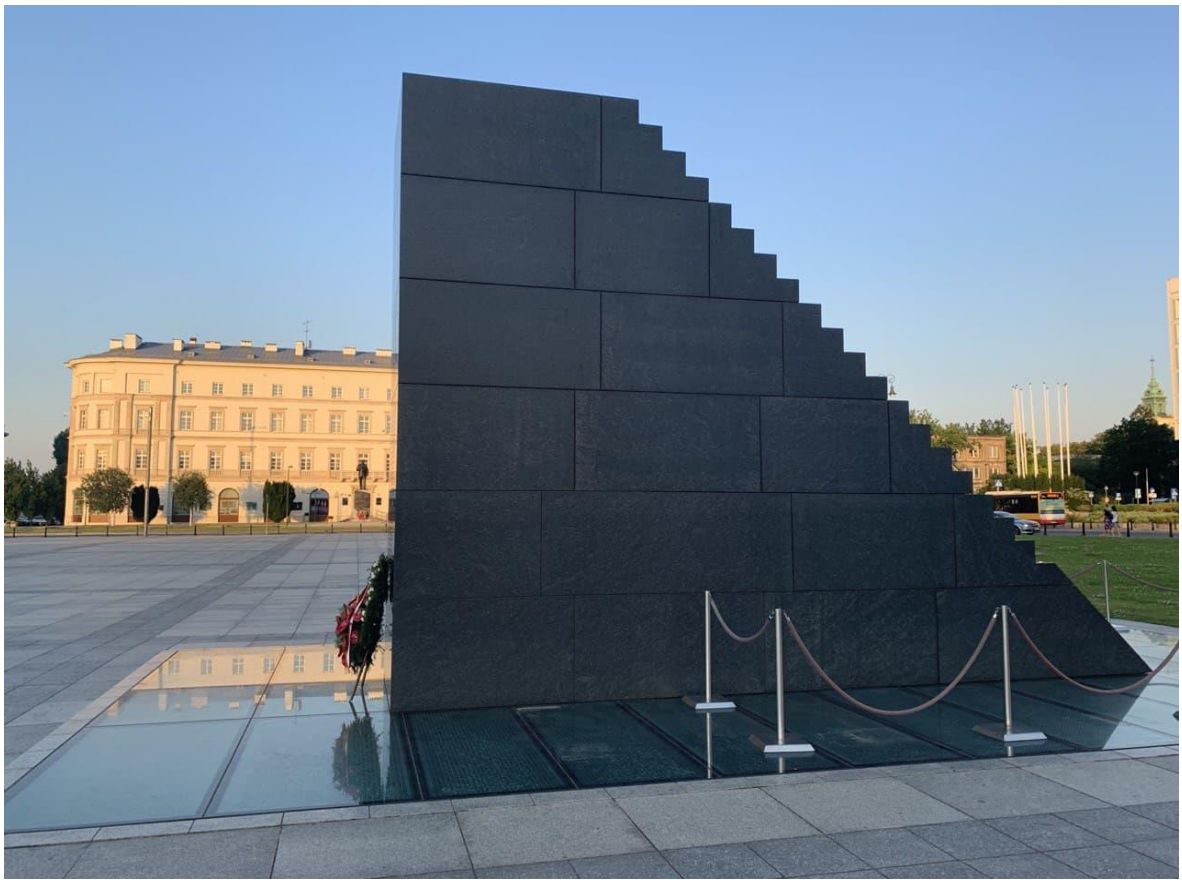

Figure 2. Smolensk Air Crash Monument (image credit: Sergei Ukhov, taken on 7 August 2020)

4.2.1. Semiotic modes communicating social relations

The monument is divided into two parts: aboveground and underground, respectively 6 m tall and 2 m deep. The square occupied by the monument is 14.5 m x 7.5 m (iPSB, no date). Finding the meaning potential behind the parameters of the monument might be problematic because these numbers bear no numerological value, and thus possess no semiotic significance. The underground part of the monument is an exception. It is generally accepted in many cultures that 2 m is the standard burial depth. Indeed, according to the architect's plan, the underground part of the monument is supposed to symbolise the notorious pits of death in Katyń, the place of the mass execution of Polish military officers and intelligentsia by the NKVD in 1940, known as the Katyń massacre. The commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the said event in the same location was the exact reason why Lech Kaczyński, his spouse and senior Polish officials boarded the Tu-154 aircraft of the Polish Air Force that never came back. Thus, this semiotic mode provides a certain continuity in the narrative victimising the Polish nation in the face of Russian dominance, as well as signifies Smolensk Oblast, a federal subject of the Russian Federation, to be one of the darkest geographical places in Polish history.

The height of the monument exceeds the height of a human being by 3-4 times, which makes it a substantial landmark standing out in the landscape of the square. This, with reference to the semiotic mode of interaction between the subject and the viewer, creates a low angle when one looks at the monument as a whole, however, when approaching the monument, the focus of the viewer is drawn to the parts of the monument that are viewed from either a straight or high angle. The former together with upward inclinations applies to the list of victims carved on the front side of the monument in the very centre, whereas the high angle is created when the viewer's attention is rivetted to the underground part of the monument, which symbolically suggests compassion and bereavement over the victims of the catastrophe.

4.2.2. Social Semiotics of materiality

Despite the complex material composition of the Smolensk Tragedy monument, three main constituting materials can be distinguished. Black granite forms the aboveground part of the monument; glass covers the underground part of it, and the iron grid is located below the glass

cover. All three are rather simple in the meaning potential they deliver to the viewer. As in the case of the Kaczyński monument, granite, as one of the oldest materials on earth used for commemoration, stands for immortality. The choice of its black variety is apparent too: black is the colour of mourning.

As for the glass cover, on one hand it may serve as a purely stylistic decision, a transparent layer that exposes 96 candles located in the underground level, standing for the 96 victims of the air crash. However, the use of glass might have a more sacred meaning. The Christian tradition has examples of storing holy relics in either transparent coffins made of glass or coffins with a glass lid, making relics visible to everyone. In this regard, the glass sheet may represent the lid of the abstract tomb, whilst the 96 victims are subjects to ostensible apotheosis.

Likewise, the meaning potential of the iron grid may be interpreted ambiguously. On one hand, it can be a way to reinforce the construction. On the other hand, the iron grid is a symbol of captivity, a place where one is kept prisoner against one's will, a place of human suffering, which echoes with the circumstances of the Katyń massacre. In light of this, victims of the air crash may be seen as people not only deified but also raised to the status of martyrs.

All three major materials appear hard in their nature and their look, which makes the monument as well as the memory of the victims stand unflinching. By contrast, light-colour plastic candles come off as soft, which suggests the fragility of human life.

Speaking of the shape of the monument, it has several meaning potentials, and the architect himself has disclosed most of them:

> I wanted this plane gangway – dark, that simultaneously looks like a foundation, like a catafalque, like a foundation for some other structure that leads to the other realm, – to be something waiting for those who are gone (Dziennik, 2018).

Therefore, the meaning potentials of the form may be divided into two groups: the profane and the sacred, loaning from Eliade. The profane part relates to the visual associations with the circumstances of the tragedy, be that a plane gangway or, as mentioned in the Polish Biographical Online Dictionary, a vertical stabiliser of the plane, an element of the wreckage that became ubiquitously identified with the air crash (iPSB, no date). The sacred part relates to the souls' ascension to heaven, yet again a strong religious connotation doubled by the 'holiness' of victims of the air crash. Typefaces of the monument harmoniously contribute to the sacred meaning. The letters used for two inscriptions, an alphabetic list of the victims in

front and the one reading "IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE SMOLENSK TRAGEDY ON 10 APRIL 2010" („*PAMIĘCI OFIAR TRAGEDII SMOLEŃSKIEJ 10 KWIETNIA 2010*") are thin and tall, that suggests evanescence and subtlety (as opposed to the font used in the Kaczyński monument).

4.3. Spatial arrangement

Lastly, analysing the two monuments located in Piłsudski Square, I would like to draw attention to their spatial arrangement. Following the breakdown of social semiotic modes originally suggested by Abousnnouga and Machin, the 'distance/proximity' mode, defining aspects of the spatial intercourse between the subject and the viewer, constitutes part of the group of semiotic modes that communicate social relations. As previously discussed, I find it important to include and examine ways the subjects under study relate to the surroundings.

Similar to how categories of analysis are broken down for the convenience of understanding the structure of analysis, but eventually should not be separated because they are complementary to each other, monuments located in one square should be treated the same way. This involves not only the monuments under study but also those that are out of the research scope, because they communicate their own meaning potentials that create an impact on objects located within reach. Secondly, monuments in my study are not geographically disseminated, rather situated compactly, thus they create a coherent and cohesive ensemble.

Despite the fact that the Kaczyński monument and the Smolensk Tragedy monument belong to the same category of the Smolensk monuments erected in 2018, a not less significant interrelation occurs between the Kaczyński monument and the Piłsudski monument. Both monuments are located on the Warsaw Garrison Command's side of the square; however, their location in the square differs.

As a result of administrative manipulations, Piłsudski Square was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Masovian Voivode together with two allotments on the eastern side of the square, discharging car parking functions. The Kaczyński monument is located in one of those two allotments, right in front of the building of the Warsaw Garrison Command, which still makes him a full-fledged part of the architectural ensemble of the square. As for the Piłsudski monument, even though it is located only 65 m away from the Kaczyński monument, his prominence is diminished by the fact that it is 'hidden' in Michała Tokarzewskiego-Karaszewicza Street and locked by two car parks. This makes an impression that the person

whose name the square bears does not belong there compositionally, which can be observed in the Figure 1.

Secondly, the relation between size and power has been mentioned within the framework of each selected monument. However, the size parameter in the case of the Lech Kaczyński monument obtains an enhanced meaning potential of dominance if compared to the size of the statue of Józef Piłsudski. Despite the fact both figures are equal in their height, the overall difference constitutes 0.5 m in height by means of an extra crown of three layers of cobblestone under the Kaczyński monument, which adds to his spatial dominance over Piłsudski, and as mentioned before, provides references to the classical tradition.

Thirdly, should Hallidayan communicative functions be applied to the Piłsudski monument, it will fall under the demand type, which makes it the antipode of the Kaczyński monument. The figure's gaze is directed at whoever is in front of him, asking for interaction. On three of four facets of the cuboid pedestal, the viewer can find quotes on Polish history, dignity and democracy that are most likely to be the messages communicated through the Piłsudski's gaze. The front facet says: "Józef Piłsudski (1867 – 1935), I Marszałek Polski" („*Józef Piłsudski, (1867 – 1935), 1st Polish Marshal*"). This provides another notable difference between the two monuments: Piłsudski is conditioned by time constraints. Mentioning his life years suggests he is earthly, temporal, part of history, whereas no life years appear on the Kaczyński monument. Hence, Kaczyński appears to be transcendent, eternal, part of living memory.

The analysis of the Smolensk monuments has shown that several units communicate multiple Christianity-related meaning potentials. However, those are drawn from separate units of analysis and sometimes are not easily detected. Most obviously the object that elucidates the biggest extent of 'holiness' is the Pope's Cross, erected at the place of Pope St John Paul II's mass in 1979.

Interestingly, if we look at the map of Piłsudski square and imaginatively link the Pope's Cross, the Monument of the President Lech Kaczyński and the Monument of Victims of Smolensk Tragedy on 10 April 2010, the result will be an almost perfect equilateral triangle. Its neat geometry designates centrality of the three objects, in so doing as if leaving other landmarks located in the square on its periphery. In addition, the number of central objects connotes one of the most symbolic Christian attributes, the Holy Trinity.

4.4. Conclusion

One of the first conclusions to be drawn from the analysis of the Smolensk monuments is the abundance of meaning potentials related to the Christian view of the world and religious practices carried out within the Christian mindset. A few categories of the analysis like elevation, gaze, proximity create a sense of a holy place and thus communicate sacredness, the main discourse. The choice of materials, mainly bronze and granite, adds to the main discourse, standing for the timelessness/tradition of the figures they embody.

There are two related discourses that, in my opinion, concordantly fit in the domain of sacredness, yet need to be distinguished. The first one, mostly found in the units of analysis of the Smolensk Tragedy monument, is martyrdom. This discourse, deeply encrypted in the Christian mindset, victimises secular people deceased in the air crash, and given their high social status in the Polish society as of 2010, defines the victimisation trait on behalf of the whole Polish nation, provided historical continuity of victims of the Katyń massacre who belonged to it.

Chapter 5. Analysing Independence Square

In this chapter, I carry out the analysis of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site located on the adjacent Heavenly Hundred Heroes Alley, where boundaries with Independence square are non-existent. The location of the commemoration site lies at the place where Independence square and the Heroes of Heavenly Hundred Alley merge into one. This place is notoriously known to be the location where approximately 120 people were killed and over 1500 were injured as a result of bloody clashes between protesters and the police between November 2013 and February 2014 (Maino, 2018). Therefore, the attached space is organised as the site commemorating a tragic event.

Compositionally, there are three main permanent components representing the style of funerary art. A wooden cross is in the middle of the composition right under the Flower Clock. In the very centre of the cross there is a paper with the text of the ninth station of the cross, referring to the day of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The choice of the station is not accidental: the third fall of Jesus is accompanied by his words 'none of us knows when our road reaches its end'[2]. Thus, the text on the cross creates a powerful link between the suffering of Christ and of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes. Moreover, this symbolism spreads to the spatial arrangement: the commemoration site is located at the end of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes Alley.

Slightly to the front of the cross, there are three large black granite vertical rectangular plates and a small horizontal one, each containing information specific to the commemoration of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes. The central plate depicts the Ukrainian Coat of Arms and an engraved photographic fragment of a protester holding the Ukrainian flag. There are two inscriptions. The first one read "ETERNAL MEMORY TO THE HEAVENLY HUNDRED HEROES" ("*VICHNA PAMIAT HEROIAM NEBESNOI SOTNI*"). The second one is a line from the refrain of the national anthem: "We will give our souls and bodies for our freedom" ("*Dushu i tilo my polozhym za nashu svobodu*"). The second plate located to the right depicts the lyrics of a traditionally mourning Lemko/Carpathian song, "The duck is swimming down the Tysa" ("*Plyve kacha po Tysyni*"). During the Euromaidan, the song became its official requiem, however before the Revolution of Dignity it was also considered to be an insurgent song. The third plate to the left depicts another prominent symbol of the Euromaidan, the poem

[2] This translation is my own.

"Mother, don't cry, I'll be back in spring" ("*Mamo, ne plach, ya povernus' vesnoiu*") written by a Ukrainian poetess Oksana Maksimishin-Korabel during the Euromaidan. The last one depicts an inspirational quatrain dedicated to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes written by Viktor Medvid. To the left and to the right of the central plates there are smaller ones made of black granite too, excluding those that exist in the form of framed photography. Each plate stands for a hero from the Heavenly Hundred and provides their photo and personal information: first and last names, occupation, years of life and place of birth.

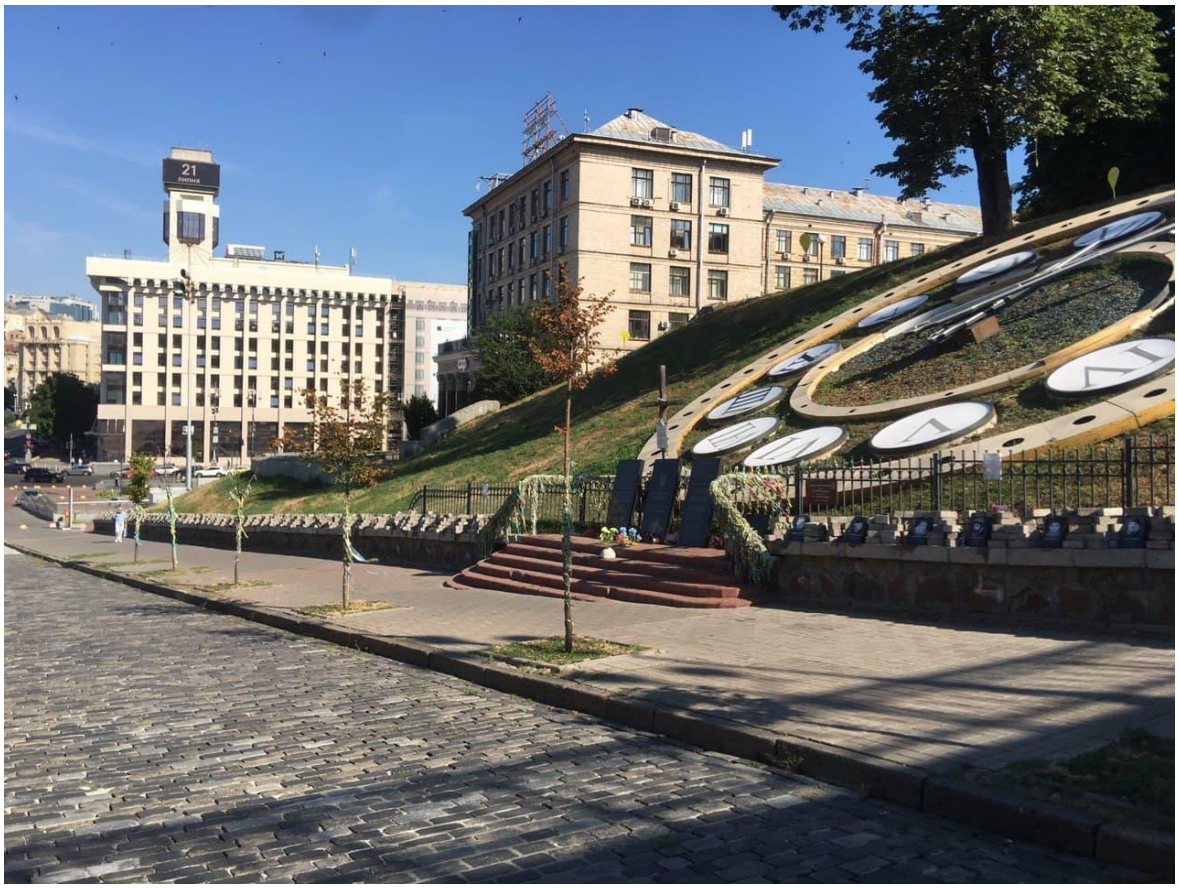

Figure 3. The Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site (image credit: Oleksii Rudenko, taken on 21 July 2020)

Probably, the major thing to mention when referring to the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred commemoration site is that it emerged as a counter-monument, featuring some of the counter-monumental characteristics, initially being transitory rather than permanent, actively engaging viewers' attention and participation, being a size unconventional for monuments, amongst other things. However, as a result of the Euromaidan the counter-monument no longer had a

reason to be in opposition to the oppressor in the government and soon was granted the status of historical monument 'of city significance' and became subject to state protection according to the catalogue of monuments of cultural heritage of the Kyiv City Hall (Maino, 2018).

Given that, even though the commemoration site became one of the most representative examples of the new foundational myth communicator, analysing it from the position of its original status rather than its present status helps to reconcile the choice of a number of semiotic modes used in its creation.

5.1. Semiotic modes communicating social relations

By size, the plates appear either small or large. The small ones are located on the granite partition-wall with the height of roughly half of average human height. Thus, they are situated either below the belt or at its level. This means that if the viewer was looking closely at the plate, they would have to bend towards the plate or kneel down, either would evoke a gesture of paying a tribute of admiration or respect to the dead. Likewise, if it was a funeral, the action would be the same.

The same applies to the central large plates. Together with six layers of cobblestone, they are more or less equivalent to human height, however, the high angle would be created. From this perspective, the size of the site's components and their whereabouts urges the viewer to be attentive to detail, considerate and respectful towards people who fell in the course of the protests.

Given that the plates bear photographic information of people and their facial expressions, they are capable of interacting with the viewer on the interpersonal level. Therefore, it is relevant to analyse them from the perspective of gaze.

The pictures of the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred are their intravitam photos extrapolated to the granite surface and they are a demand type. This means that their gaze aims directly at the viewer as if the person would be looking at the camera lens when a picture of one would be taken. There is no single mood expressed in their faces: some people are smiling, some are serious. The meaning potential this unit might have is that despite their 'heroic' status in the Ukrainian society, they do not necessarily have to be heroic looking to contribute to a change for better. They are the same ordinary human beings that express a variety of emotions, the same as the viewer looking at them. This semiotic mode entails the one of modality, for photographic images by default belong to the category of high modality. The meaning potential

of life-like images stands for the representation of people as part of living memory, not yet distant history which none can relate to.

Speaking of the proximity of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site, it is located on the eastern part of Independence Square, which makes it spatially peripheral. Besides, it is one of the lowest landmarks in the square dimmed by several other spots, predominantly the 61 m tall victory column Independence Monument being the most prominent and the most central. This means that the number of meaning potentials created by the commemoration site's location and its interplay with other objects is very scarce; however, there are a few things to be noted.

The first thing that catches the eye is the Flower Clock, located just behind the commemoration site on the hillside. Before I have mentioned that a few units of analysis of the commemoration site communicate timelessness. Considering the clock as a part of the site's ensemble might point at the viewer's reflection over the concept of time, for example, its fluidity. Moreover, given the site's general character, the spirit of the imminence of death inevitably projects onto the living viewer, which exacerbates the impression the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site gives.

Secondly, the commemoration site is located both on Independence square and the Heavenly Hundred Heroes Alley, there is no distinction between them at that spot. However, the street has much to offer. Let alone its name and the commemoration site under state protection in the beginning, the more the viewer walks up the street, the more disorganised commemoration sites from less sound materials they encounter. Wooden crosses, flags, photos, lanterns. All these can be found along the street up to the Ecumenical church of St Archistratig Michael and Ukrainian new martyrs of Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, that itself is a monument to the Euromaidan, although located relatively far to be considered as part of the square.

I perceive this peculiarity as a two-way invitation; it only depends on where the viewer starts to walk. If the viewer starts from the commemoration site on Independence square, they are invited to, metaphorically, go deeper into the Euromaidan's domain, but physically, go up street or 'ascend' to the Church or the Revolution of Dignity Museum which is closely located. Alternatively, if the viewer heads towards Independence square down the Heavenly Hundred Heroes Street, they are invited to take a look at the place where it all happened, once they have passed numerous formative sites.

5.2. Social Semiotics of materiality

There are three major materials present in the commemoration site. Black granite, as discussed in the previous chapter, communicates the tradition of mourning and eternality, backed up by the fact that the plates are similar to gravestones, which immediately creates associations with the afterlife beyond the temporally profane.

The second material is brick. Piles of brick separate Heroes' plates from each other on three sides. This could hypothetically stand for the imitation of brick-lined graves, although this was not common after the 19th century at least in the Western tradition (Riordan and Mitchell, 2011, p.91). Alternatively, the brick construction around each person commemorated might be a reference to extemporised barricades, meaning the protesters' resistance against the police.

The third remarkable material is wood, which forms the eminent cross located in the very centre of the composition above all other components of the site. The fact that the cross is wooden may suggest that it is only a temporary solution, as it often happens with counter-monuments. On the other hand, a wooden cross may communicate simplicity, irrelevance of grandiloquence, something coming from the ordinary folk, in such a way underlining the grassroots origin of the Revolution of Dignity.

Figure 3 depicting the site dedicated to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes as of July 2020 features other objects that contribute to the overall perception of the site. These include numerous yellow and blue ribbons adorning the railings and the poles growing from under the pavement, several safety helmets used by the protesters for protection, lanterns and artificial forget-me-not flowers. However, their presence, as it happens in case of counter-monuments, is transitory and prone to damage from the environment, therefore there is no guarantee that the composition will remain the same.

There are other semiotic modes related to the materiality of the commemoration site which point out its original counter-monumental nature. The way the regularity of the commemoration site would be described is highly irregular because none of the elements of the composition are aligned. For example, not all the heroes are represented in form of a black granite plate for some are depicted only in the framed photo; or the centre of the commemoration site is comprised of three vertical large granite plates which could be regular if it was not for the fourth horizontal plate to the right of the trio.

Fonts used in all plates vary, but two dominant ones can be distinguished. One is tall thin letters, as discussed, which are likely to mean loftiness, heavenliness. The other one is aesthetical slanted rounded letters. They appear in plates that depict writings by authors that are cultural phenomena mostly associated with the Euromaidan and its heritage. This could have two meaning potentials, where one is a 'human touch' as opposed to the formality of the absence of slant, and the other one could be assumed to be standing for citations, as is traditionally done in literature.

It is not easy to say how the future Heavenly Hundred Heroes memorial, being part of the Revolution of Dignity Museum, will change the proxemics of the site. It is likely that the so-called 'two-way invitation' idea will remain as the Revolution of Dignity Museum will be more incorporated into Independence Square's premises. However, the project will eliminate all the traces of chaotic human touch; there will be no pictures, no crosses, no safety helmets but a long white institutionalised wall resulting in decreased emotionality.

5.3. Conclusion

The analysis of semiotic modes found in the Heavenly Hundred Heroes commemoration site leads to the determination of the following discourses communicated by the site. Mourning is the first one, for it is related to the location of the commemoration site, the place of the killing of people named the Heavenly Hundred Heroes. A number of semiotic modes other than its location point at it: the choice of colour and materials of the plates stretching across the pavement of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes, imitating the image of a cemetery and reconstructing the appropriate atmosphere; the high angle created by the height of the plates, which either makes the viewer look down to the fallen or invites one to pay tribute to them by kneeling down.

Another powerful discourse communicated by the commemoration site is sacredness, which is visible through multiple examples of the implementation of Christian references and uniting them with the Heavenly Hundred Heroes. It is found in the name of the group of people and the naming of the alley after them, associating their way with that of Jesus Christ; the use of Christian procedural attributes like a cross and lanterns; the Ecumenical church of St Archistratig Michael and Ukrainian new martyrs of Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church located nearby, and others. The last element, even though it does not belong to the composition of the commemoration site, identifies the Heavenly Hundred Heroes as martyrs, therefore martyrdom is another discourse complementary to the sacredness, adding that those people are worth

veneration by virtue of suffering oppression for the sake of truth and a just cause similar to the Son of God.

Chapter 6. Discussing results

Juxtaposing the discourses detected in the process of the analysis of semiotic modes, there is a great deal of resemblance between the Polish and the Ukrainian cases.

In my opinion, the main discourse of both places, where each disseminate new foundational myths, is sacredness. This form of legitimising someone's power is traditional, because history has seen numerous examples when monarchs were referred to as the Lord's Anointed, or Egyptian pharaohs bore the title 'Son of Re' and represented the might of heaven on earth by virtue of such continuity. Similarly, both foundational myths exploit a large number of religious attributes that iconise the protagonists of the myths and thus legitimise their right to be in the position of power holders, even though it is done mostly by means of secular methods.

On top of that, the sacred discourse is supplemented by the representation of protagonists of both myths as martyrs, however the origin of such martyrdom in each case is slightly different. In case of the Smolensk Tragedy myth, martyrdom is defined not only on account of the victims of the air crash but also the association with the victims of the Katyń massacre, therefore their loss is more than a tragedy of utmost contemporary national importance, it is a loss of the elite that contributed to the establishment and strengthening of independent Poland in its historical struggle. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the external enemy against whom martyrs fought is not explicitly defined, martyrdom is presented per se. Another point to be made is that the Smolensk monuments communicate the trait of victimisation, officially naming the 96 people 'victims of the Smolensk Tragedy', which implicitly communicates the justification of the reinforcement of positions of the political agents who were behind the creation of the Smolensk monuments, so that being a strong and self-sufficient political unit shall not allow such things happen again.

As for the Heavenly Hundred Heroes, their martyrdom is conditioned by democratic values and the struggle against the authoritarian oppressor within their country. In this case, the nation's external enemy is not identified directly as represented by monuments, however, historical notes on the struggle for the independence of Ukraine from the geographical neighbours' imperialistic claims are abundant in Independence Square. In this vein, what makes the case of the Ukrainian foundational myth different from the Polish one, is that the Heavenly Hundred Heroes are not officially referred to as victims, rather defenders of the justice.

However, this fact does not dim the discourse of mourning communicated by the commemoration site. The location where people were actually killed creates a powerful emotional appeal which is impossible to ignore. None of public feasts that used to be celebrated in Independence Square before the Euromaidan have been taking place there since 2014, because it would be as inappropriate as celebrating happy moments in a cemetery. In this view, even though some of the semiotic modes existing in the Smolensk monuments suggest the meaning potential of mourning, the historical record and performative functions of the location makes the recreation of the tragedy impossible, therefore the Smolensk monuments are devoid of such discourse.

The aforementioned discourses appealing to historical justice and religious and emotional attachment are some of the main components of foundational myths and are visible in the monuments that communicate them. Moreover, they allow the myths of the Smolensk Tragedy and the Heavenly Hundred Heroes to perfectly blend into the canvas of new post-Communist mythologies generalised by Vladimir Tismaneanu, who identified such features in political myths as the adaption of long-denied religious values often to only conserve power, using traditional forms of nationalist manipulation and mobilisation, and capitalising on grievances, all of which can be found in cases of both foundational myths.

As the analysis has shown, these provisions are not subject to being conditioned by the status of the political agents in charge of creating such myths. The discourses of the Smolensk Tragedy myth lobbied by senior political officials from Law and Justice are almost identical to those of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes myth which emerged among Ukrainian grassroots from the very beginning during the Euromaidan. What is worth reiteration is that the Smolensk Tragedy myth was intended to be presented as a popular myth, given that the main material constituents of the myth were erected at the place of the mass mobilisation of the Polish nation around religious values, imbued by the Pope's visit in 1979. However, the truly interested party cannot be mistaken for the interest of Polish grassroots owing to the look of the statue of the late Polish president. Therefore, regardless of the approach to the public commemoration of figures and events pertinent to foundational myths in post-Communist societies, be that top-down with authoritarian inclinations or bottom-up with democratic aspirations, the semiotic modes encrypted into the fabric of the design of monuments imposed at the discretion of political agents produce highly similar discourses that legitimise the new power in the countries considered in my research. This means that the social semiotics critical discourse analysis of

monuments can serve as an efficient tool of identifying and explaining power channels in the public space.

Conclusion

Having been long interested in the politics of history and memory in Central and Eastern Europe as well as observing the dynamics of the post-Communist transformation in these countries, I have come up with a research hypothesis which formed the basis of my master's dissertation. The central argument is as follows:

The discourses of foundational myths enshrined by political agents in the monuments under study may demonstrate a certain resemblance regardless of the political agents' societal status.

In order to test this hypothesis, I have focused on two cases presented by two neighbouring countries with similar socio-historical backgrounds yet contrasting political reconfigurations that happened around the same time, those being the 2014 Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine and the electoral triumph of Law and Justice in Poland in 2015. The new power holders almost immediately started to secure their leading positions by disseminating dominant narratives constituting their foundation myths, the spiritual core of their essence, which penetrated the urban cultural landscape of the capitals and other cities in both countries. Among all tools of the politics of memory available to the new Polish and Ukrainian authorities and applied over the past several years, I find the erection of monuments lobbied and sponsored by them the most intriguing, for the societal statuses of political actors who stood behind the creation of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes in Independence Square in Kyiv and monuments dedicated to Lech Kaczyński and victims of the Smolensk Air Crash of 10 April 2010 were the opposite. In this light, I sought to identify the messages communicated by the monuments under review and the extent of their similarity against the backdrop of the contrasting nature and goals of the political agents, which formed the two parts of the research question posed in my dissertation.

To answer this question, I have resorted to the Social Semiotics approach from within Critical Discourse Analysis, which had previously been successfully applied to the study of British war monuments by Gillian Abousnnouga and David Machin, and thus was used as a blueprint for my research. Building on their classification of semiotic modes present in monuments and their further division into three major groups, those being semiotic resources that communicate social relations, social semiotics of materiality and visual grammar, through their interpretation I have been able to identify sets of meaning potentials which in their turn informed certain discourses.

The results have shown that the discourses communicated by monuments in Kyiv and Warsaw demonstrated a high degree of resemblance. The main discourse that is presented by multiple semiotic modes and that is visible through multiple examples of the implementation of Christian references is the sacredness of what constitutes the power holders' foundational myth. Other discourses, including grievance and martyrdom, despite the fact that they belong to the religious domain, demonstrate diverging traits.

Nevertheless, the ensemble of these discourses entirely fits in the framework of new post-Communist mythologies that operate distinctive characteristics laid out by Vladimir Tismaneanu, which are the exploitation of grievances, the acceptance of long-denied religious values, the imposition of the narrative 'fatherland in danger' and other.

Despite the fact that these characteristics were determined in 1998, the analysis carried out in my dissertation has shown that the use of those narratives has not changed in more than twenty years, which points to the continuity of a certain template that is used in the creation of all foundational myths in Central and Eastern Europe. That said, the fact that the societal status of the political agents who are in charge of the creation of such foundational myths does not significantly alter the discourses of the foundational myths communicated by the monuments under review substantiates the research hypothesis.

This thesis has demonstrated that the analysis of semiotic modes in monuments carried out within the framework of the Social Semiotics dimension of Critical Discourse Analysis proves viable in the evaluation of overarching characteristics of the socio-political life in Central and Eastern Europe as per a comparative study of Polish and Ukrainian cases.

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