

### **DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

The aim of the research project is to determine the transformation of semantics, aesthetic and ideological patterns of architectural monuments in communist Albania, and what part of it has been preserved and is present today in the collective memory. The study will take into account the opposition between the critical analysis of artifacts ideological aesthetics and verification of the actual landscape of Albanian political symbols in the time of socialism, and the mechanisms of collective memory reconstructive elements of the past in the system of representation. Through analysis of the semantics of monumental art and the function of the figure of a hero and its ideological and aesthetic transformation I will point out synchronous functionalization of three different representational systems that present different variants of development of the national discourse in Albania. The main objective of this study is to analyze the symbolic elements of the new order – monuments and other structural elements of the new public space, but also changes in the micro-space (the private sphere).

Albanian public space allows to design the structure of identity within the Albanian cultural tradition, centered around the historical discourse, which in turn constitutes a central paradigm of national culture. In a symbolic construction of self-definition processes, under the new ideological and aesthetic order, as shown by the Albanian case study, a central component has been built upon a visual representation of the hero (leader), which can be categorized in three semantic groups: *Stalinist*, *Enverian* and *Skanderbegian*, that influenced the process of construction of aesthetic determinants of the Albanian public space during the communist period (1944-1985).

In order to answer these questions I will conduct around 40 in-depth interviews with elements of narrative interview in Albanian language. For selection of the study group I will use institutional networks (University of Tirana, the Albanian Academy of Sciences, the Society of Writers and Artists of Albania) and private social networks. The development of these networks will be a part of the research trips to Albania, as well as the activities carried out before the beginning of the research (February and June 2017). At each stage of the research project the results and techniques will be discussed with Albanian researchers, in order to avoid methodological errors. In the preparatory phase I will analyze available studies, monographs, scientific articles and background information about the history of Albania, the Albanian history of individual cities, artistic and cultural traditions, with a special emphasis on socialist realism.

The intent of this project is to fill a gap in the area of research on the socialist system of the Albanian representation of artifacts, architecture and urban planning and ways of perception of urban space with a special emphasis on Tirana and other Albanian cities, which have a great ideological importance.

By filling in the missing elements in the study of socialist space in Albania, this project not only deepens the knowledge in the area of discipline, but also brings new research optics to more general studies on the construction of new systems of symbols, or politicizing public space. The project can also contribute to the development of anthropological research on the identity of the place and space, as well as cultural studies related to the semantics of power.