

K E N O P S I A
Sarajevo War Tunnel Museum

Ena Kukić

Ena Kukić, BSc

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Andreas Lechner

Institut für Gebäudelehre

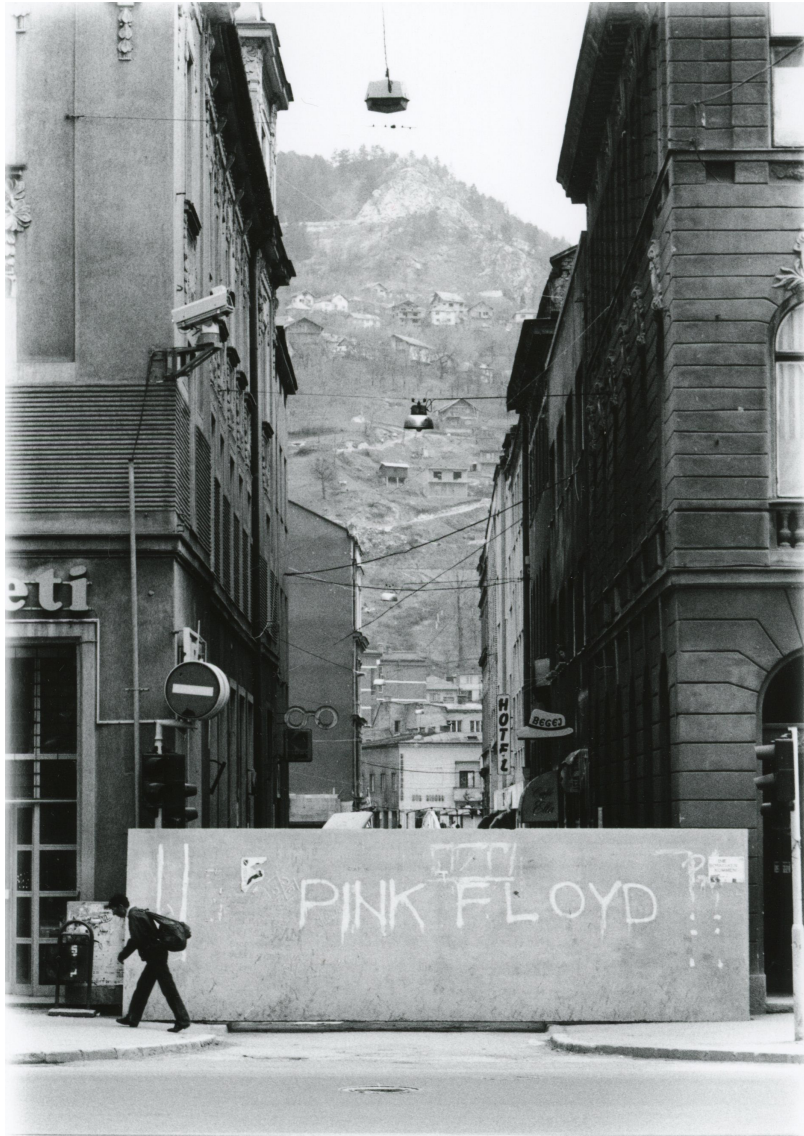
Graz, October 2017

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Graz, 17 October 2017

Ena Kukić



*And no one showed us to the land
And no one knows the wheres or whys
But something stirs and something tries
And starts to climb towards the light*

Pink Floyd, Echoes

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1. PROLOGUE

K E T A [noun]: an image that inexplicably leaps back into your mind from the distant past¹



1.1 Backstage

The Sarajevo Tunnel is an underground passage constructed in 1993, during the Siege of Sarajevo, in the midst of the Bosnian War. It was built by the Bosnian Army in order to link the city of Sarajevo, which was entirely cut off by Serbian forces, with the Bosnian-held territory on the other side of the Sarajevo Airport, an area controlled by the United Nations. The tunnel allowed food, war supplies, and humanitarian aid to come into the city, and enabled exit from the besieged area. The Tunnel D-B linked Sarajevo neighbourhoods Dobrinja (D) and Butmir (B), and the entrances were hidden in the ordinary family houses on both sides.

Overly romanticized tunnel stories, as well as the popular name “Tunnel of Hope”, contribute to the credential of the overall positive history of this place during the war. However, the truth is somewhat different, and the dark side of the tunnel is the other real determinant of its character. This backstage of the siege was the place where black market flourished even in the worst moments of the struggle.² After the war, the entrance to the tunnel and part of the route were turned into an unofficial museum by Kolar family. Most of the passage has been demolished and flooded with land. After the authorities saw the economic and political potential of this unusual museum, they decided to officially support it and legally allow the Kolar family to manage it, as long as the facts exhibited in the museum are strictly controlled and free from unwanted connotations. The problem was also the improper and arbitrary management of wartime heritage by Kolar family because organizations for the protection of architectural heritage were not included in the project from the beginning. When the site is visited today, it is impossible to distinguish authentic parts from those added a few years later. These issues, along with the touristification of the site traumatized by war and shaping war facts in line with ruling politics make this institution i.e. the museum quite problematic.

This project aims to highlight the history of the tunnel through factual analysis and offer an architectural solution for both sides of the tunnel with the aim of contributing to transitional justice and the proper management of historical legacy. One of the author’s goals is finding closure, given that her first memories were created in this tunnel.

Footnotes PROLOGUE

1 neologism invented by John Koenig in his Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows, written in order to fill a hole in the language - to give a name to emotions we all might experience but don't yet have a word for; <http://www.dictionaryofobscuresorrows.com/>, 8.10.2017

2 see Andreas (2008), p. 12

2. BENEATH

Do you remember the first days of our lives? Did you forget in the bloom of memories? Someone looked at you and spoke the name that you forgot. Just for laugh, he says, just for laugh.

Are you bold enough to see what's coming next from the days of your past, from your past? They always talked about it with a smile. That's the way it should be, I guess.

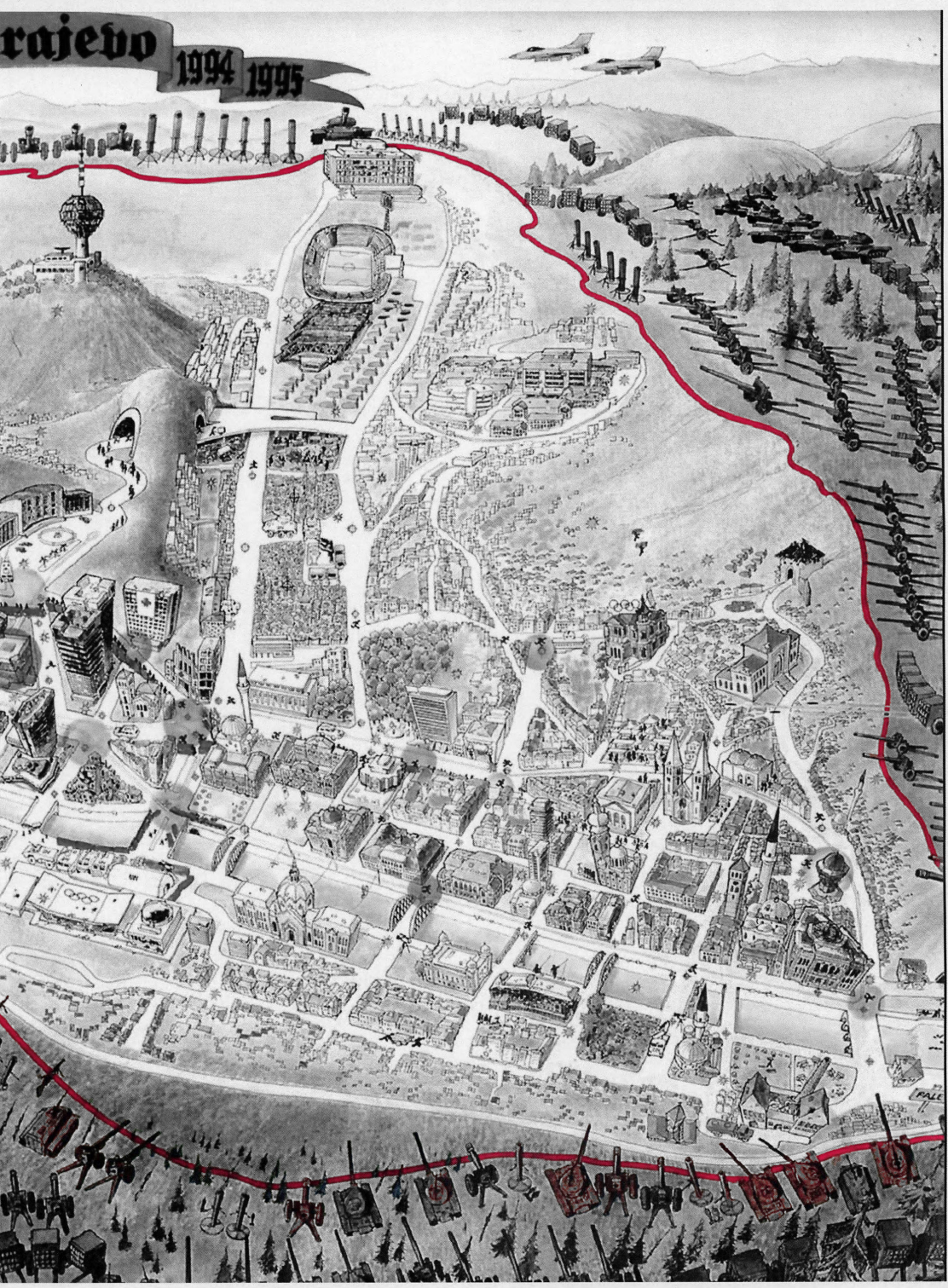
Your hands don't have that touch anymore. You're feeling something new, something familiar again. And you ask yourself: where did I hear this question before, so many times, so many times?

Basheskia & Edward EQ, *Forest Tale*



rajevo

1994 1995





2.1 Paradise lost

Tito was the closest thing to God in a seemingly godless country. If the Fall of Man was the transition of the first man from a state of innocent obedience to God to a state of guilty disobedience, what happened in Yugoslavia was the Fall of Nation.

“We have spilt an ocean of blood for the brotherhood and unity of our people and we shall not allow anyone to touch or destroy it from within.”¹, said Josip Broz Tito on multiple occasions introducing the Brotherhood and Unity policy in 1963, in an effort to eliminate tensions between ethnic groups in Yugoslavia.

However, destruction from within started shortly after Tito's death, by strengthening of nationalism and corruption scandals. Serbian nationalist politics resulted in the secession of Slovenia and Croatia. After that, the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina proclaimed independence of the Republic of BiH on a referendum. Even prior to the recognition of the state by the international community, Serbian military forces came to the Bosnian territory and attacked cities on the border with Serbia, murdering and exterminating the population.

On April 6, 1992, the day when the European Community countries recognize the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, partisan attacks on Sarajevo commenced. Part of the capital's population decided to join the aggressor, which was often used as an argument to falsely present this war as a civil one. The siege of the city begun on May 2, 1992, leaving residents without telephone communications, water, electricity and gas, and the free parts of the city were completely dissipated from the rest of the world. Ocean of blood was to be spilt once again, and the longitudinally structured town in the valley was an easy target for attackers from the surrounding hills. The survival of the city was in the hands of unarmed citizens. The stake of this struggle was the entire state.



2.2 Hotspot Aerodrom

Defined as a network access point, hotspot also stands for painful and irritated skin area. In safety management, hotspots are areas where collisions between aircraft on the ground tend to occur. In a way, Sarajevo Airport fit all of the definitions.

The airport in the besieged city was under the control of the aggressor from the very beginning of the war. During a sudden visit by the French president Mitterrand in June 1992, instead of the anticipated and desperately awaited military intervention by European forces, it was proposed that the airport be placed under the control of the UN, with the aim of bringing the planes carrying humanitarian aid there.² Sarajevo residents should not die hungry.

A month later, the UN took over the airport from the Serb forces. During the entire siege, the airport welcomed around 30 landings per day, more than nowadays in peace. Due to the aggression, there was no specified flight schedule, and the airline was bearing the official name of *Maybe airlines*. The passengers embarked on flights under sniper fire and access to the aircraft was only given to UN diplomats, humanitarians and UN soldiers.

Thanks to the UNHCR, 1500 tons of food was weekly delivered to the city. With nearly 13,000 flights and lasting longer than 3 years, this was the longest humanitarian air bridge for the supply of a besieged city. Without this assistance, the inhabitants of Sarajevo would not have survived and be able to provide resistance. The aggressor was aware that this umbilical cord had to be cut off - but in the meantime they actively participated in the black market activities.³

Crossing the airport runway was strictly prohibited to civilians and soldiers of the BiH Army. The other side meant freedom, and the runway was geographically the only zone through which people had the chance to leave the besieged city at the risk of life.



2.3 Dead end

What lies beyond the runway symbolized the end of captivity for Sarajevo residents. But instead of reaching this end, majority met death in an open field of airport. Continuous unsuccessful scheming to get there was a course of action that seemingly led to nothing further.

How to cross the airport?

One of the problems all people living in Sarajevo agree to hate is the dense fog in the fall and winter days. The capital is located in the valley, and when the foggy weather occurs, it is there to stay. However, the fog was a precious ally during the war. People were running over the runway under the protection of the fog, and some of them even succeeded. Others were trying at night, which was a bit harder: it was a 450-meter-long race with hurdles. Everyone who managed to skip 4 rows of barbed wire, including motion sensors, had to avoid the night patrol of the UN transporters. At first it was only a few fools, until later that year, when the reported number of persons caught in one night reached 500. For every 100 persons caught, there was a person who reached freedom. There were also people from the other side who tried to enter the besieged city, mostly to smuggle food and weapons. All goods would be taken from those who were caught trying to pass the runway. They were always returned to the side from where they started running. Clever people would run in the direction opposite to where they came from when soldiers emerged. After the UN caught them, the soldiers would take these people exactly where they wanted to arrive.⁴ Being in disguise was proven to be another unsuccessful way. One butcher tried to cross the airport with a cow over which he shifted a sheet with a large "UN" inscription. As the soldiers laughed, the man got over to the other side. The cow was however soon taken away from him. After all, a single cow was worth more than an ordinary human life at the time. Too many people were killed in the runway, so other ways were considered. Sport pilot Sulejman Vranj has twice crossed the airport with a motor kite. In the third attempt, the kite was detected and the pilot wounded. The next idea was training St. Bernard dogs for transfer of goods, if people could not get there and back. Finding a St. Bernard or similar dogs that survived the food shortage in Sarajevo was impossible. Then appeared the idea of a tunnel.



2.4 Common ownership

Economy of Yugoslavia was a socialist one. After Tito's death, the process of transforming public ownership into private hands commenced. Also, many people lay claim to the idea of building a tunnel. But the truth is – it was a common ownership – anyone who ever tried passing the runway must have thought about an underground way.

The idea of a tunnel seemed strange to many people. But considering that the city found itself in a classical medieval siege at the end of the 20th century, it was quite logical to use medieval methods. The phenomenon of tunnels as fortifications is linked for this exact period, namely the early Middle Ages, in the military history. Later in the war, French UN General Philippe Morillon claimed that he had no knowledge of the tunnel, but also commented that the Bosnian government would be stupid not to dig one.⁵ As early as December 1992, a team of experts investigated the possibility of passing under the runway. They hoped it would be possible using the existing drainage system. The first problem occurred immediately because there was no project documentation of the Sarajevo Airport. The only copy was in the possession of the UN force command, and it could not be reached. One of the civil engineers who participated in the building of the airport, and then worked on the maintenance of the airport before the war, was contacted. The first information on construction and underground installations was completely discouraging, but that did not stop the idea of connecting the free territories with the tunnel below the airport. Even when there was a negative opinion about the geotechnical soil characteristics below the runway, it was decided again that project activities shall continue. Based on the report prepared by a professional team in December, the logistics department made the order which was signed by Rašid Zorlak, Assistant Commander for Logistics of the First Corps of the Army of BiH. It was ordered that the realization had to begin immediately. The mentioned order written on December 22, 1992 is the first written record of the concrete steps that were necessary to be taken. To protect the confidentiality of the project, the signatory did not enlist this document in the official protocol, although it was certified by his stamp. In a document, the object was mentioned for the first time by the name "Objekat D-B" (Dobrinja – Butmir neighbourhoods), which will remain its official name during the siege.⁶



2.5 Mission: Impossible

When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it. This saying by Henry Ford was allegedly piece of graffiti art in the Aerodromsko naselje neighbourhood in Sarajevo.

The work on the excavation of the tunnel started immediately. Due to various problems, and especially because of attempts to preserve the secrecy of the whole project, the works did not go in line with the planned dynamics. Sarajevo's sharp winter certainly did not go hand in hand with the diggers. The lack of materials for tunnelling was another major problem, and it was hard to get the digging tools. Due to the poor quality of the embedded material, parts of the tunnel soon collapsed. Until mid-March, a small group of people was struggling with this process and in a month and a half only about 85 meters in length was built.⁷ At the same time, the unsuccessful attempt to unblock Sarajevo further emphasized the need to link the city with the free territory. It was the third unsuccessful attempt to unblock the city. All these actions ended with great human losses. Under such conditions, the extraordinarily important tunnel construction project finally received adequate support from all key structures of the military and civilian authorities, including the cabinet of the President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In mid-March 1993, a team of qualified people was formed to work in the tunnel on the Dobrinja side. It was a labour brigade made up of fighters and the work was organized in three shifts, 24 hours a day. With the new work organization, on March 26, 1993 the D-B tunnel excavations continued under completely new conditions.

On the other side, in Butmir, the first activities started according to the original plan - as of January 1993, but the desertion of one of the coordinating engineers caused a delay in activities on that side of the route. This delay lasted until mid-March. In addition to soldiers, many volunteer civilians participated in the construction of the tunnel. The work was organized similarly at the Dobrinja side, and two retired miners, who found themselves as refugees in the area of this municipality, were engaged in each shift. Thanks to their professional experience, they were in charge of podgrade, wooden beams that were the supportive construction of the tunnel.⁸



Unlike the Dobrinja side, where there were no trees because everything was cut for firewood, Butmir had plenty of trees that could be used during construction. The Muzur family, who were traditionally engaged in blacksmith crafts, produced tools for Butmir excavations. In order for the enemy to not notice the extraction of large quantities of land, it was packed in sacks used to protect other objects. The toughest jobs were mostly performed under the cover of the night. About 300 people were involved on both sides with the aim of speeding up the tunnel construction.

The builders faced all sorts of problems - to stay on the chosen construction path without the possibility of tracking works from the field, to make sure that the tunnel is deep enough but also sufficiently below the surface of the ground so it does not collapse, to maintain the level of air in the tunnel so that miners can breathe normally, to fight the groundwater. Some military commanders reportedly tried to stop the tunnel construction, since they were involved in black market activities elsewhere across the frontlines and the opening of the tunnel would have influenced their distribution.⁹ There was also a fear of the tunnel collapsing due to the very heavy transport aircraft that were landing above that hole in the ground. The significance of building the tunnel was crystal clear to the aggressor. In addition to the artillery operations in Dobrinja and Butmir during the construction, there was a huge pressure on the UN forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina to prevent the construction of the tunnel, with the threat that the Serb forces would not be able to guarantee safety of UN forces at the airport. UN Officials then tried to influence the political and military leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Enemy pressure has led the international forces on several occasions to dig through the runway to find and stop the D-B project. There was also the idea of diverting the flow of a nearby river in order to flood the underground passage. Nevertheless, the project continued.

Every evening, miners from both sides would occasionally listen in order to hear the hits of picks from the other side. With great efforts of all involved, tunnel works were completed on July 30, 1993. After months of painstaking work and many doubts about the possibility of this project, the diggers heard the voices of each other. In enthusiasm, with the last strong pickaxe strokes on both sides, the earthy curtain has finally fallen between the besieged city and the free world.



2.6 Photo finish

Light at the end of a tunnel [idiom]: signs of improvement in a situation that has been unsatisfactory for a long time

Observations on the enemy side about building the tunnel had a significant impact on the Serb offensive that followed. Their goal was to create a second ring surrounding the city by intercepting road communications across the Igman mountain. The ring, which the enemy intended to create beyond the borders of the besieged city, would mean virtually double siege, and those already dangerous roads, now exposed to constant fire, would be lost for the BiH Army. The importance of this moment, as well as the main reason for the offensive, was the process of the peace negotiations that were conducted in Geneva at the same time, with the mediation of the international community. The outlined proposals for future internal arrangements were very unfavourable for BiH. The basic objective of the Serb forces attack was to create as much pressure as possible on the Bosnian negotiating delegation. It was expected that the Bosnians, under the threat of force, would agree to the proposed plan or even be forced to military capitulation during the negotiations. The strategic belt of the Igman mountain was about to fall. Enemy forces advanced from two opposite directions with the aim of connecting at the mountain. The operation was personally led by notorious war crimes indictee Ratko Mladić. The enemy separated the neighbouring mountain Bjelašnica with a helicopter attack. By cutting this tie, Sarajevo would be in double blockade and this would virtually mean the end of all hope. It was, literally, the question of hours and minutes. There was no possibility that Bosnian soldiers, who desperately needed to help out on Igman, could cross the runway. And then, the tunnel was finished. In less than an hour after the tunnel was dug through, first military units passed through as reinforcement in the direction of Igman. Fierce battles began, and the violent attacks were finally slowed down. The controversial Bosnian president Alija Izetbegović left the negotiations in Geneva and refused to participate in them with the request that the enemy soldiers withdraw from the plains of Igman and Bjelašnica mountains. On August 15, 1993 and by the elements of the signed truce, the Serb forces withdrew from these areas. The formation of the second ring around the city of Sarajevo was prevented.¹⁰



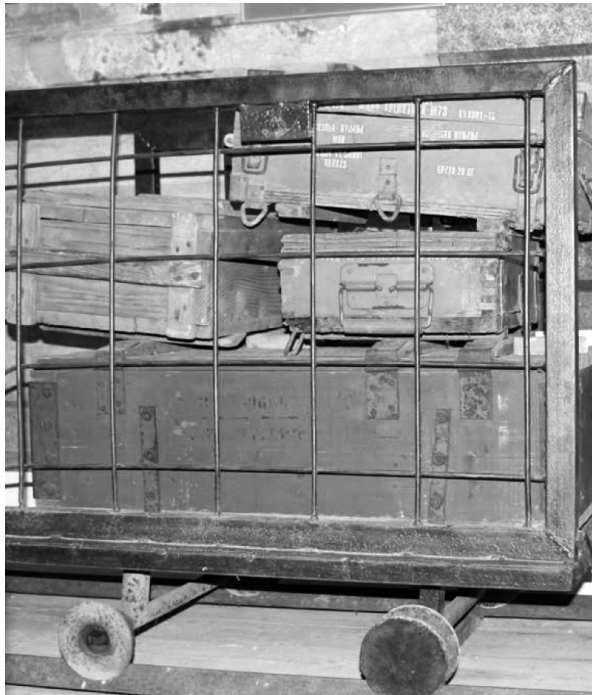
2.7 Hope and Despair

The proper translation from Bosnian would be the Tunnel of Salvation, but the name Tunnel of Hope somehow stuck with the humanitarians and reporters. However, things were quite far away from romantic.

During 1425 days of siege, 1,120,000 people passed through the tunnel, carrying millions of kilos of various food and merchandise, hundreds of thousands of kilos of military equipment and ammunition, millions of litres of oil and about 80 million kilowatt hours of electricity. The total length of the D-B facility was approximately 800 meters. The height of the tunnel was between 1.5 and 1.8 meters, and the width was about one meter. Sometimes there would be only 20 people in the tunnel and sometimes up to 1,000. Passing people from the other direction was not possible. It would mean that the person or several of them had to return by several tens or hundreds of meters to allow the passage of people from the opposite direction. On average, up to 4,000 people per day passed through the tunnel. That journey sometimes lasted for two hours.¹¹

There are a lot of points that could illustrate the significance of the Sarajevo Tunnel. In the foreground is certainly its military significance. Defence forces within the city could count on continuous assistance in ammunition and armaments supply. The political significance of the D-B tunnel stemmed from the possibility that political and military leadership could at any time leave Sarajevo and return again. The women delegation went through the tunnel with the aim of forming a female front and psychological support for the armed struggle. Students and soldiers went to schooling and specialization. Children went to math competitions. Many artists have been given the opportunity to present their works on free territories. Numerous national sport teams have also come out through the tunnel. Ordinary citizens, civilians, also passed in and out of Sarajevo. There were finally opportunities to join numerous members of war-torn families after months.

But for many, there was a price to be paid.



At the beginning of the war, there was a rumour that for 2,000 Deutsche Marks one can leave the city with a humanitarian plane. The tunnel, as well as the war in general, for some meant the possibility of illicit trade and other war-profiteering activities. Smuggling was practiced by ordinary people, mainly in an attempt to feed their own families.

However, some have used this opportunity for enormous acquisition of property. In collective remembrance there is still a memory of wounded people returning from the fight who had to wait at the entrance on the Butmir side, because at that moment one of the war profiteers, Alemko Nuhanović, was transporting his goods. Alija Ademović, one of the tunnel diggers, recalls another episode in which a group of 30 wounded soldiers waited in front of the entrance while a shipment of “military equipment” was brought through. The shipment was revealed to be alcohol, and two of those soldiers died while waiting. The tunnel was regularly rented for up to 10000 Deutsche Marks per hour, where the price depended on the level of scarcity in Sarajevo.¹²

Most of these controversial issues were never legally pursued, because majority of the war profiteers still hold important positions in current government or are closely tied to it.



2.8 Afterlife

“Let this object serve our victory with the desire to become museum and historical value as soon as possible.” - Rašid Zorlak, Assistant Commander for Logistics of the First Corps of the Army of BiH, August 3, 1993, on the occasion of the opening of the D-B Tunnel

Upon the ending of the siege and obsolescence of the communication passage below the runway, the tunnel was abandoned and its decay began shortly after. Without regular maintenance and deterioration caused by water, it started to collapse. Day after day, it disappeared meter by meter. None of the numerous levels of government created by the Dayton Agreement showed interest in the protection of this unique memory of suffering. Considering this, owners of one of the houses on the Butmir side took things into their own hands. They started collecting what seemed to be junk items scattered around the tunnel. They found utilities used for digging, backpacks and bags in which people were carrying food, trolleys used to transport materials etc. Most importantly, they managed to preserve about 20 meters of the tunnel from their home to the airport. On their own initiative, members of the Kolar family formed a museum collection which attracted an increasing number of curious visitors. They organized these exhibitions presenting their house as an original main entrance to the tunnel, and their possessions as original tunnel artefacts.

The problem is that most of it is not true.

The real main entrance was built in a nearby house Bijelonja. Kolar entrance did not exist in the period between 1993 and 1995 in a way they present it, and their claims are a drastic deviation from the state of affairs and represent a classic falsification of historical and material facts. Despite all that, Kolar family continued to profit on the fake entrance to the tunnel. The tragic Butmir massacre also happened in the backyard of the Bijelonja house, but the Kolar family managed to introduce it with the memorial board on their own house.¹³ The site traumatised with war was successfully *touristified*.



On April 20, 2010 Sarajevo government issued a paper on the protection of the tunnel under the Cultural Heritage Act. In January 2015, the museum collection and the Kolar house were reconstructed. Management of this institution is under the umbrella of Fond Memorijala organisation, whose spokesperson Irfan Gazdić stated that one of their plans for further improvement of the memorial is purchasing additional nearby plots to expand the complex, with the construction of an improvised minefield (which was originally not at this location).¹⁴

An architectural competition was organized in 2016, in order to provide the organisation with a project for further development of the museum buildings. The jury resolved not to award the first prize.

Footnotes BENEATH

- 1 see Dierauer (2013), p. 80
- 2 see Kreševljaković (2013), p. 18
- 3 ibid. p. 19
- 4 ibid. p.21
- 5 see Andreas (2008), p. 59
- 6 see Kreševljaković (2013), p. 29
- 7 ibid. p. 36
- 8 ibid. p. 37
- 9 see Andreas (2008), p. 60
- 10 see Kreševljaković (2013), p. 47
- 11 ibid. p. 51-55
- 12 Interview with Alija Adamović on the Sarajevo tv news show *60 minuta*, 11.10.2004.
- 13 see Nedim Hasić: Najveća sarajevska ratna prevara, 11.5.2012, https://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/953/najveca_sarajevska_ratna_prevara.html, 28.9.2017.
- 14 see Sarajevski 'Tunel spasa' u 2013. posjetilo preko 82.000 turista, 15.1.2013, <http://bih-x.info/sarajevski-tunel-spasa-u-2013-posjetilo-preko-82-000-turista/>, 28.9.2017.

3. GETTING AROUND

*"One cannot make architecture without studying the condition of life in the city".
Aldo Rossi*



3.1 Traumascape

[noun]: a site traumatised by war, sometimes touristified in a process of post-conflict reconstruction¹

Today's geographic context of the tunnel is the infamous border between Sarajevo and East Sarajevo, where the latter consists of a few pre-war suburban eastern parts of Sarajevo which are now in the Republika Srpska entity and almost exclusively populated by Serbs. This makes the location even more important in ways of reconciling different ethnic groups, since it makes the immediate environment for people whose daily lives virtually do not intertwine. This densely built residential area gravitates towards two neighbourhood centres, based solely on predominant ethnicity of people inhabiting them. These facts alone make the tunnel's location problematic. The invisible but omnipresent division line can be found on the eastern side of the tunnel.

There is another part of Sarajevo with a similar spatial organisation: Vraca neighbourhood with a memorial park dedicated to the World War II Sarajevo victims, with a border between the two constitutional entities passing right through the monument. The idea was to have a park shared by the two conflicted groups of people, but the truth is that the park is commonly known only as a getaway location for stolen car dealers, since the police rarely cross the entity lines.

Comparing it to Dobrinja and the tunnel context, there is a visible difference in the urbanization level of these two parts of the city. While Vraca is covered with private one-storey houses, Dobrinja is characterized by social collective housing and therefore offers more opportunities for interaction. Given that the inhabitants have no common places of interest, and that this tunnel connects the history of ethnic groups they identify with, one could argue that the location for the following project could not be more appropriate. However, other characteristics of this place already made ground for memorial projects of a slightly different kind.



Another important geographic determinant of the site is the proximity to the airport, which makes it an inevitable tourist attraction. The link between war and tourism always exposes some ethical dilemmas. Reconversion of sites traumatised by war in Sarajevo was accompanied by chaotic transfer of legal responsibility for these sites, which resulted in a situation where no one can be held responsible for violating the law. So, informal tourism organisations flourished and interpretation and representation of a collective trauma was nobody's business.

Some of the so-called war tours arranged for people who are eager to visit the war heritage are the *Times of Misfortune tour*, *The Total siege tour*, *the Mission Impossible tour* and others. These tours are often guided or narrated by people who use them as a platform to voice their own personal opinions. Together with the fact that today's grotesque Tunnel Museum is private, one could argue that the memory is also privatised.

The people in charge of this institution do not just feed the need for a particular side of the story – they also thrive for dark tourism business. The touristification of the sites marked by war can be problematized together with the thirst to satisfy a morbid curiosity, viewing them as an effect and a cause. German word *Schadenfreude* can be defined as a pleasure derived from another person's misfortune. The management of sites such as the war tunnel could be described as guided by this morbidity in order to satisfy financial needs.² Except the dark tourism demand and supply, there are naturally other motives for visiting such a place. Unfortunately, they are seldom taken into account by the organizers, and the target market is seen as a very homogenous one. This results in a very poor educational material currently provided at these places.

All of this paints the need for any future museum to be a vector for unbiased information and to provide the possibility for individual experience of war heritage, along with remembrance and memorialisation.



3.2 Love thy neighbour

“If a Četnik was born in Croatia, he would be Ustaša.”³ This folk proverb points out to the similarity in all nationalist policies. The ruling parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the three right-wing political parties, one for each major ethnicity. While their individual agendas are based on bigotry towards other two ethnicities, at their core they are completely identical.

Current political context of this project is almost as gloomy as in war times, only in a more passive way. Sarajevo is quite often heralded as the “European Jerusalem” due to its diverse ethnic and religious tissue. Unfortunately, today’s Sarajevo lives off its former glory. City’s profile has been changed through the war. At the time of the 1991 census, Bosniaks made 49.2% of the city’s population, there was 29.8% Serbs, 10.7% Yugoslavs, 6.6% Croats and 3.6% of other ethnicities. According to the 2013 population census, 83,8% - the vast majority – of the city’s population identified themselves as Bosniaks, only 3,22% as Serbs and 4,24% as Croats.⁴ Sarajevo is ethnically a quite homogenous city nowadays.

Another major problem is commonly accepted identification of nationality with ethnicity and religion. More than a third of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not consider the state they live in as their homeland. Bosnian Croats and Serbs gravitate towards Croatia and Serbia. Third group is somewhat more complex to explain. The term ‘Bosnian’ is used referring to the concept of citizenship. Most importantly, it is used to denote all inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina regardless of their ethnic origin. On the other hand, ‘Bosniak’ is used in reference to the national and religious appurtenance of one of the communities living in BiH, with clear adherence to Islam.⁵ Essentially, that means that, for example, a non-Serb non-Croat atheist does not have a commonly accepted ethnicity. Those people are listed as “others” on the population census, and were being encouraged by census interviewers to identify as belonging to one of the three constituent groups. Some people will argue that a non-Muslim can be Bosniak, but these ethnic + religion ties were sealed during the war and it is very hard – if not impossible – to perceive them differently today.



Many people do not feel the need to identify as anything other than Bosnians and Herzegovinians, which is absurdly not permitted by laws in this country. Divide and conquer policy goes so far as to legally restrict persons outside the three constituent ethnicities to hold any high position in the administrative apparatus of the state. Altering of established system is well prevented in this way. This artificial design of ethnically homogenous groups of people had its place in the war, and not only in attempts of ethnic cleansing of BiH by Serb and Croat troops. During the first year of aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina, 35% of the First Corps of the Army of the Republic of BiH were Serbs and Croats. The aggression ended with only 1% of them in this segment of the army, with allegations against President Izetbegović that he Islamised the army by forcing out the unfitting soldiers and introducing Muslim prayers in military daily lives. Twenty-two years after the war, heroization and victimization along with the unavoidable religious context are drivers of national identities for most of the region's population.

Is one of the tasks of the future museum to change the problematic situation? This building must not in any aspect serve to the triumvirate of the nationalist politics, and it should provide the public discourse with expert interpretation and critique on war tunnel events. In that way, the project could contribute to the transitional justice in Sarajevo and enhance opportunities for the transformation of the Bosnian political system which is the root of the abuse of war sites in nationalist rhetoric. In order to succeed in that intention, it is necessary to strip the tunnel of all subsequently added connotations. That raises a question of typology: would it be better to have a memorial centre instead of a museum? The traditional difference between memorials and museums is obscure, even though Paul Williams argues that "a memorial is seen to be, if not apolitical, at least safe in the refuge of history. [...] A museum, by contrast, is presumed to be concerned with interpretation, contextualization, and critique."⁶

This project will try to introduce the memorial that can also be a critique in its bare existence, as well as an apolitical museum. With a combination of typologies, chosen in regard to today's state of affairs on both sides of the tunnel – geographically, socially, politically – a model for Sarajevo War Tunnel Museum could be found.

Footnotes GETTING AROUND

1 see Tumarkin (2005), p. 12

2 see Naef (2011), p. 5

3 Četnik is a member of Serbian ultranationalist movement, while Ustaša belongs to Croatian ultranationalist movement; they are considered to be arch enemies.

4 Bosnian Federal Bureau of Statistics: Final results of the 2013 population census, <http://fzs.ba/index.php/popis-stanovnistva/popis-stanovnistva-2013/konacni-rezultati-popisa-2013/>, 8.10.2017

5 see Naef (2011), p. 17

6 Williams (2007), p. 8

4. CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE IN B&H

In order to override or stimulate the mechanism of oblivion, Bosnians and Herzegovinians dealt with their history in different ways. Two of them are particularly impressive; not only in their timelessness but also in the way they link nations who inhabit the Balkan region.

Many people experience Stećaks and Spomeniks quite intimately because they were built to pay tribute to ordinary people and parts of their lives. While Stećaks commemorated dead individuals, Spomeniks were created to memorialize a variety of different events in which everyday people played heroic roles, mostly connected to anti-fascist struggle in Yugoslavia during World War II. Both of these monuments can be found between BiH borders, but also in neighbouring countries. In times when collective memory is already carefully fragmented, trivialized and fuelled with identity politics, it is of utmost importance to revisit the story behind these works of art and reinterpret their effortlessly assembled multiethnicity.



4.1 Stone sleepers

[noun phrase]: literal translation of Stećaks from Bosnian term used in literature¹

Stećaks are medieval monolith tombstones located throughout the overall territory of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina, and parts of the territories of today's Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. Numbering a total of approximately 70,000 tombstones throughout 3,300 sites and dating from the 12th to the end of the 15th century, they make an ideal example of shared heritage in the region because people belonging to all three medieval religions living in the region (Serbian Orthodox, Catholic and Bosnian Church) as well as all ethnicities and different social strata have been buried under them.² Out of 70,000 recorded tombstones, some 60,000 are on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The physical appearance of a Stećak is characterized as monolithic and of prismatic shape with flat or gable-top surface, with or without pedestal, horizontally or vertically positioned and made of stone. Some of these monuments bear inscriptions, mostly in extinct Bosančica alphabet, some in Glagolitic and Latin script. These engravings are sometimes religious phrases, descriptions and information of the deceased and his life, and some of them are related to thanatopsis, offering archaic wisdom about mortality and dread of death.

"I was nothing then, I am nothing now"³

Artistic playfulness of death on Stećaks was represented with shallow reliefs of various decorative motifs, which can be roughly divided in groups that complement each other: social and religious symbols, ornaments, traditional dance motifs, figural images and many unclassified but prominent ones, such as the spirals, rosettes, liliun, stars, arcades and crescent moons. Most famous motive is certainly the image of a man with his right hand in the air, which is sometimes described as a gesture of fealty. Acclaimed Croatian writer Miroslav Krleža wrote that a Bosnian depicted on Stećaks stands upright, with his head and his hand raised, never kneeling and never shown as a slave.



Some of these motifs can also be classified as architectural ones. There are examples where the monument itself is treated as a building, and decorated accordingly with columns or arcades.⁴ Simple architectural concepts, such as series of vertical bands resembling columns, can be found on many of these monuments. Some of the images include processions of animals such as deer, horse and lion, but also activities as dancing the kolo, hunting or chivalric tournaments. Some of these scenes symbolize the soul of the deceased going to another world. With this diversity, Stećci participated in the formation of the visual culture of death.⁵

The interconfessionality of Stećaks is one of their most remarkable features. This fact does not come without a burden: it is also the reason of dissonant confrontations, different opinions and opposing views as to their archaeological, artistic and historical interpretation. These confronted interpretations coincide with the creation of nation-states and rising national awareness in the Balkans.⁶ All four countries which house these monuments claim ownership of Stećaks, which is one of the many stumbling stones in the relations between these countries. Then suddenly, on March 10, 2015, Reuters reported that former Yugoslav enemies joined forces in seeking Stećaks' protection.⁷ After five years of intensive work, the nomination process was conducted under the leadership of the distinguished Bosnian academician Dubravko Lovrenović in cooperation with experts from all four states, but it was not protected from the political interference, especially within the most problematic of all countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina – where experts had to be careful to involve all three ethnic entities and to provide fair representation of their individual interests. Apart from the technical complexity of the nomination, the issues of interpretation and related ownership of Stećaks have been among the main challenges in the process.⁸

The aftermath of these joint efforts was the process of inscribing Stećci as an UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2016. This included a selection of 4000 monuments at 28 necropolises, huge majority of which are located in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Balkan heritage experts succeeded in showing that South Slavic Balkans is the area of great syntheses, apart from rivalries and destruction.







4.2 Spomeniks

Smrt fašizmu, sloboda narodu!
Смрт фашизму, слобода народу!
*Death to fascism, freedom to the people!*⁹

Spomeniks are super-sized sculptures or buildings memorialising events that happened during World War II. In Tito's era, dozens of these monuments were erected across Yugoslavia. In some cases Tito ordered their construction, but a large number of them were commissioned and funded by the locals. They are one of the backbones of the Brotherhood and unity project, established from the ashes of the Revolution. A new country was to be organized after the war – a classless country ruled by principles of socialism, with no ethnic tensions.

Primary intent of Spomeniks was to honour people's resistance and struggle against the Axis occupation. They have a dual nature: commemorating the crimes which occurred during the occupation, but also celebrating the Revolution which defeated the enemy. These monuments have, through time, proven to be more than just a sum of their parts.¹⁰

Spomenik is a word meaning "a monument" shared by all Ex-Yugoslavian countries. Many other monuments – hundreds if not thousands, smaller in size but not in their intent, were also built in this period from the 1960s to 1980s across the Republic of Yugoslavia. Their scope and quantity is unparalleled in Europe to this day. Their locations are mostly isolated and not attractive to tourists, and they range from barren mountain tops to the seaside, dominating the landscape wherever they exist.



These gigantic structures are built out of indestructible materials like granite, reinforced concrete and steel. Some of them are solid and other hollow, and sometimes they are so big that they provide access to the public, challenging the boundary between sculpture and architecture. Their shapes are abstract and geometric, and have nothing in common with busts of great leaders or symbols of socialism, being devoid from the cult of personality found in many countries of Eastern Europe.¹¹

Spomeniks rather recall macro views of crystals, flowers and cell formations, and as per usual, there is a political reason for that. In the first decade after the war, Yugoslavian war monuments were crafted in the traditional socialist-realism style developed in the Soviet Union. However, during the following period of Stalin's governing of the USSR and his diversion from Tito's principles, there was a change of hearts in this relation. Yugoslavian leader refused to let his country become a Soviet satellite state, and because of this political strain, Yugoslavia had to distance itself from the USSR in everything including sculptures, and in order to embody the Partisan heritage, artists looked at the artistic movements as abstract expressionism and minimalism – sculptural styles never before employed in memorial architecture at this level and at this scale.

Spomeniks are perceived as distinctly Yugoslavian and highlight a new and unique identity. Tito expressed his wish that this decontextualized art helps in the country's ethnic reconciliation, and that their shared universal language acts like a medium of solace and forgiveness. He wanted to suppress nationalism, which is why a more traditional style was not considered as appropriate. These monuments were to become a new tradition, and they embodied the Yugoslavian vision of the future. Their slightly futuristic features, but also the retro look from today's point of view, bought them a place in contemporary publications. After all, they do look like UFOs or Pink Floyd album covers – a place in pop culture was already guaranteed for them.



It all started with the book *Spomenik* by Antwerp-based photographer Jan Kempnaers, which marked the beginning of a global interest for this anti-fascist heritage. The book featured a series of amazing photographs and it introduced the term *Spomenik* into the international dictionary of art theory, but it did not unequivocally emphasize the political context of the whole phenomenon. *Spomeniks* were trivialized, the narrative was reduced to resemblance to UFOs and the legacy of anti-fascism was marginalized.¹²

While former Yugoslavian enemies joined forces in celebrating the *Stećaks* heritage, they systematically disapproved of *Spomeniks* – in joined forces, of course. Along with Greece, Yugoslavia was the only country with a resistance movement strong enough to liberate itself almost without help from the Allies. This movement was multi-ethnic, therefore it represented the antonym of today's political arrangement, in which there is no resistance nor multiethnicity. A large number of monuments have been destroyed, abandoned and neglected in the years following the Balkan wars in the 1990s, and the ruling parties are still trying to marginalize them. Their (although invisible) anti-fascist symbolism is what bothers the nationalist forces of all Balkan countries. These forces were built on the fascist foundations, and fascism is proven to be the mainstream once again.

“The Yugoslav experience of fighting against it on the basis of intercultural solidarity — and, also, of failing to maintain that memory, and of its collapse in the 1990s into resurgent fascism — has much to tell us. These monuments are its concrete legacy, intended to speak of what Yugoslavs had emerged from, how they wanted to be remembered, and what they hoped for. They deserve better than to be glimpsed for a few seconds on Tumblr.”¹³





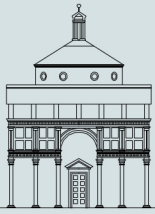
Footnotes CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE IN B&H

- 1 Dizdar (1999), p. 1
- 2 see Kisić (2013), p. 100
- 3 Buturović (2015), p. 122
- 4 see Wenzel (1965), p. 55
- 5 see Lovrenović (2009), p.28
- 6 see Kisić (2013), p. 100
- 7 Daria Sito-Sucic: Former Yugoslav foes join forces in seeking tombstone protection, 10.3.2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-balkans-unesco/former-yugoslav-foes-join-forces-in-seeking-tombstone-protection-idUKKBN0M61R520150310>, 27.9.2017.
- 8 see Kisić (2013), p. 106
- 9 official slogan of the entire Yugoslav Partisans resistance movement, first shouted by fighter Stjepan Filipović in moment before his execution by Nazis
- 10 What are spomeniks, <http://www.spomenikdatabase.org/what-are-spomeniks>, 27.9.2017.
- 11 see Kempenaers (2010), p. 66
- 12 see Owen Hatherley: Concrete clickbait: next time you share a spomenik photo, think about what it means, 29.11.2016, <https://www.calvertjournal.com/articles/show/7269/spomenik-yugoslav-monument-owen-hatherley>, 27.9.2017.
- 13 Owen Hatherley: Concrete clickbait: next time you share a spomenik photo, think about what it means, 29.11.2016, <https://www.calvertjournal.com/articles/show/7269/spomenik-yugoslav-monument-owen-hatherley>, 27.9.2017.

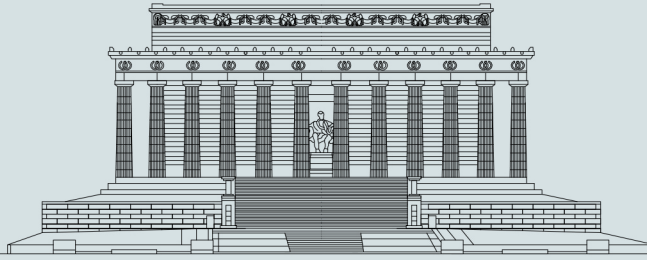
5. REFERENCES

“Benjamin regards everything he chooses to recall in his past as prophetic of the future, because the work of memory collapses time. [...] Memory, the staging of the past, turns the flow of events into tableaux. Benjamin is not trying to recover his past, but to understand it: to condense it into its spatial forms, its premonitory structures.”

Susan Sontag on Walter Benjamin's 'One-Way Street'



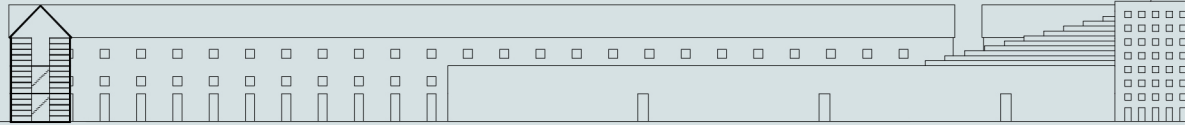
Pazzi chapel
Filippo Brunelleschi
1440-1460 Florence



Lincoln Memorial
Henry Bacon
1912-1922 Washington DC



Woodland chapel
Erik Gunnar Asplund
1918-1920 Stockholm



San Cataldo
Aldo
1971 M



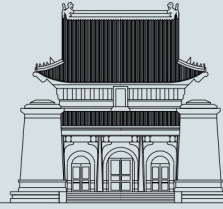
Jewish Museum
Daniel Libeskind
1999 Berlin



Mausoleum for Max Dvořák
Adolf Loos
1921



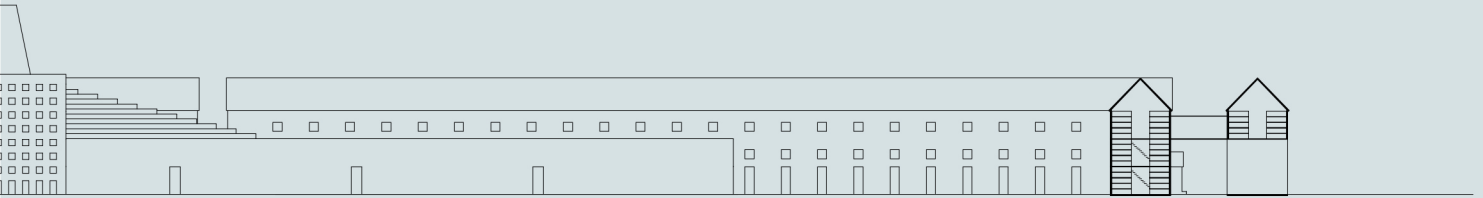
Chapel of Resurrection
Sigurd Lewerentz
1925 Stockholm



Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum
Lu Yanzhi
1925-1931 Nanjing



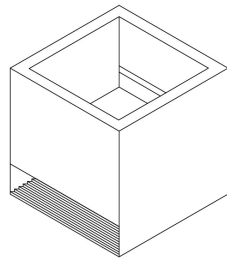
Resistance monument
Aldo Rossi, Luca Meda
1962 Cuneo



Modena cemetery
Aldo Rossi
1962 Modena



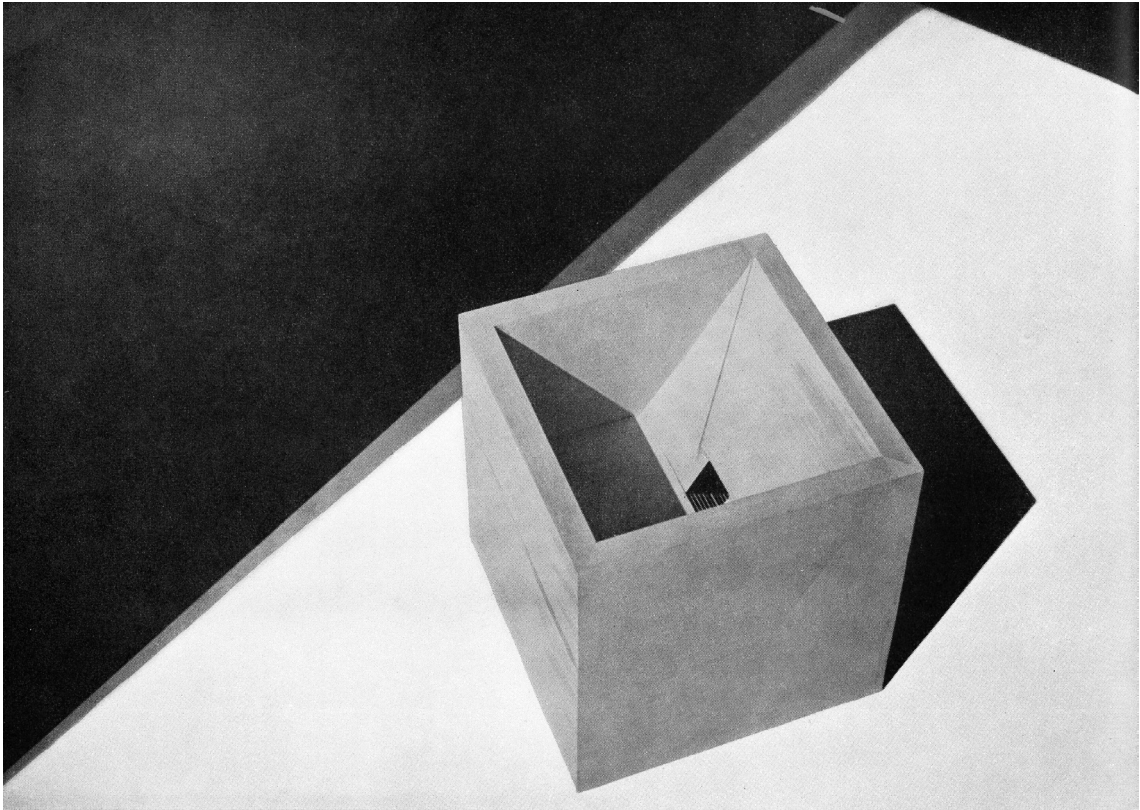
Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe
Peter Eisenman
2005 Berlin

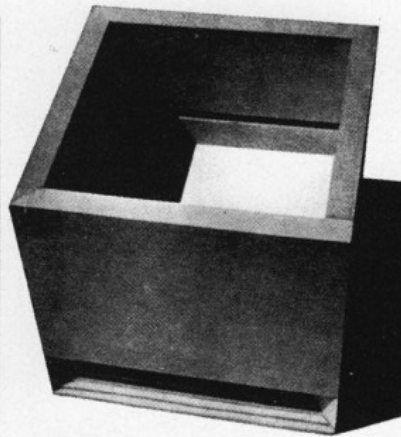
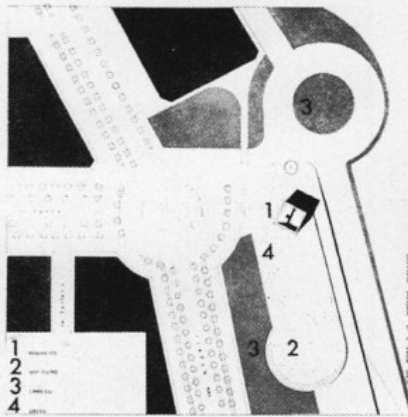
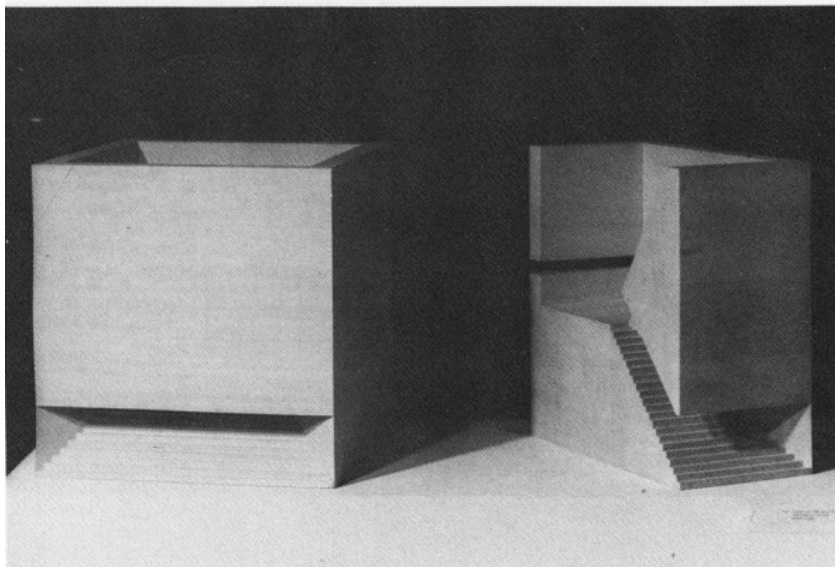


5.1 +

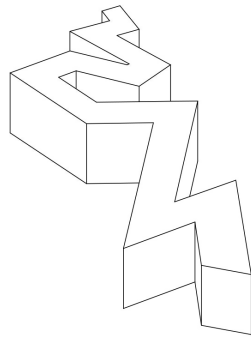
Monument to the Resistance in Cuneo
1962
Aldo Rossi

The unbuilt monument in Cuneo was to stand at the foot of the Boves mountains, where members of resistance fought the Germans during the war. The architect proposed a semicircle of seats focused on a masonry cube, so that the monument itself becomes a focus of a theatrical event. The cube was to be penetrated by pyramidal staircase that leads to an interior platform, and the whole unroofed space resembled a kind of inverted mastaba. In the wall opposite to the staircase, a narrow slit was cut in the wall to provide a view of a ridge top where the battle was fought. In the corners of the wall, the slit was angled towards the circular seats, so that people sitting on the far right seats were able to see the viewer inside the cube looking across the landscape. In that way, the importance of the act of looking was emphasized. The viewer becomes aware of the fact that the cube is kind of a camera obscura that focuses his attention on a site where heroic deeds took place. The audience in the seats contemplated an object for contemplation and thus, in a larger sense, contemplated the very act of contemplation.¹





MONUMENTO ALLA RESISTENZA A CUNEO



5.2 -

Jewish Museum Berlin
1999
Studio Libeskind

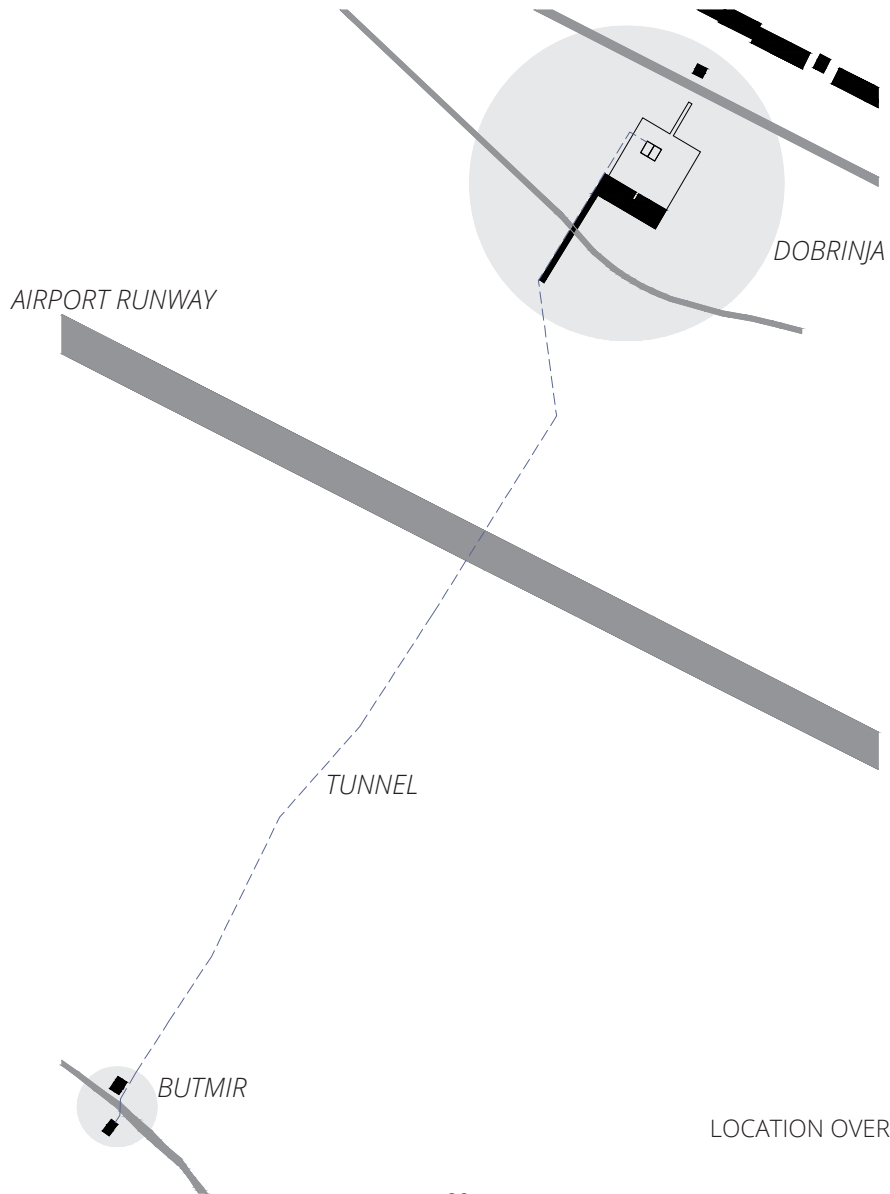
In an anonymous competition for an expansion of the original Jewish Museum in Berlin, Studio Libeskind was chosen as a winner for their project that implemented a radical design as a conceptually expressive tool to symbolize Jewish presence in the German capital. Architect's aim was to express absence and invisibility of the Jewish culture by using architecture as means of narrative providing visitors with a sense of what the Holocaust meant for the Jewish culture and Berlin. The famous zig-zag form comes from an abstracted Jewish Star and lines connecting the locations of historical events. The interior is quite complex and abounds in empty spaces and dead ends. Before choosing one of the three routes, visitors experience anxiety in losing the sense of direction. The overwhelmingly cold atmosphere of reinforced concrete and sharp corners is further accentuated with a very few light sources. The interiors of this object were exhibited even before their functionality as a museum commenced. Even today, a large number of visitors primarily come to see the architecture of the museum. The recognizable architectural language used in this project was also used by Libeskind for the Westside Shopping Centre in Bern. The architect argued that museums, like shopping centres, are places where people are mirrored in artefacts which testify to their existence.² However, using the same peculiar design narrative for the Jewish Museum and a shopping mall, could cement the architect's visual profile, but at the same time it removes some of the significance it had for the representation of places such as the Holocaust.





Footnotes REFERENCES

- 1 see Reynolds (2013), p. 17
- 2 see Ionescu (2017), p. 101

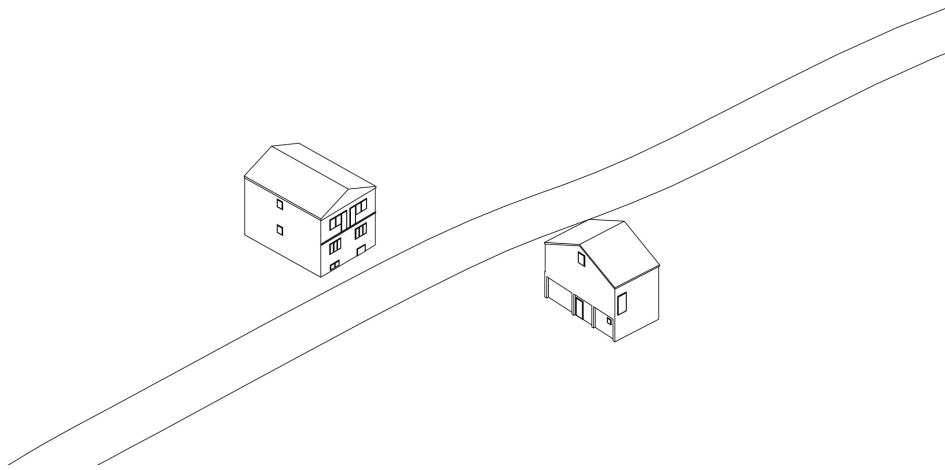


6. SARAJEVO WAR TUNNEL MUSEUM

What the present-day bizarre tunnel museum offers to its visitors is a false promise of first-hand experience: passing through the tunnel and a large number of questionably autochthonous artefacts, with future plans for building an improvised minefield and trenches that did not exist there (henceforth, the falsification of history, again). As a person who had a real experience of using the tunnel in the war and who values the principles of the architectural heritage protection, I feel the moral obligation to completely negate this approach with my project. This presupposes the removal of all problematic existing parts of the complex on both sides.

The question is - especially given its controversial use during the war - whether it is indeed necessary to offer the possibility of passing through the tunnel. For the purpose of providing information, the project's aim is to offer a look at the tunnel, but not in a literal way and not in its entirety. That was a painful privilege inextricably linked to the war context and must not be mistaken for an available tour. Today, 22 years after, exploitation of war memorabilia in BiH serves as a trigger for ethnic tensions and it is time for this period of Sarajevo's history to be properly marked on the timeline and left in the past.

Carefully choosing my architectural language, I will try to reinterpret the motives of hiding and feeling exposed, the disparity of the underground and above ground, the particularity of the airport and the usualness of houses used as entrances to the tunnel, the different materialization of the original war tunnel on two opposite sides, the contrast of the essential and irrelevant throughout the story, all in the context of today's political situation.



BUTMIR AXONOMETRY

6.1 Butmir : Memorial

Exit from the tunnel to the rural side of the city

Existing Museum in the private house of the Kolar family is found on this side of the tunnel. The institution of this Museum is problematic as already explained in the previous chapters. This project proposes the demolition of the inadequately reconstructed buildings (Kolar and Bijelonja family houses), as well as sorting and cataloguing of all artefacts with the intention to protect autochthonous elements. On this clean start, it is proposed to build a memorial (not a museum!).

Although the tunnel was used in both directions, Butmir's side was perceived as an exit because it represented freedom and a successful escape from Sarajevo. Butmir meant the end, end of a burdensome journey. The project's location is also the scene of one of the most futile war tragedies, a massacre in front of the Bijelonja house over people waiting for permission to enter the tunnel (because of priorities). This event points to the undeniable dark side of the tunnel, requires adequate commemoration - even after 22 years - and refuses to celebrate hope, salvation and the past altogether.

The Memorial is conceived as an ensemble of concrete monoliths that take form of the demolished houses in their original wartime appearance. These monoliths are a negative concrete cast capturing the space and emphasizing the absence of original objects. Adequate documentation is provided only for Kolar and Bijelonja houses. Exit / entrance to the tunnel is sealed. This part of the project is a reminiscence of *Stećaks*, indigenous monuments of the period in which people functioned well together and which are encouraging a public dialogue between four nations today. However, they are not chosen for their apolitical connotation, but rather because of their metaphysical characteristic, timelessness and dignified commemoration of what is inevitable.

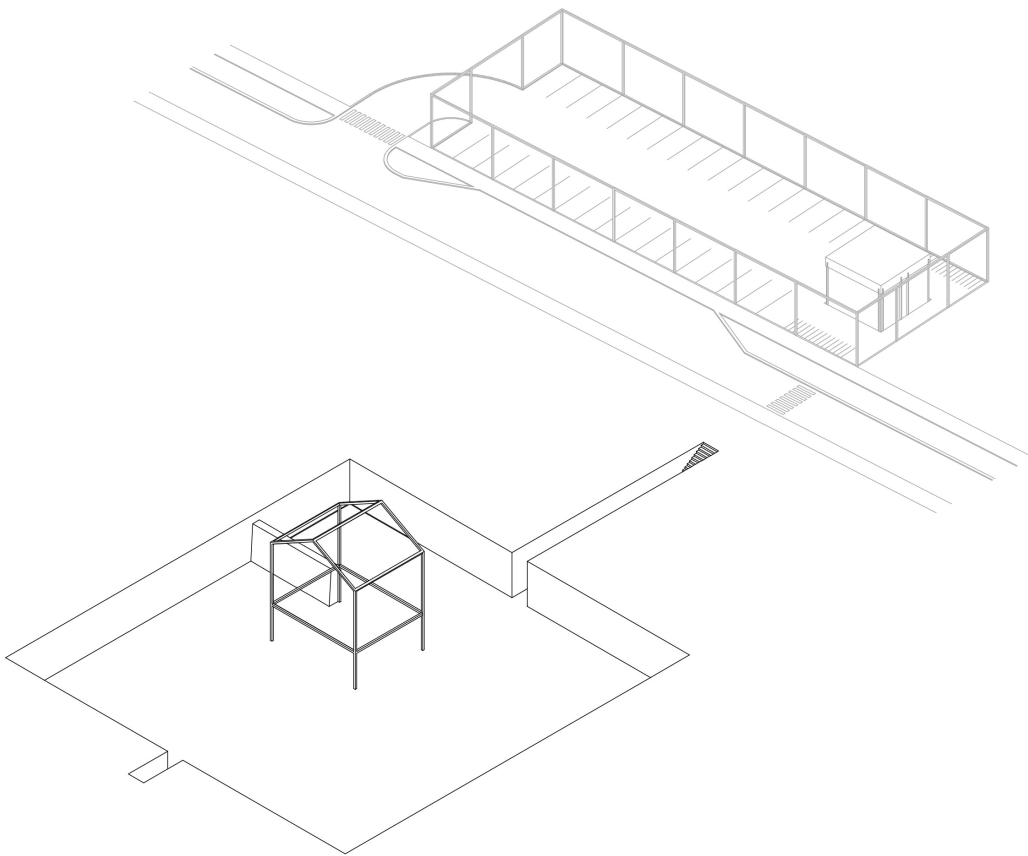
The inspiration for execution of this memorial can be found in works of the British artist Rachel Whiteread, who described her projects as the *mummification of space*.











DOBRIŃJA: OVERVIEW AXONOMETRY

6.2 Dobrinja : Museum

Exit from the tunnel to the urban side of the city

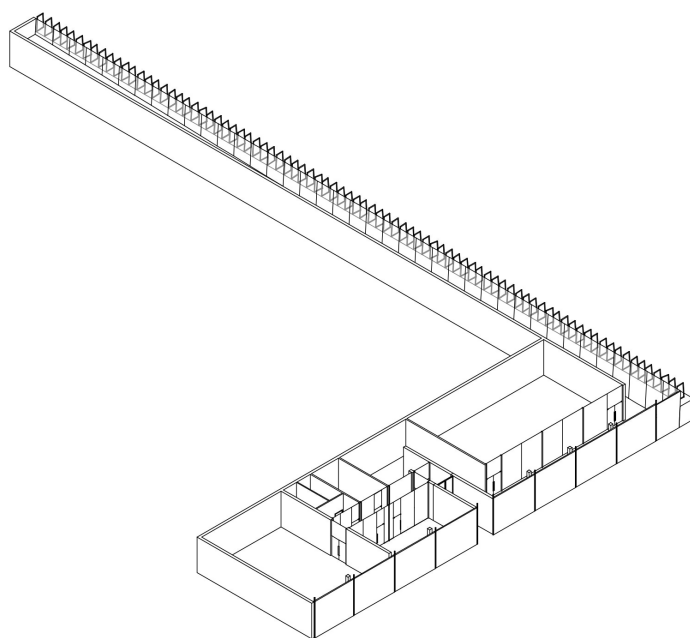
While the design project for the Butmir side might be considered sculptural, the Dobrinja side would offer a real museum. This is the entrance rather than the exit, and its juxtaposition is the Sarajevo Airport.

The 2012 Urban Master Plan anticipated the demolition of all private houses on this location and the parcel was to be allotted to the airport. Taking into account the importance of the location, this museum project suggests the exclusion of a 700m² plot from the master plan. The entrance to the tunnel is located in the basement of the Sloboda house, which was renovated and enlarged after the war. This house should be demolished, and the tunnel access in the basement is to be preserved.

Access to the location is from Kurta Schorka Street. Car and bicycle parking as well as a bus station are on the side of the street opposite to the tunnel. There is also a visitor center, where one can buy museum tickets and use the toilet. This content is deliberately situated away from the museum itself in order to play down the touristic connotation of the place. The visitor center is conceptualized in the same aesthetics as the museum.

In an effort to reinterpret the identity of the tunnel as a building, the entire museum is located underground. The entrance to the museum is reached by climbing down a narrow staircase and a passage, followed by a large plateau covered with pebbles. This plateau offers a close view of the basement remains. After that, one finds himself in a narrow entrance to the museum.

This sudden change of scale is motivated by feelings of exposure when crossing the airport runway, which was the trigger for the idea of the tunnel during wartime. The only part of the project above the ground level is a delicate metal construction, a frame in the form of the demolished Sloboda house.

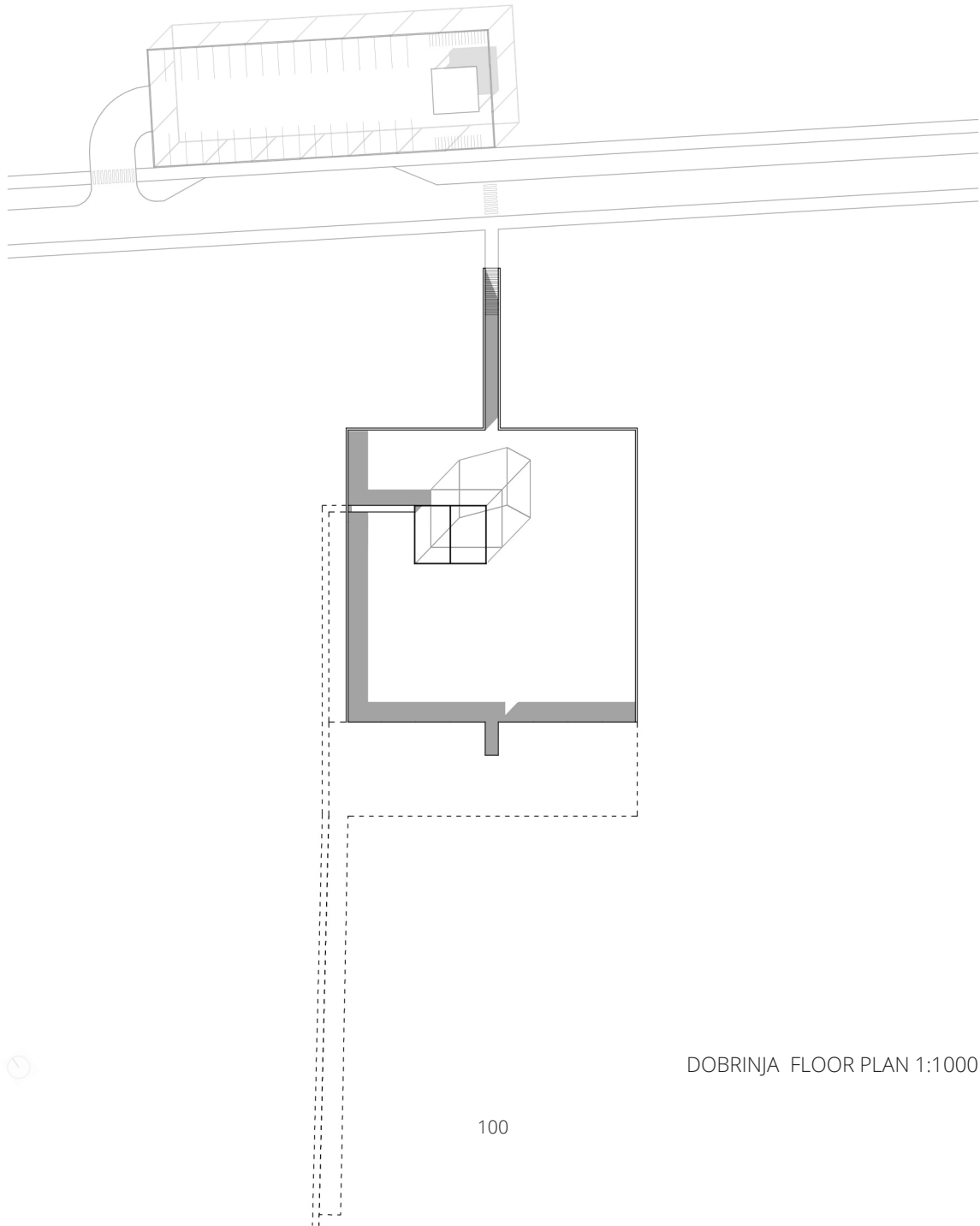


DOBRINJA: MUSEUM AXONOMETRY

The war tunnel was constructed with metal pipes on the Dobrinja side since all the trees in the city were used as firewood, which influenced the choice of materials for the frame of the Sloboda house. This also points out to the ordinariness of the house, emphasizing its basement as an important part. The museum is characterized by a clean floor plan and simple gradation of spaces.

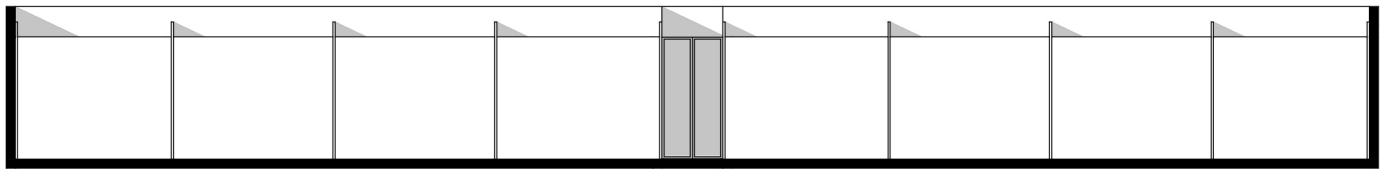
From the interior of the hall it is possible to experience the plateau and the Sloboda house from another angle, after which visitors could enter the new tunnel. That is actually the second passage pierced in parallel to the original tunnel, but larger than it in its dimensions. It offers a view on the original tunnel whose ground is 1m higher compared to the ground of the new tunnel. Original artefacts from Butmir and Dobrinja are exhibited in this new passage.

Spatial organisation and materialization - concrete, glass and metal in the interior, and concrete, stone and low vegetation outside - seek to provide a neutral and minimalistic basis for the main showpiece - the original tunnel itself.

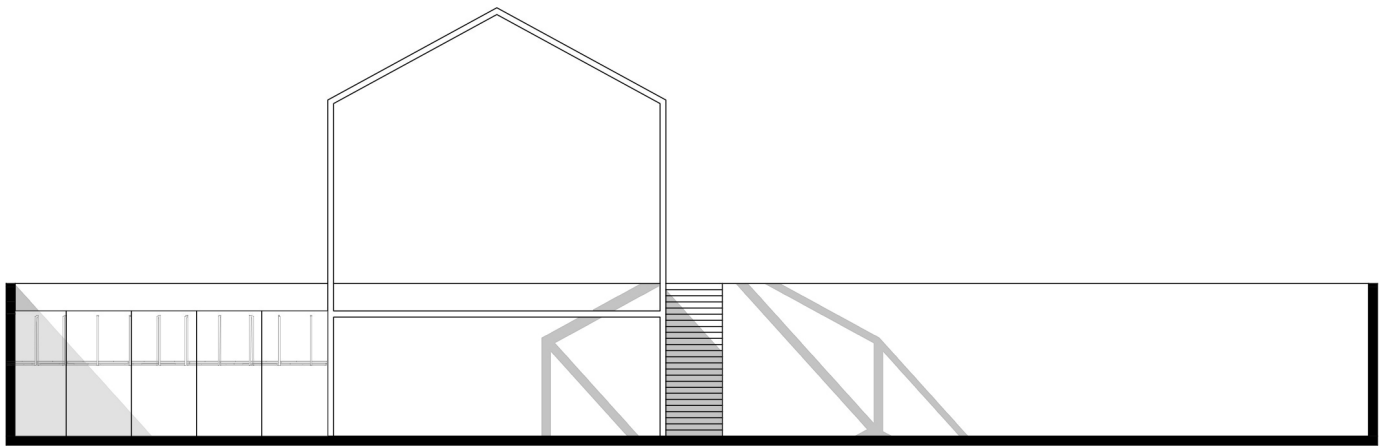


DOBRINJA FLOOR PLAN 1:1000

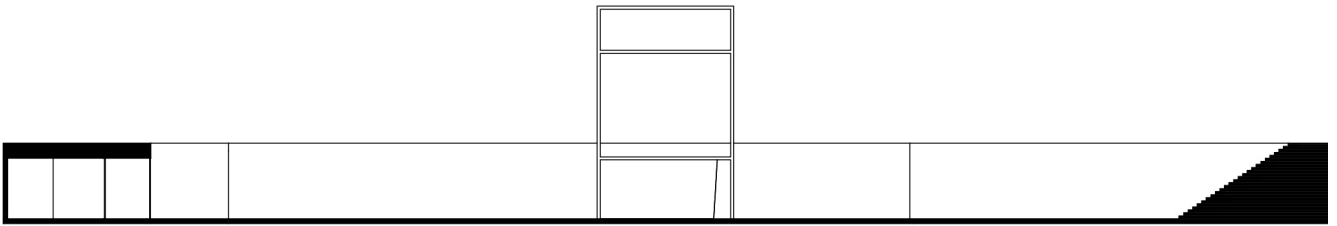
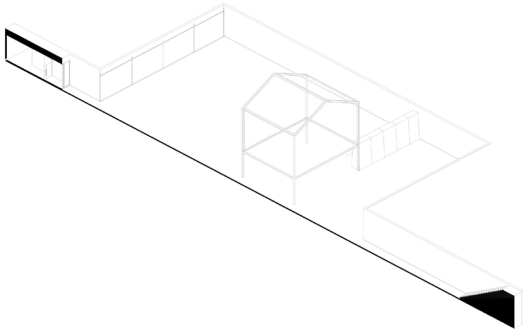




COURTYARD ELEVATION / SOUTH 1:250

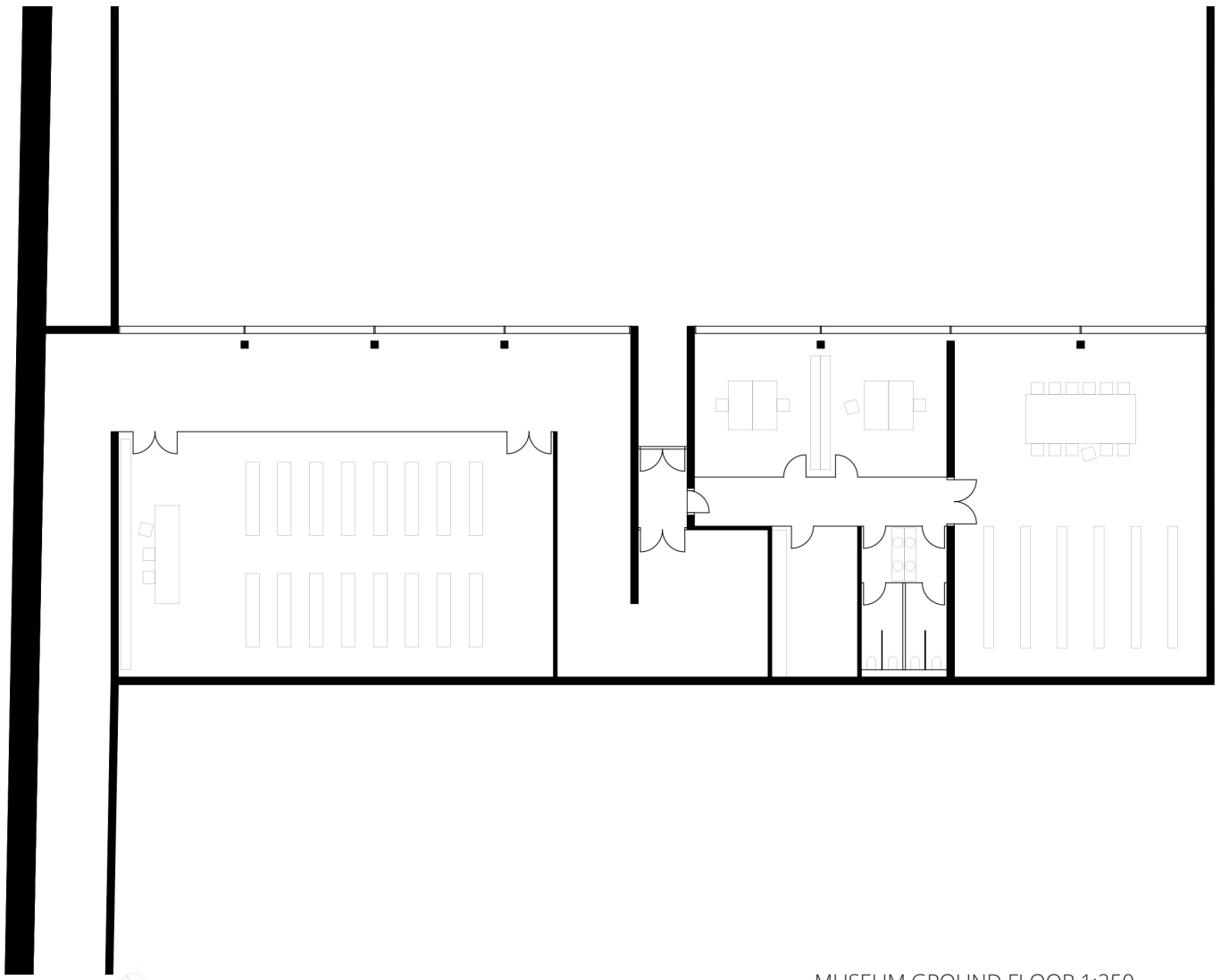


COURTYARD ELEVATION / NORTH 1:250



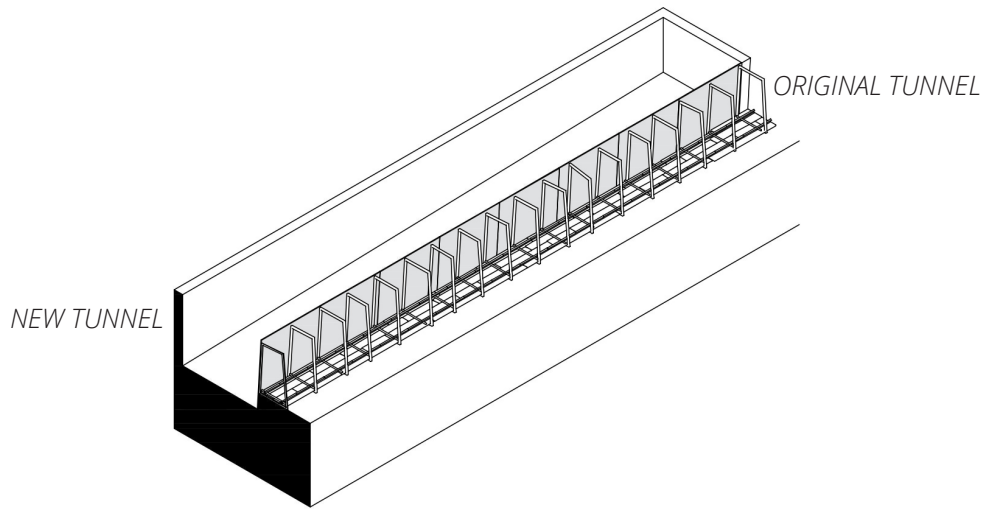
COURTYARD SECTION 1:500





MUSEUM GROUND FLOOR 1:250





DETAIL: TUNNELS AXONOMETRY



7. EPILOGUE

K E N O P S I A [noun]: the eerie, forlorn atmosphere of a place that is usually bustling with people but is now abandoned and quiet; an emotional afterimage that makes it seem not just empty but hyper-empty, with a total population in the negative, who are so conspicuously absent they glow like neon signs.¹

Footnotes **EPILOGUE**

1 neologism invented by John Koenig in his Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows, written in order to fill a hole in the language - to give a name to emotions we all might experience but don't yet have a word for; <http://www.dictionaryofobscuresorrows.com/>, 8.10.2017

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