

Abstract:

False heroes. Removal of communist monuments in Prague after year 1989

This thesis will examine monuments, established to promote communist ideology, that were removed after the Velvet Revolution and in the next few years of the 1990s in an attempt to symbolically abolish former regime.

Firstly it will outline the historical context. Based on contemporary periodicals and public politicians speeches it will show social discourse regarding relation towards communism and notions what the new regime should be like. After it will deal with the concept of historical memory, places of memory and their change and rewriting. It will also compare this monument removal with iconoclasm that accompanied other revolutions.

In its main part the thesis will follow several cases of monument displacements of statues of heroes and leaders, constituting events and artifacts – symbols. It will attempt to demonstrate how the monuments disappeared from the public space and how these events and the removal itself helped construction of historical memory besides the creation of monuments that are supposed to commemorate communist totalitarianism. It will also mention existing monuments that were put up during years 1948 – 1989, that stir up discussion to this day and it will touch how other countries of the Eastern Bloc dealt with communist monuments.

Key words:

monuments, communism, postcommunism, public space, Velvet Revolution, 1990s, Prague