

MARY PARK
ADAPTIVE REUSE, INTAR
SPRING 2020 THESIS BOOK

GENERATING TENSION

MEMORIAL OF SEXUAL SLAVERY

GENERATING TENSION

Memorial of Sexual Slavery

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Design in Interior Studies [Adaptive Reuse] in the Department of Interior Architecture of the Rhode Island School of Design

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Abstract

War crimes, such as slavery and rape can lead to hatred between countries of perpetrators and victims, souring political relationships for generations. Memorials of these atrocities are the physical indication of an effort, however nascent, to continue the dialogue and keep questioning the tragic history. The memorial as a reminder of a specific incident, not only changes the relationship of surrounding spaces within the site but also between different groups that are engaged in that specific history.

In South Korea, the history of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II has been a major cause of anti-Japanese sentiment, leading to international conflict. Since 2011, memorials to the victims of sexual slavery, called Statues of Peace, have been erected throughout South Korea as a call for apology and remembrance of the victims. **The first of these statues, which sits in front of the former Japanese Embassy in Seoul, is where weekly demonstrations have taken place for 29 years.**

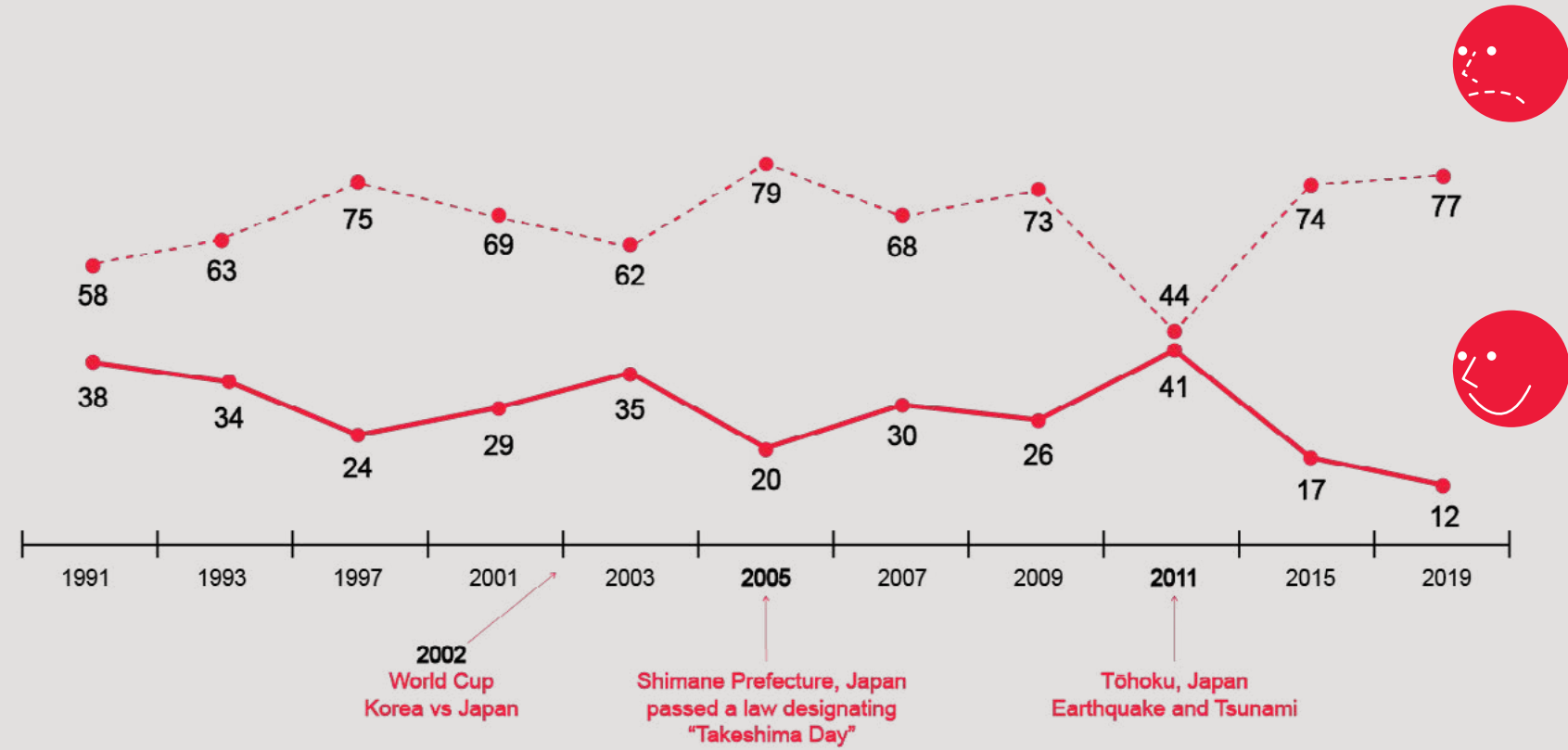
Such statues commemorating a sensitive memory that involve specific countries can create a site of confrontation. In fact, the presence of the statue and the weekly demonstration halted the reconstruction of the Japanese embassy in 2019. **Acknowledging the state of tension, rather than avoiding it, is the first step in improving the political relationship; and these spaces of confrontation hold real potential. The tension created in the site is not negative energy, but is the fuel that will always facilitate a dialogue.**

Today, the statue gazes toward a construction fence built around the empty Japanese Embassy plot, provoking critical questions. **How should one proceed with sensitive dialogue without being so delicate that no progress is made? As a response, the intervention begins by reconstructing the lost memory, a recreation of the past Embassy building, through re-using the construction fence, and existing political tension as a building material.** The gaze of the statue, from the other side of the curb, then penetrates through the new volume of the Japanese Embassy. This creates a corridor that invites visitors into the memorial, which itself grows out of ongoing tension. **The intervention that creates a monumental space that starts with the acknowledgment and utilization of the existing political tension as material to build a different relationship.**

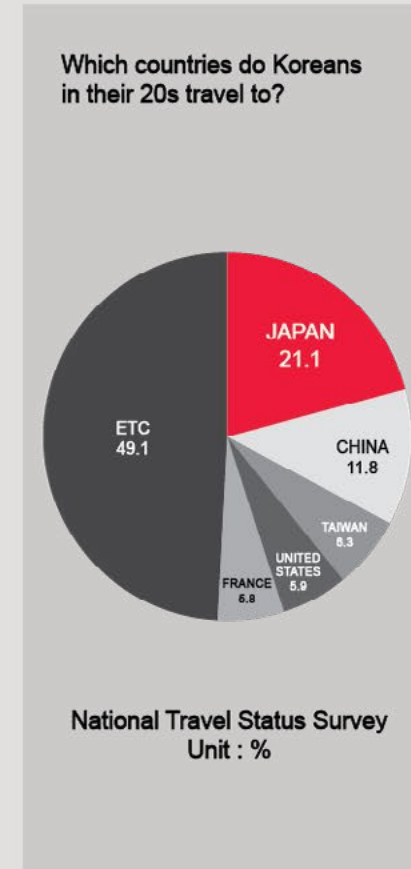
South Korea's 'No Japan' boycott is new.
But the wounds are old.

-GlobalPost

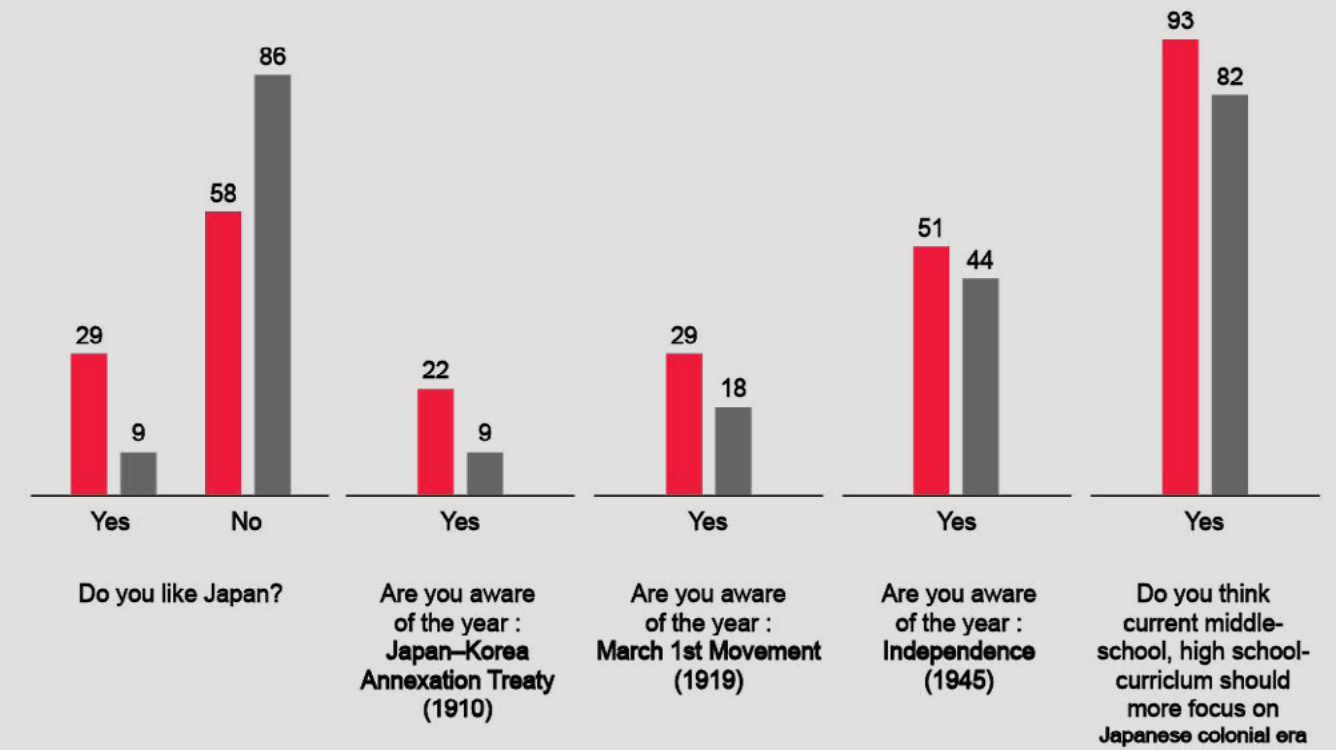
How do Koreans feel about Japan? 1991-2019



Donga (2019)



How do Koreans in their 20s and 60s feel about Japan? 20s 60s



Weekly Chosun (2018)



Prologue

Anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea

'No Japan' campaign is an ongoing movement in South Korea. It began in July 2019 with a boycott of Japanese brands by Korean consumers after the Japanese government abruptly decided to restrict exports of three chemical products used by South Korean companies to make cell phones and electronic displays. 1 1 Since then in anyone in South Korea, who purchases products from Japanese brands, like Uniqlo and Muji, will be severely criticized. Demonstrations against Japan as a response to the economic constraints are becoming more violent.

Likewise, the political tension between the two countries has been on the downside since the Japanese colonial rule, from 1910 to 1945, so the trade war is only the tip of the iceberg. It's a long-standing complicated relationship. South Koreans are always extremely sensitive toward any issues related to Japan. For instance, people behave aggressively with any sports game versus Japanese teams and the controversy over the ownership of a Korean island Dokdo is a never-ending topic on the news. It is such a tragedy that the acrimony between the two neighboring countries is so strong. However, the national antagonism will not resolve at any time soon, as the tension has its roots from the Japanese colonial rule. In particular, it includes the time of sex slavery by the Japanese Imperial army during and after World War II.

At the same time, among Koreans, today, the attitudes and the degree of hatred varies among different generations, the degree of this hatred. According to the research, younger generations, in their 20s compared to the older generation in their 60s, although they are still on the edge when it comes to historical conflicts with Japan, they enjoy Japanese culture especially the food. Traveling to Japan to try delicious food was a common topic these generations would talk about with their friends, before the recent trade war, when Koreans started to boycott any purchase from Japanese brands. For the older generations who have experienced colonial rule, it is difficult to understand this contradictory curiosity of younger generations. Different perspectives are growing among different generations in South Korea, which, as a result, can also develop into another serious conflict within South Korea.

Hence, South Korea is facing a strong need to start building a more constructive dialogue with Japan as an attempt to relieve the tension. It is not only to improve the relationship between the countries but is also significant in bringing different generations of Korea, to discuss shaping the historical attitude together.

South Korea's 'No Japan' boycott is new. But the wounds are old.
-GlobalPost

1 As a result of the trade war between South Korea and Japan, the economy of both countries are suffering. From July to August, Japan's export rates to South Korea declined 8.1% relative to the same period of 2018 and South Korea has experienced a 3.5% decline to Japan. In fact, on Aug. 2, Japan officially removed South Korea from its white list, which is a group of countries typically given preferential treatment on trade. Meanwhile, South Korea is floating the idea of removing itself from the General Security of Military Operations Agreement or GSOMIA, an intelligence-sharing agreement also involving Japan and the United States.

PART I. BACKGROUND

SOUTH KOREA

VS

JAPAN



History of Tension

Sex Slavery by Imperial Japanese Army

During 46 years of Japanese rule from 1910 to 1945 (Its rule came to an end on August 15, 1945, as Japan surrendered in World War II), Japan had left an extensive amount of influence on Korean culture as the government's priority was Korea's Japanization. Ranging from language, food to architecture, etc the influence is still present all over the Korean peninsula as a part almost impossible to get rid of, and what Koreans become extremely sensitive against since they are the living evidence of brutal history. What South Koreans are mostly angry about is that there wasn't always a proper apology from the Japanese government regarding their horrible mistakes from this time.

Sex slavery, by the Imperial Japanese Army, is especially, one of the most important topics when it comes to the complicated relationship between the two nations. Before and during World War II, large number of young women(the numbers are still quite not accurate but estimated to be ranging from 20,000 to 360,000/ 410,000) were abducted from the countries those were under Japanese rule during the time, mostly from Korea and China, to be transported to military "comfort stations".¹ These women were under dehumanized status, as only one-quarter of the victims survived, still with a severe disease transmitted through rape and violence and even a lot of them were left infertile after. It is not surprising that the army and Navy records used the term "units of war supplies".

So far, in South Korea, the number of registered victims of this tragedy has been decreased to 21 from 240 (by April 2019), and it is expected to go down faster as their average age has now become 91. Nothing can ever compensate for the horrible incident that has taken over their whole life, but these women, with support of Korean civic groups, are still fighting for a genuine apology from the Japanese government.

The "comfort women" were usually injected with salvarsan, which together with damage to the vagina caused by rape or rough sex were the causes of unusually high rates of sterility among the "comfort women".

-Wikipedia

¹ Comfort stations were located in not only Japan, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, then Malaya, Thailand, Burma, New Guinea, Hong Kong, Macau, and French Indochina

< Four Korean comfort women with a Japanese soldier (1944)



History of Tension

Statue of Peace

Statue of Peace was constructed to commemorate the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration on December 14, 2011 in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, Korea. Since then, 124 Statues has been erected all over the Korean peninsula, 10 of them in different countries including the US, Australia, Canada, Germany, and China.

The 134 statues are almost identical in design as except for few variations, they are represented as a young girl (the average age of the victims by the time were the early 20s to mid-20s, Kim Bok-dong, the first witness in Korea, was only 14 when the Japanese Army came into her house) in their sitting on a chair. It is an image of victims of forced prostitution by the Imperial Japanese Army, and an empty chair next to the girl provides a space for people today to emphasize with these victims.

It is the site, the opposite of the Japanese Embassy, that makes the initial statue so powerful. According to the two artists, Kim Seo-kyung and Kim Eun-sung, it was the Japanese government's overreaction as strong opposition against the statue, that changed the artists' original plan, which was to construct a memorial stone, to 'Statue of Peace'.

Every Wednesday at noon, this statue becomes a place for Wednesday Demonstration demanding Japan to redress the Comfort Women problems.¹ The first demonstration held on January 8, 1992, It is the world's oldest rally on a single theme by the Guinness Book of Records. Although Korean law prohibits protests around the foreign embassy, the Wednesday demonstration falls in one of the exceptions, which is the demonstration is expected to be held on a small scale.

¹ Objectives of Wednesday Demonstration

- (1) Acknowledge the war crime.
- (2) Reveal the truth in its entirety about the crimes of military sexual slavery.
- (3) Make an official apology by the Japanese Government.
- (4) Make legal reparations.
- (5) Punish those responsible for the war crime.
- (6) Accurately record the crime in history textbooks.
- (7) Erect a memorial for the victims of military sexual slavery and establish a historical museum.

PART I. BACKGROUND



1976
-Embassy building **erected**

2013
-New construction plan by Japanese government delivered to Jongno provincial government office

2015
-Construction permit acquired
-**Demolition** began

2016
-Artifacts from Joseon Dynasty were discovered at the construction site

2019
-Construction permit cancelled

State of Tension

Unresolved conflict

The former Japanese embassy, built in 1976, is a six-story building including the basement. Described as “a red brick structure surrounded by high, barbed-wire-topped walls and guarded at all hours by dozens of police officers”.

The Japanese government owns a 2,382 sq.m plot in Jeongno, Seoul. After a Korea-Japan Treaty in 1965, it took Japan almost four years to settle down in the current site. Whenever they considered several possible sites in Seoul, the Japanese government struggled to make a decision as Koreans were highly against any. Hence, the final site was offered by the Korean government at a cheaper price.

It’s been six years since the building has been torn down in 2015. The office has been temporarily moved to a commercial building nearby, for a reconstruction of a new building including a three-story basement and six-story above, planning to be completed by 2020. However, the construction has been halted in 2019 without any future plans within the plot. According to one Japanese expert, it is quite unusual for a Japanese major government office to rent out space in a building considering its high-security issues. Also, among ‘The Four Countries’, US, China, Japan, Russia, considered to be having close relationships with Korea, Japan is the only one that doesn’t own an embassy building in Korea. Even the building permit has been canceled by Jongno District Office, after several warning letters regarding the delay in construction, and with no response from the Japanese government. It is, in fact, illegal for such delays in starting the construction without a valid reason.

According to a report by the Japanese journal, Mainichi, the presence of Statue of Peace is the major reason for the delay. Furthermore, foreign Minister Katsumi Sawada, who has served as a correspondent for Seoul for eight years, said in his article that there is no official that the Japanese embassy is expected to return soon.

Today, Statue of Peace is staring at a high temporary fence that’s surrounding this empty plot left in a state of neglect, the voices of weekly protest, are reflected off from this void. It is, indeed, a physical indication of a current relationship and a bleak future between the two countries, which has to be considered carefully to bring back the conversation.

< Demolition of Japanese Embassy Building from October 5th to December 30th (2015)

“...Another feature of the embassy, ... is its minimal presence; it is hard to be seen from every perspective, while the central office is only 300~400m away. Beyond the alleys and walls behind the tall Hankook Ilbo (Korean journal) building, the Japanese Embassy, surrounded by many buildings, doesn’t exist physically to those who do not seek it.”
-Jeong-gyeong



한국에 「일본국」을 대표하는 대사관이 개설된 것은 한일국교정상화가 이루어진 다음해인 1965년.



> Japanese Embassy Building has been standing in the center of the capital city, Seoul, but it's quite hidden (1995)

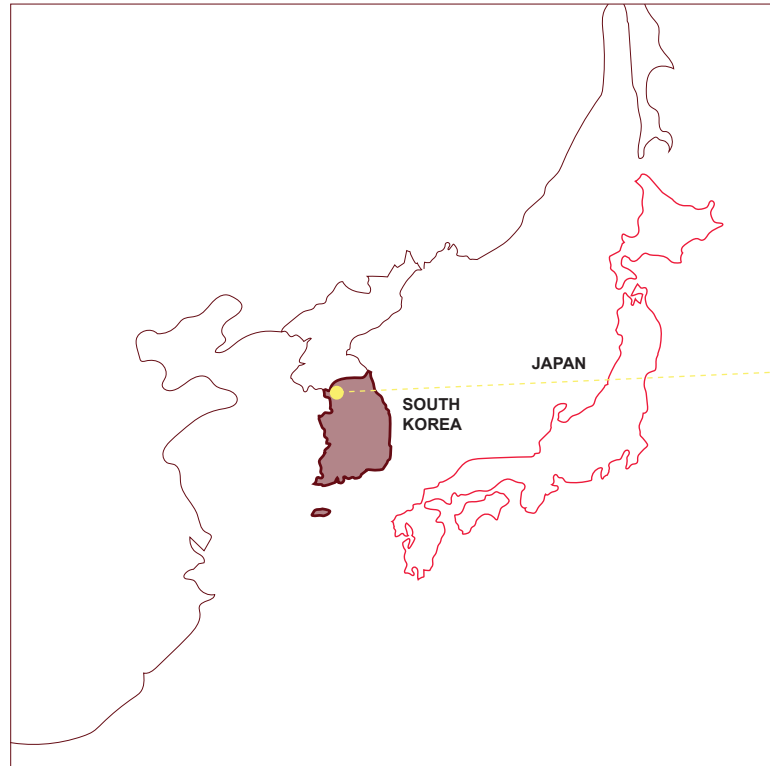
< Construction of Japanese Embassy Building (1968)

관제의 접촉교류는
 ...Another feature of the embassy, ... is its minimal presence; it is hard to be seen from every perspective, while the central office is only 300~400m away. Beyond the alleys and walls behind the tall Hankook Ilbo (Korean journal) building, the Japanese Embassy, surrounded by many buildings, doesn't exist physically to those who do not seek it."
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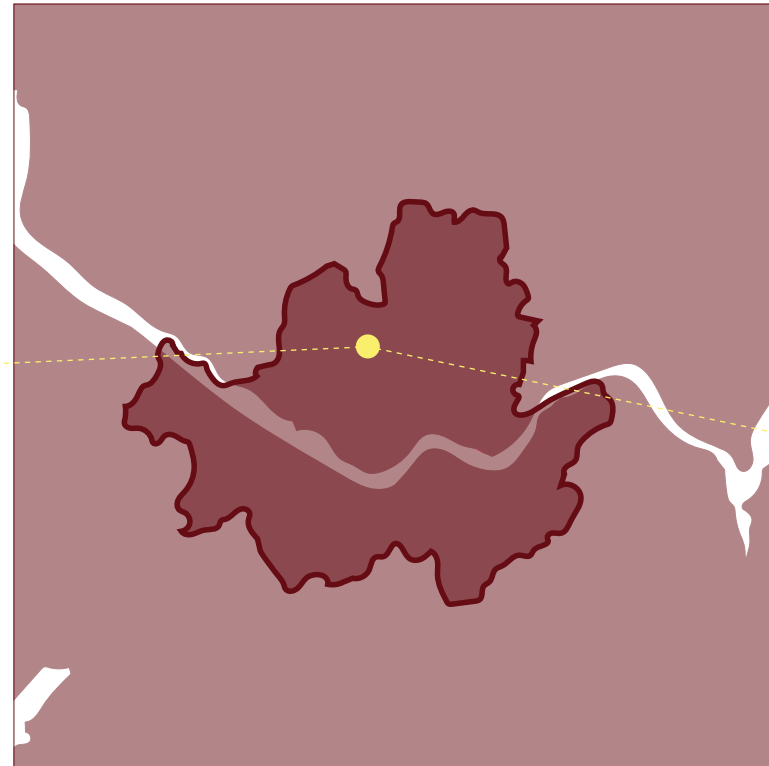
PART II. SITE

STATUE OF PEACE

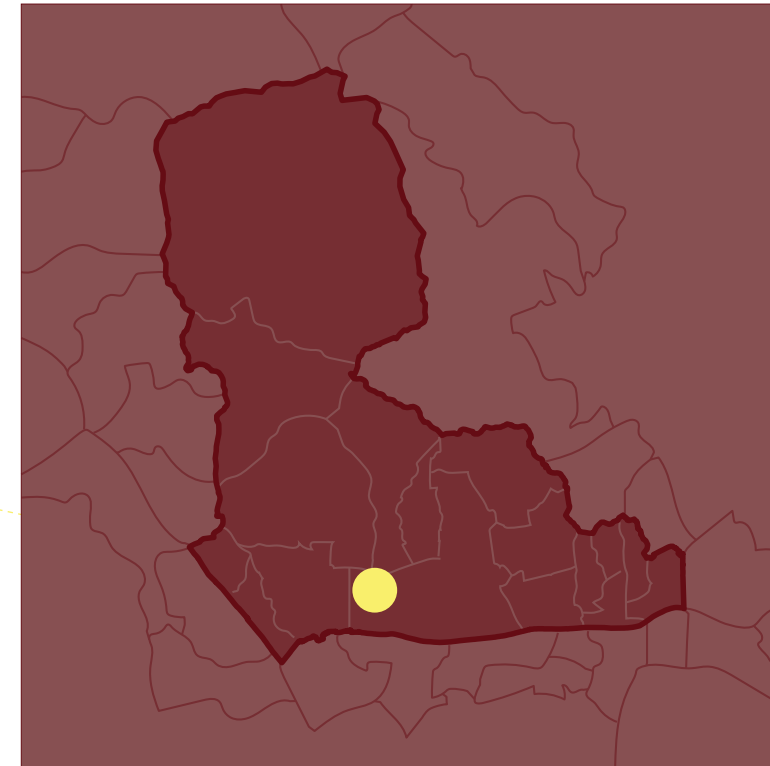
평화의 소녀상



SOUTH KOREA



SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA



JONG-NO GU, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

FROM NEIGHBOR TO ENEMY



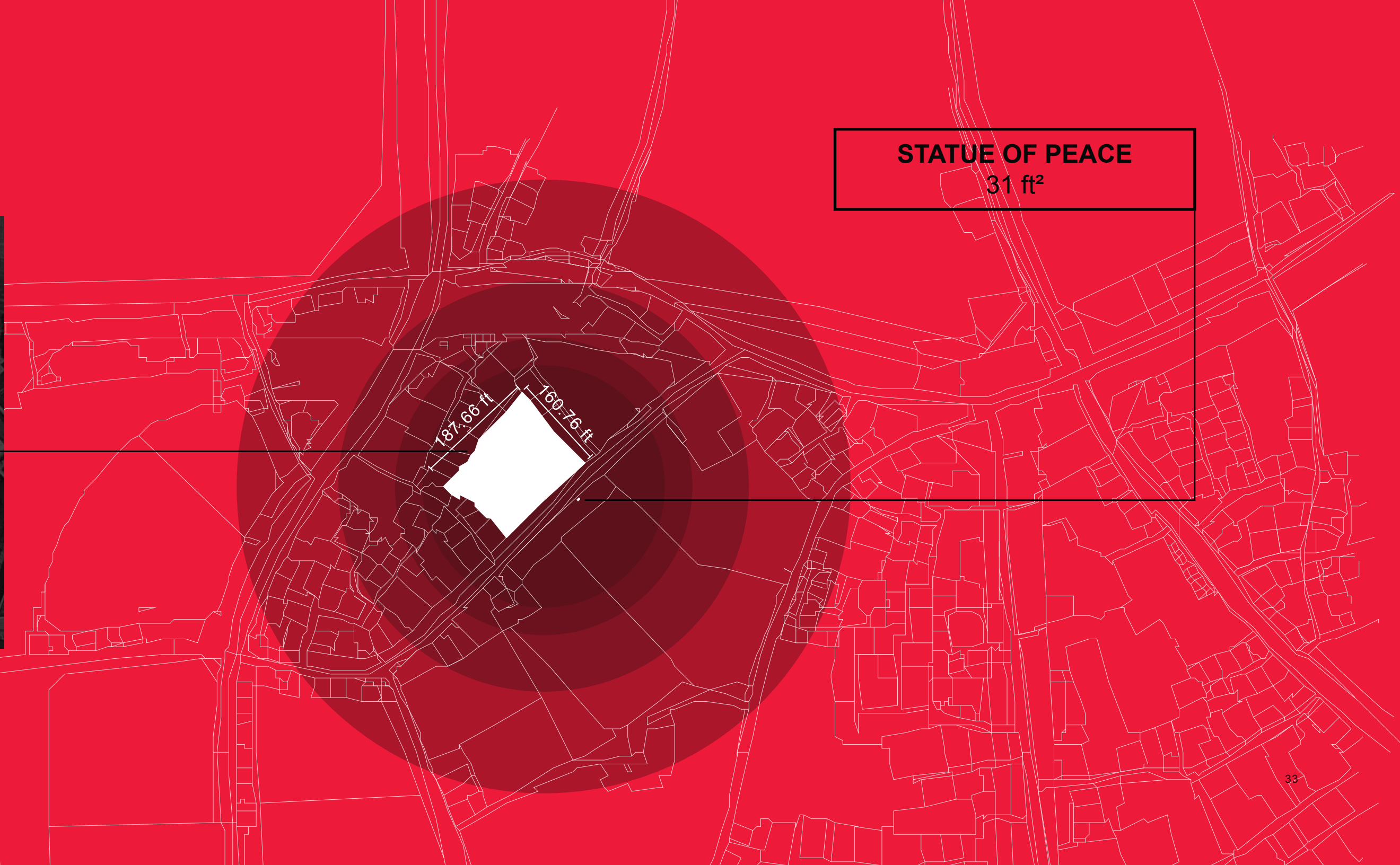
**STATUE OF PEACE,
JONG-NŌ GU, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA**

PART II. SITE

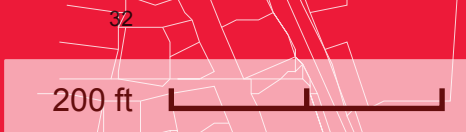
Since the erection of the statue in 2011, the site of confrontation has become an epicenter of diplomatic tension between South Korea and Japan.



JAPANESE EMBASSY PLOT
19,113 ft²



STATUE OF PEACE
31 ft²





B. JAPANESE EMBASSY PLOT

A. STATUE OF PEACE



The high construction fence, surrounding the trace of the old embassy building, is a symbol of temporality.

What is the statue staring at today?

PART II. SITE

In the busiest part of the capital city, Seoul, people come across the site that reflects the current diplomatic tension. Reconciliation or stronger conflict? We are still in the process of creating a different relationship.



The parameter of the thesis site includes Statue of Peace, where weekly demonstration takes place, and the empty Japanese Embassy plot. The project is an imagination of temporal intervention as a stepping stone of further conversation.



1. Japanese Embassy Plot

The five-story former Japanese building built in 1970, was demolished in 2016, expected to be reconstructed to a six-story building by 2020. However, in 2019, the Japanese government has halted the construction. The presence of the statue and the weekly demonstrations are factors of diplomatic tensions between South Korea and Japan.

Today, approximately 19,113 square feet Embassy territory is left empty with a construction fence surrounding the site. The entire facility is temporarily relocated to the office building nearby.



[FORMER JAPANESE EMBASSY]

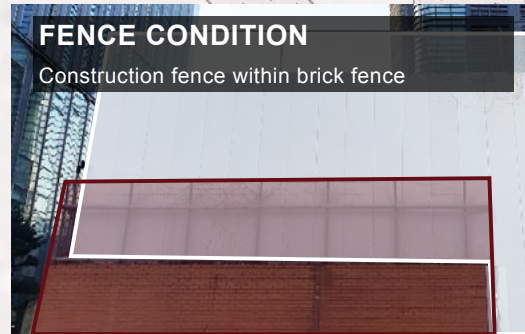


> Former Japanese Embassy Building

< Abandoned Japanese Embassy plot (2019)

PART II. SITE

- 1. LOST BORDER:
Boundary of Japanese Embassy building
- 2. OLD BORDER:
Fence of Japanese Embassy
- 3. TEMPORARY BORDER:
Construction fence



- 1. LOST BORDER
- 2. OLD BORDER
- 3. TEMPORARY BORDER

JAPANESE EMBASSY PLOT
19,113 ft²

STATUE OF PEACE
31 ft²

JAPANESE EMBASSY
NEW LOCATION

[FENCE CONDITION]



> New Border, Construction Fence (2019)
< Existing Site Plan 1:64

2. Statue of Peace

Statues of Peace, “ Sonyeosang” in Korean, were erected all over South Korea as well as several foreign countries including the United States and Germany. The intention is to call for an apology and commemorate the victims of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army during WWII.

Among 124 statues in South Korea (by 2019), the initial statue was erected on December 14th, 2011, to celebrate the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration. The statue was designed by couple Kim Seo-kyung and Kim Eun-sun, and to capture the time the victims were abducted, it is in the shape of a girl.



[MEANING]

Artists depicted the victims as a young girl, in an actual scale.

It becomes an emotional object as it is often decorated with clothes by the people who sympathize with it.

Girl

“The girl represents those who were forcefully and systematically sexually abused by the Japanese (during WWII).”

Hair

“We showed how these girls had their relationships (with family and friends) cut off against their will through the statue’s cropped hair.”

Face

“The face is of one who is angry about their treatment, but unafraid and with the will to resolve this issue.”

Bird

“The bird is a symbol of peace, freedom and liberation. It connects those victims who ‘returned to the sky’ and the ones who are still left on the ground.”

Empty Chair

“People can sit in the shoes of the victims and think ‘what if it was me?’, ‘what if it was my family, my sister?’.”

Shadow

“Despite the statue being a girl, its shadow is that of an old woman. It represents the hardship the victims had to suffer all this time.”

Fists

“The clenched fists represent how the victims will no longer stay silent about Japan’s war crimes and want to tell the truth.”

Heels

“The heels are unattached to the ground, this represents the unstable lives of the victims, regarded as ‘sluts’ or ‘prostitutes’ and treated coldly by society.”

BRONZE CASTING
PEACE MONUMENT

GRANITE MOSAIC
FLOOR FINISH
OVER CONCRETE BASE





[LOCATION]

There are 133 statues in total, including 9 statues abroad and 124 statues all over South Korea.



> Location of Statues_ World Map (L)/ South Korea (R)
< 500 Figures of Statue of Peace (2017)

3. Wednesday Demonstration

Wednesday Demonstration demanding Japan to redress the Comfort Women problems, as an official term, it is a protest against the Japanese government, of their war crime, sexual slavery during World War II. In the presence of surviving victims, it is aimed to call for a sincere official apology from Japan.

After the first demonstration on January 8th, 1992, people gather every Wednesday at noon in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul. In fact, Wednesday Demonstration was listed as the world's longest rally under a single issue, in 2002.

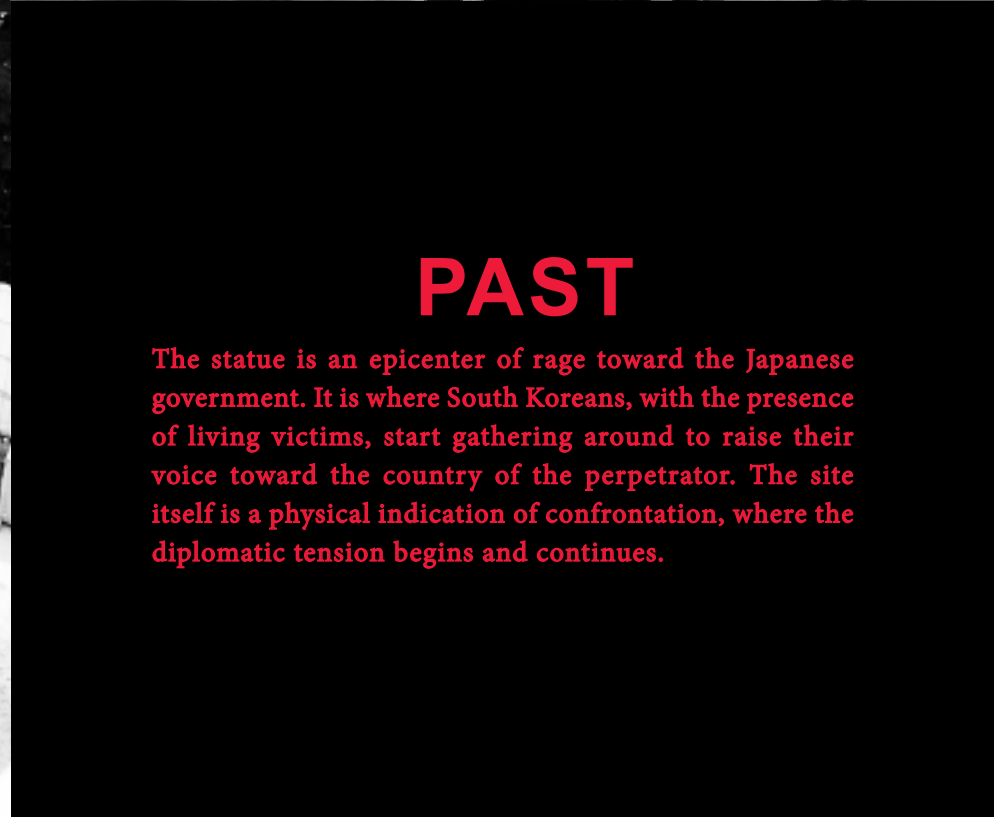


> 1000th Wednesday Demonstration with erection of the initial Statue of Peace (2011)

< First Wednesday Demonstration (1992)



PART II. SITE



PAST

The statue is an epicenter of rage toward the Japanese government. It is where South Koreans, with the presence of living victims, start gathering around to raise their voice toward the country of the perpetrator. The site itself is a physical indication of confrontation, where the diplomatic tension begins and continues.

PRESENT

Now that the Japanese embassy building is gone since 2015, the statue is staring at the trace, enclosed by a high construction fence. The gaze of the statue became has now become much stronger than before. It is confronting the reality of diplomatic tension that has gotten worse than ever. It throws a significant question to us, "How should one proceed with sensitive dialogue without being so delicate that no progress is made?"



Site Analysis

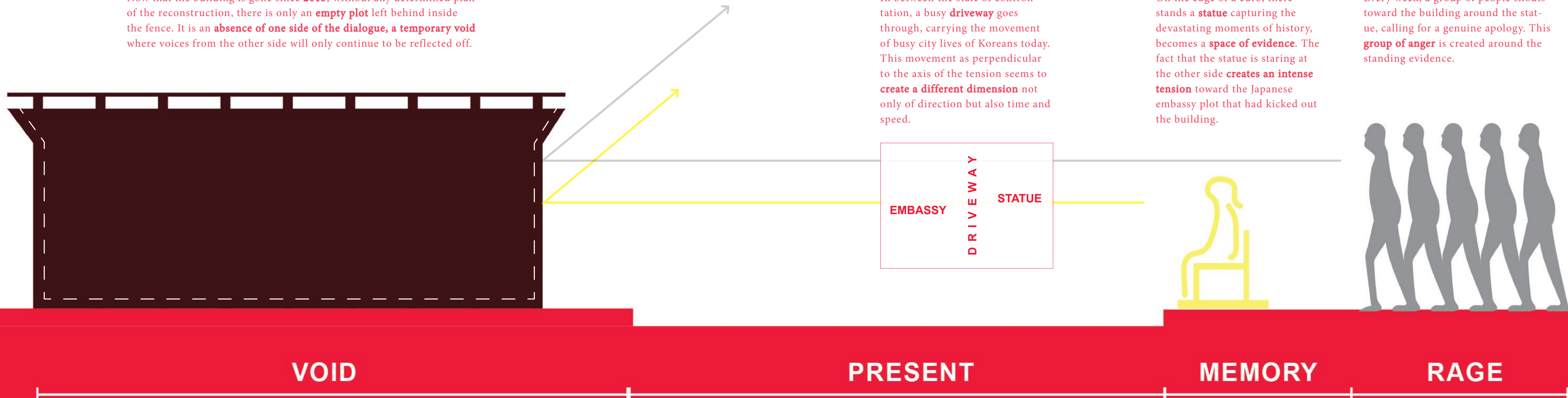
Curb as Border

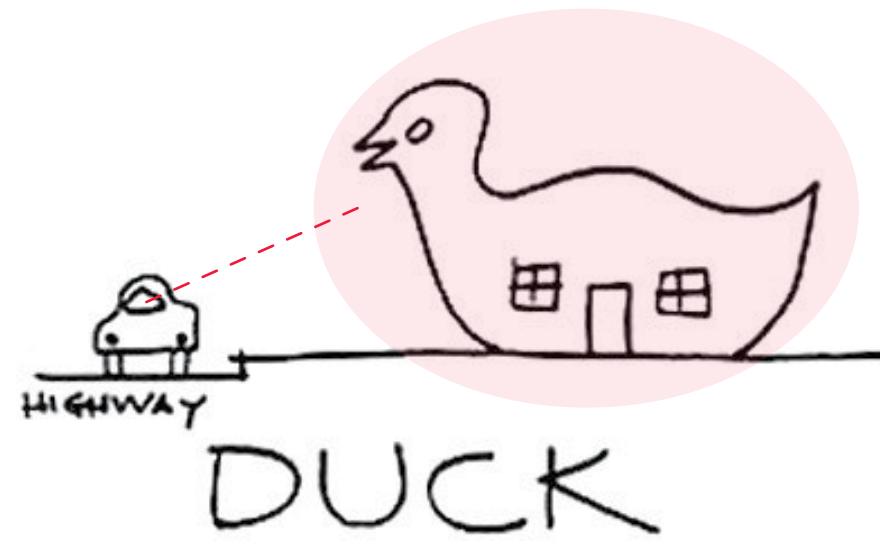
Now that the building is gone since **2015**, without any determined plan of the reconstruction, there is only an **empty plot** left behind inside the fence. It is an **absence of one side of the dialogue, a temporary void** where voices from the other side will only continue to be reflected off.

In between the state of confrontation, a busy **driveway** goes through, carrying the movement of busy city lives of Koreans today. This movement as perpendicular to the axis of the tension seems to **create a different dimension** not only of direction but also time and speed.

On the edge of a curb, there stands a **statue** capturing the devastating moments of history, becomes a **space of evidence**. The fact that the statue is staring at the other side **creates an intense tension** toward the Japanese embassy plot that had kicked out the building.

Every week, a group of people shouts toward the building around the statue, calling for a genuine apology. This **group of anger** is created around the standing evidence.



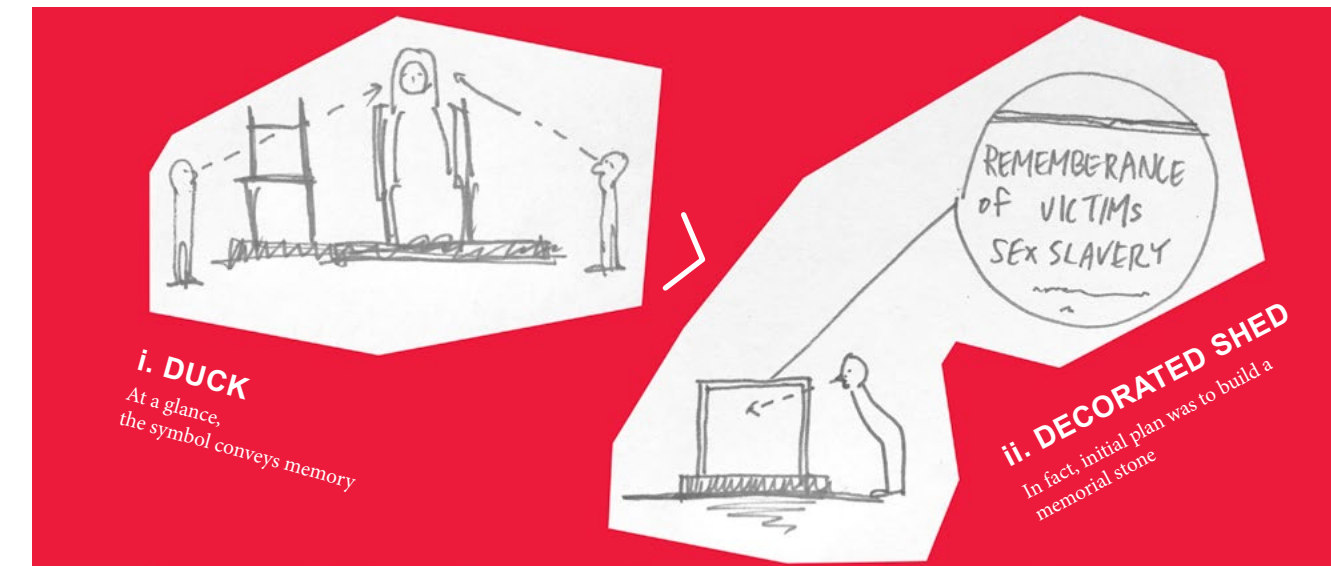
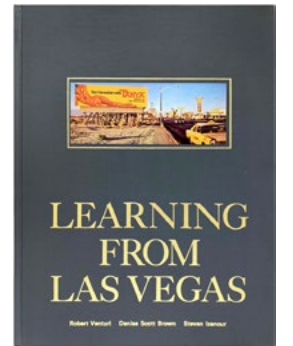


Site as Meaning

Statue as Symbol

From **'Learning from Las Vegas'** (1972) by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, describe architecture under the idea of ducks or decorated sheds. The "Ducks" refer to a building literally in the shape of a duck, an architecture that is shaped under what it represents, also where form follows meaning. At the same time, "Decorated Sheds", talks about a building that only can be identified with informative signage, a decorative component that can be replaced/ relocated to any other buildings anytime.

In this sense, the site filled with significant history and rich content should be analyzed under the "Ducks" typology, as to say, where the meaning of the architecture defines more important than how it is planned. Statue of Peace, as a symbol, is an epicenter of the existing tension in the site, that creates an enclosed space for dialogue around it.



< Demolition of Japanese Embassy Building from October 5 to December 30, 2015



Site as Meaning

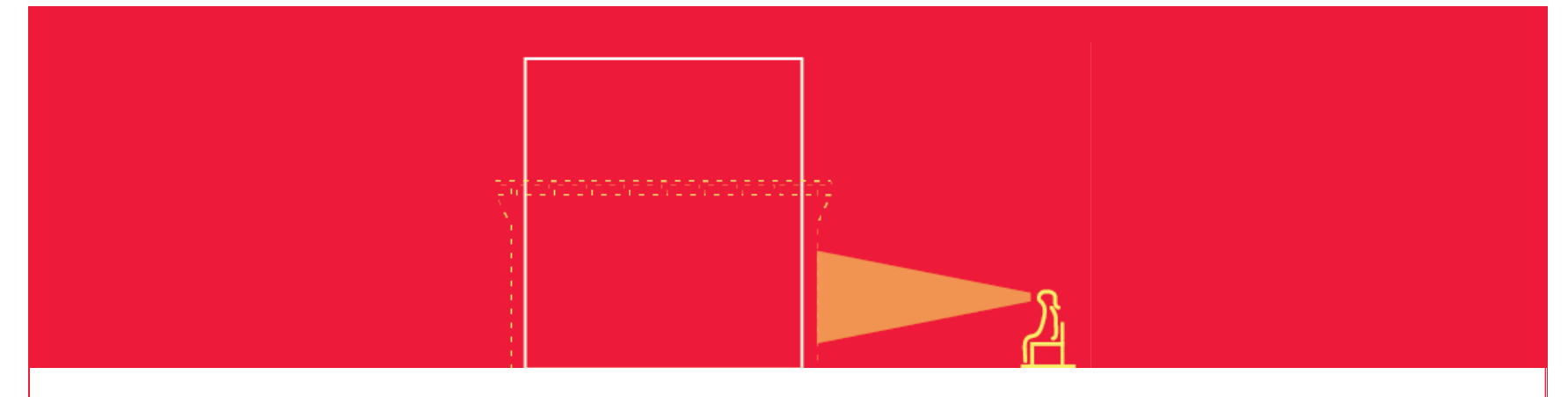
Moving Symbol

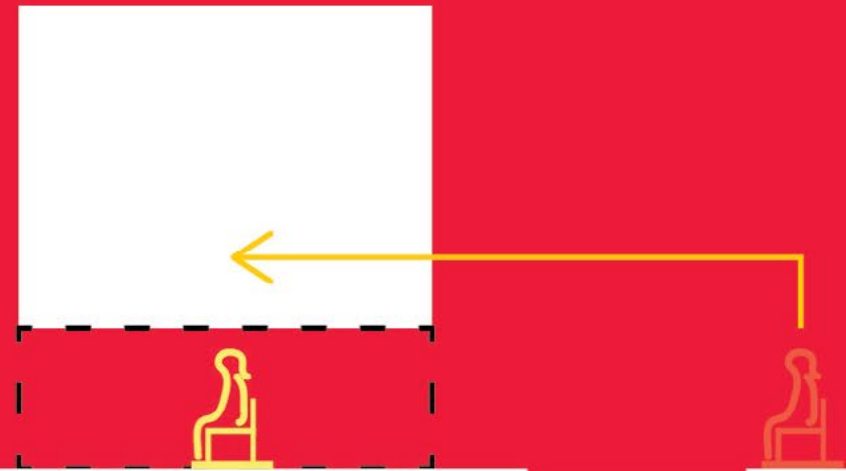
So, then what will happen when the symbol starts to move? Think of it as if playing chess. Every movement of each piece planned toward the opponent will have a crucial influence on the final result, so it has to be planned delicately. Likewise, relocating Statue of Peace, the strongest piece carrying heavy memory, will generate massive movement of a power that will modify the surrounding space.

As the symbol is moved to a different axis, it can be led to even deeper conflict or hopefully, allow to discover a perfect moment of dialogue, so the strategy requires profound study as the following result is never easy to be predicted. Moving to any direction will generate a strong architectural gesture, that will talk about not only

the attitude of Korea toward Japan but also the type of dialogue the users will experience. So further intervention, surrounding space, can only start after a step of studies on the consequences of different movements.

Currently, the statue looking straight forward is already implying a strong attitude toward the embassy building on the edge of a curb. This will be the focal point where further intervention steps are generated. Further study through different movements is to analyze the power of the statue and generated tension within the site.

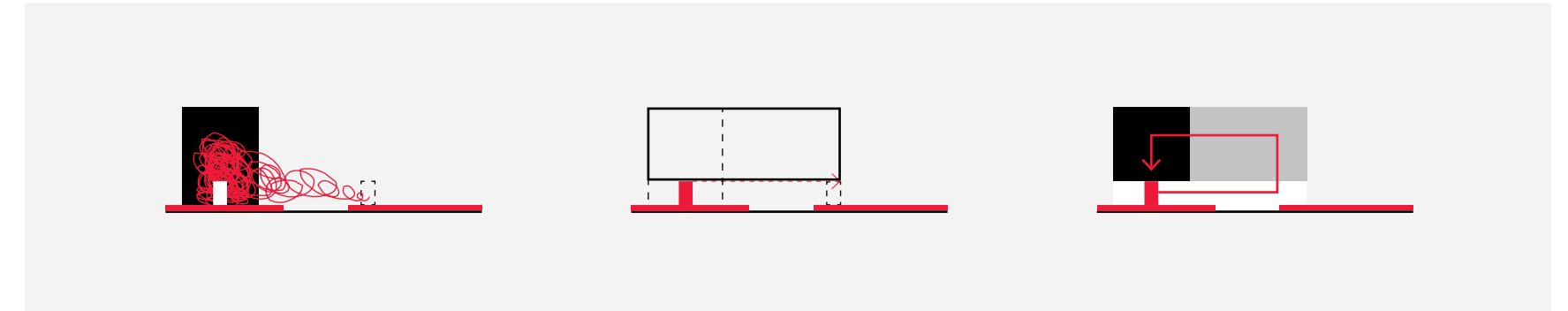




Site as Meaning

Moving the Symbol_(A) Moving Forward

The statue is looking at an empty plot. What can be done as it actually moves into the space? Will it create a massive clash or a moment of conciliation?



(A)

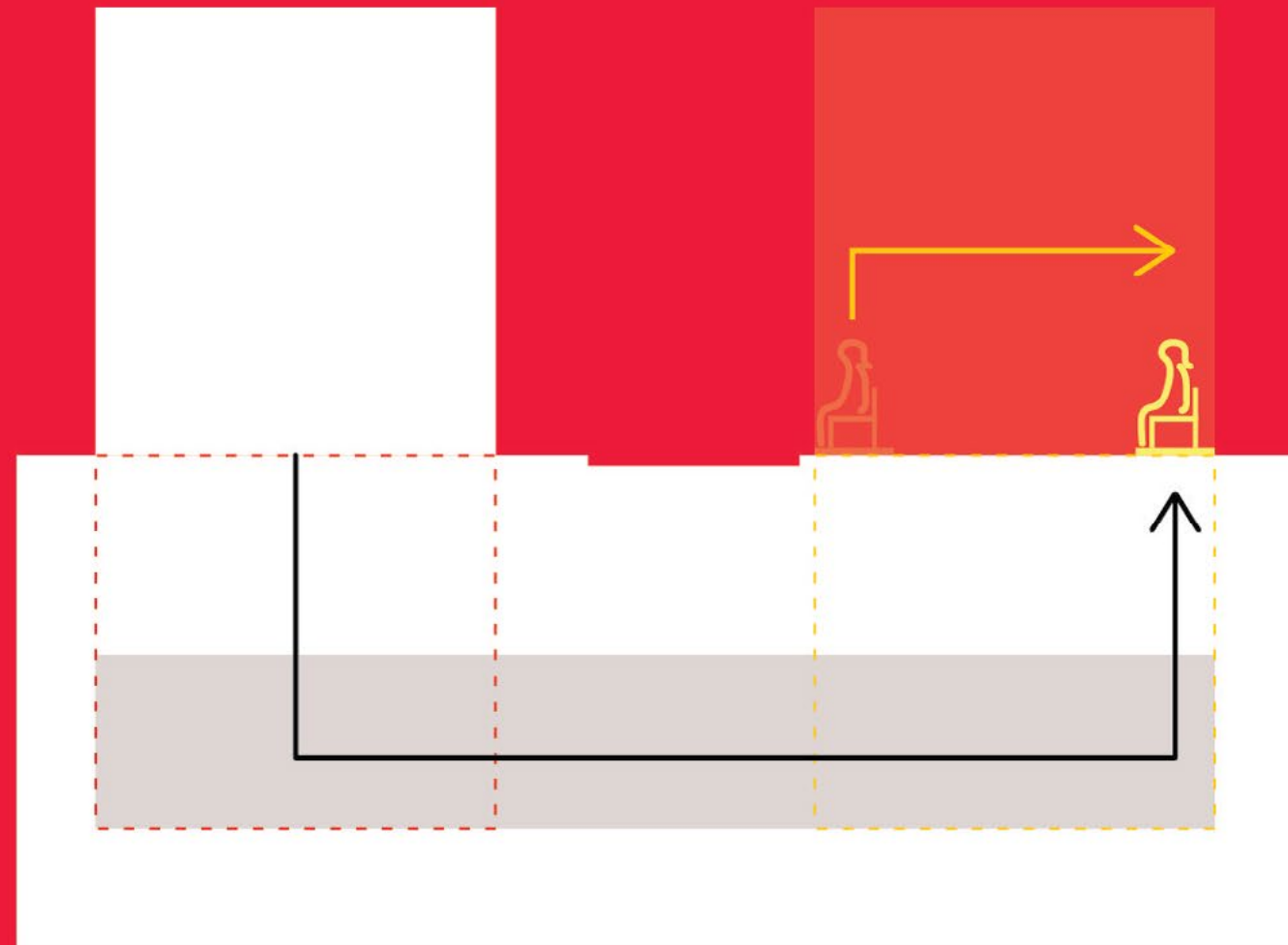
As the object of power, as the statue as an epicenter of the tension moves into the embassy plot, it will create either a clash/ integration of different powers.

(B)

The relocation now provides a breather space, extra space where we can imagine as a place for dialogue. It is placed in between and also connecting the Japanese Embassy plot and Statue of Peace.

(C)

A new direction of the dialogue can be done by connecting spatial components from the statue.

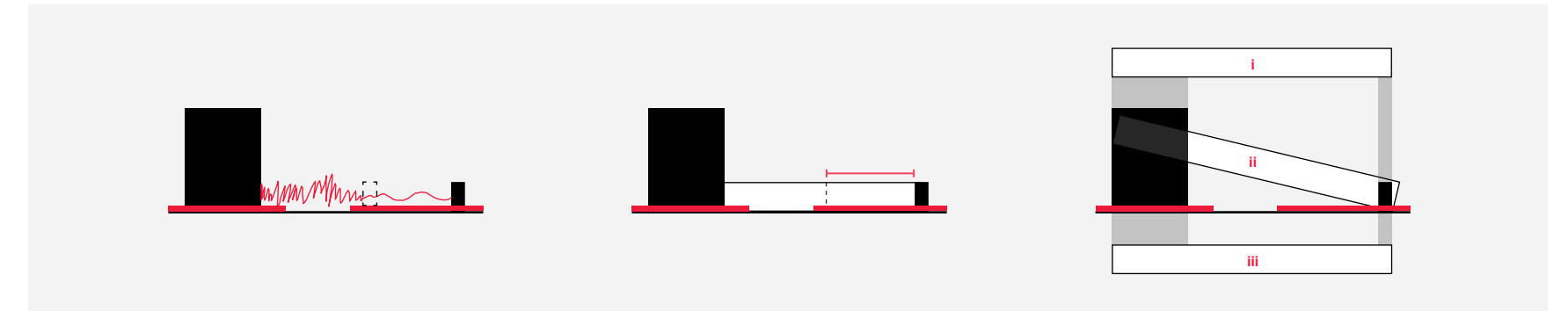


Site as Meaning

Moving the Symbol_(B) Moving Backward

The placement of the statue on the edge of a curb isn't an ideal condition for an interactive dialogue. It is not so different from how we consider proper proxemics between human beings for a better conversation. Taking one step back doesn't mean you are avoiding the person in front of you, but allow you to have more freedom ex-

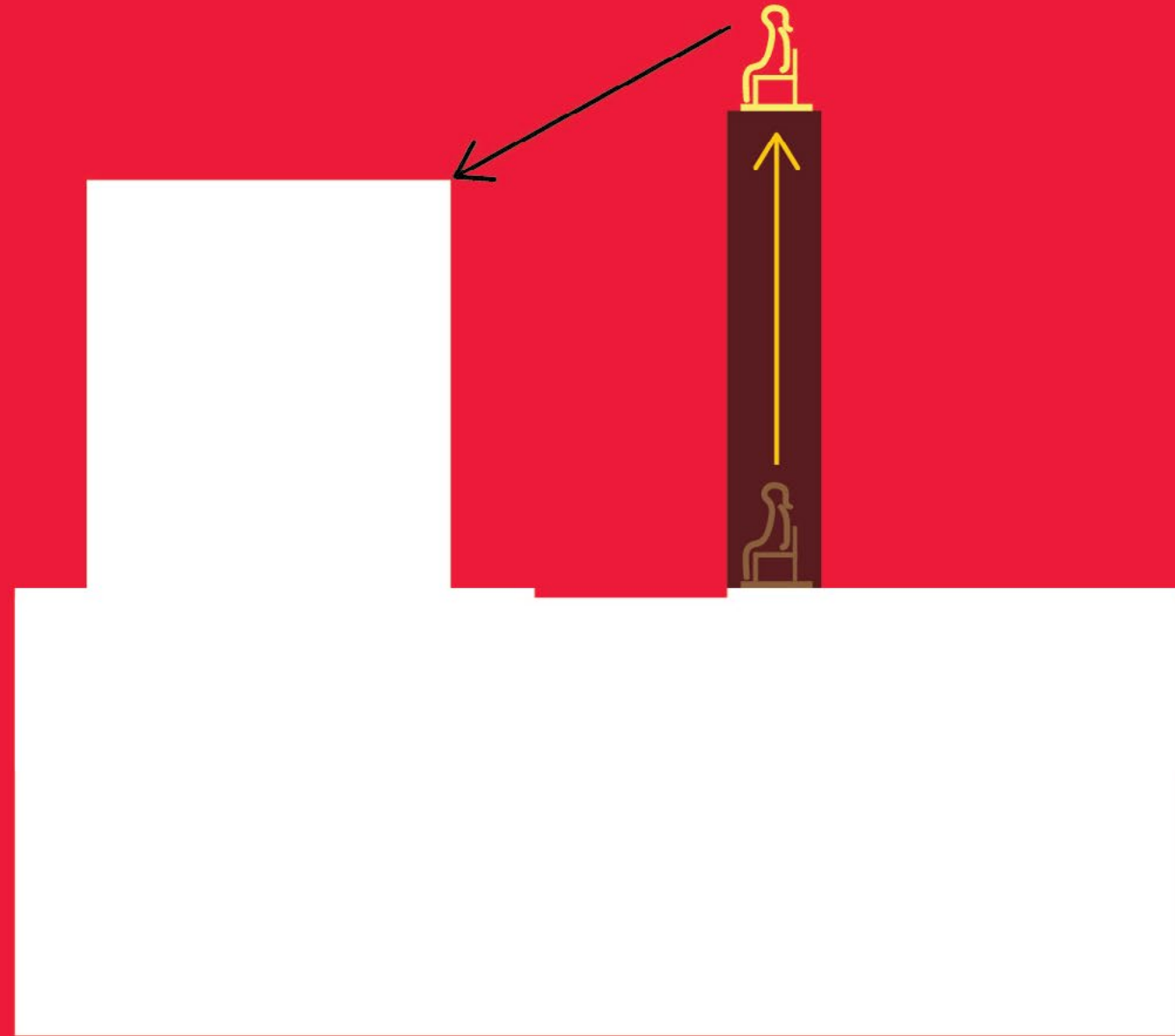
pressing yourself and better observe the reaction of the opponent to lead a better conversation. So why not by moving it back to have a pause in between? It will provide a possibility to design the space for better dialogue.



(A)
Not as a retreat, but as a way to relieve tension from the state of confrontation. The current placement of the statue seems quite tight, moving backward can start as a gesture of reconciliation.

(B)
The relocation now provides a breathing space, extra space where we can imagine as a place for the dialogue. It is placed in between and also connecting the Japanese Embassy plot and Statue of Peace.

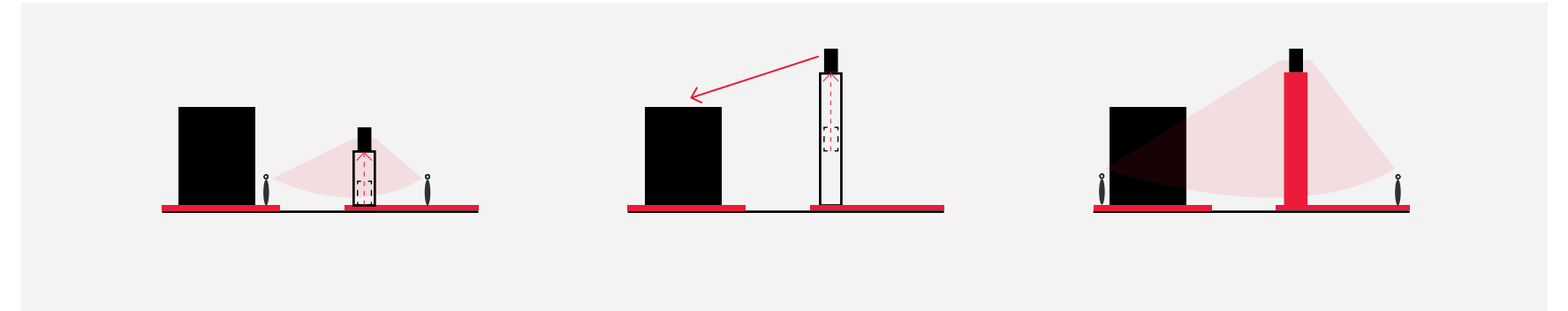
(C)
i. Elevated Space can enhance visibility as the 'Duck', the space itself as a symbol
ii. Connecting Bridge will let the circulation to start from the statue
iii. Underground Space seems to create the most balanced space



Site as Meaning

Moving the Symbol_(C) Moving Up

What if the statue is elevated on top of a tall obelisk?
It will look down the surrounding city, including the Japanese Embassy plot.



(A)

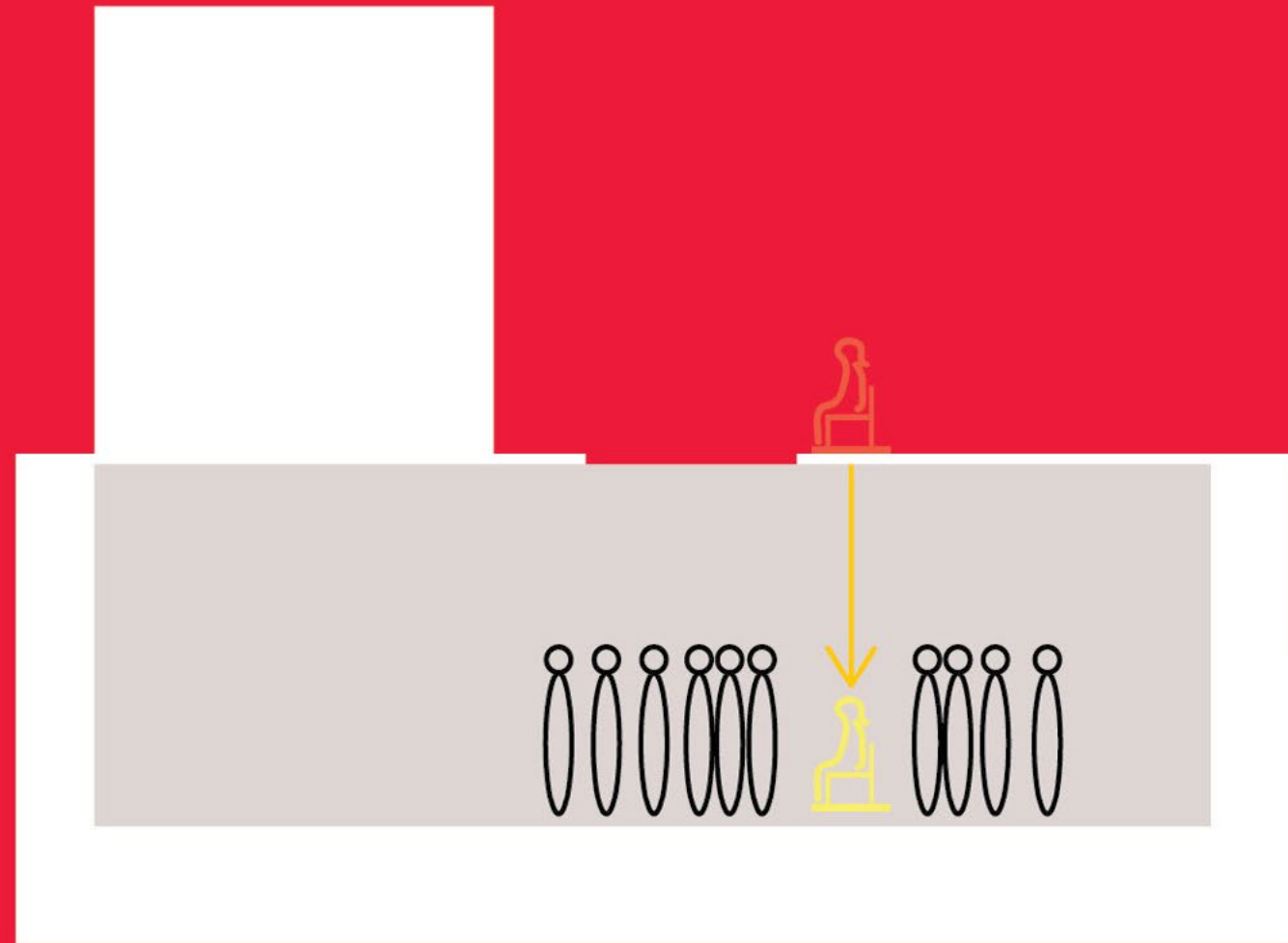
As the statue goes up, it will be easier to be seen from a distance.

(B)

As the the statue gets taller than the Japanese embassy building, height creates a visual hierarchy.

(C)

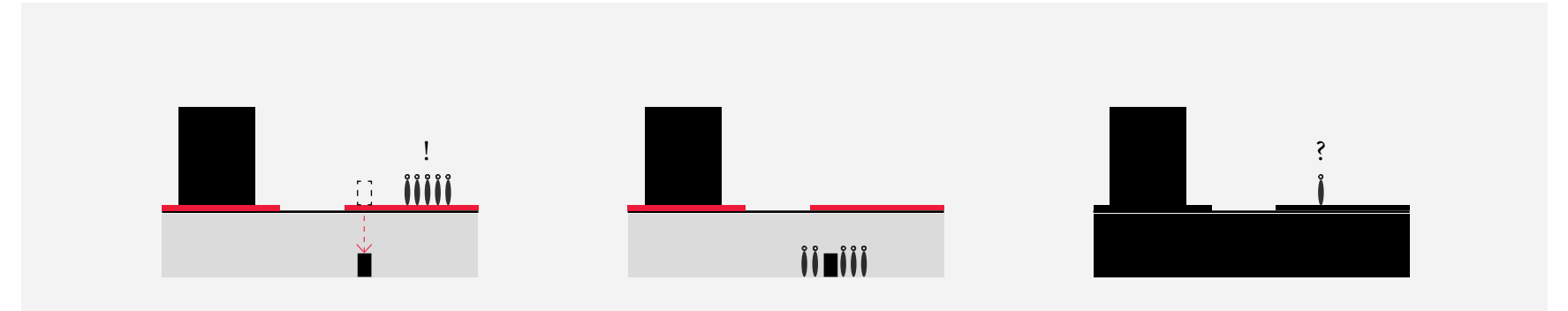
The statue on top of obelisk now is looking down not only the embassy but also the as a landmark, which can be seen from a wider perspective.



Site as Meaning

Moving the Symbol_(D) Moving Down

When the statue is submerged, the demonstration will also have to follow. A significant epicenter will just disappear from city life all of a sudden.



(A)

The statue as submerged underground, disappeared from the sight from the Japanese Embassy.

(B)

Since it is an important spatial center where the weekly demonstration happens, this may also follow down to the new placement.

(C)

After the statue is gone, there is no confrontation, the site loses one side of the dialogue.

MEMORIAL OF SEXUAL SLAVERY

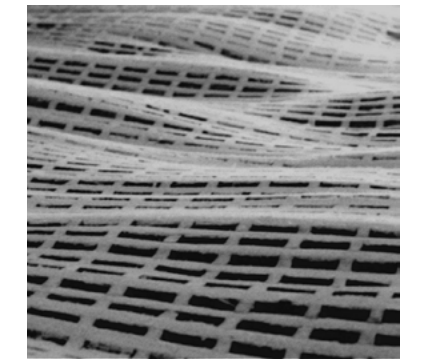
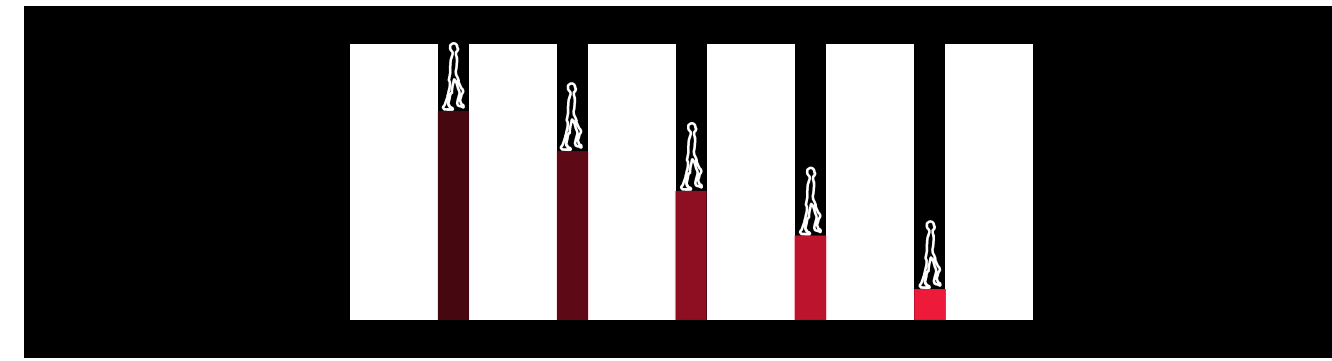


Precedent Study_ Memorial

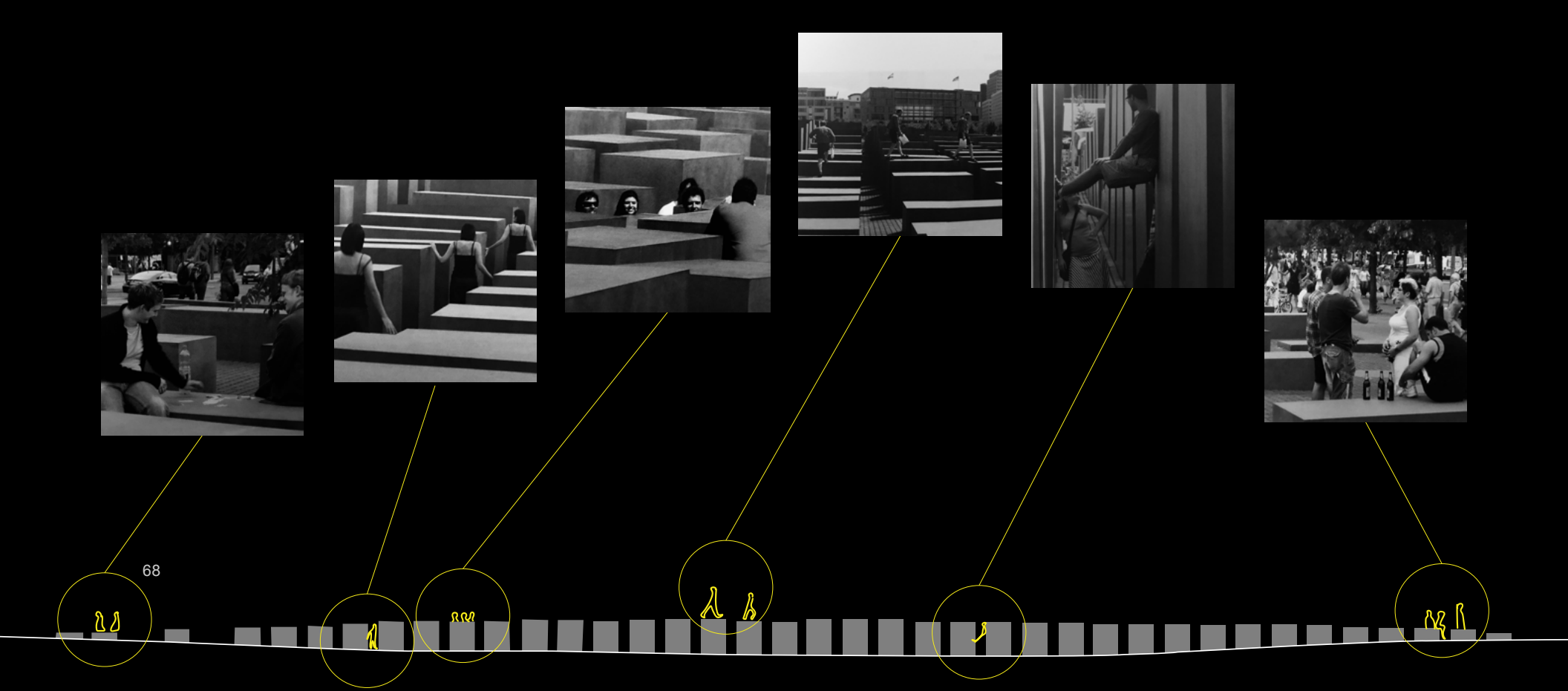
(1) Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe by Peter Eisenman (2004), Germany

“The duration of an individual’s experience of it grants no further understanding, since understanding the Holocaust is impossible. The time of the monument, its duration from the top surface to the ground is disjoined from the time of experience.”

In this context, there is no nostalgia, no memory of the past, only the living memory of the individual experience.”
-Eisenman Architects



From the plan, it seems like a grid of duplicated pillars, but the architect had hidden an unexpected experience as the height of the blocks gradually change with the landscape. A subtle change in elevation, the way he layouts thousands of identical blocks, results in dramatic variation in the experience. It gives freedom to the individual to decide the direction of the movement, duration of the journey and how do they want to interact with each pillar.





Precedent Study_ Memorial

(1) Learning from Peter Eisenman

How is it possible to give a meaning to the enormity of a war crime? Peter Eisenman, an American architect, responds to this question through the Holocaust Memorial (2004). It is up to each individual of how we interpret the history.

Known as Memorial to the Murdered Jew of Europe, 200,000 sq ft site in Berlin, Germany, is filled with 2,711 concrete pillars that are placed 95 centimeters apart from each other, only to allow one person at a time to walk through. There is no entrance nor an exit. This enormous grid created by equally placed blocks, even without any indication of a direction, the visitors are disoriented. They get to decide how they each want to explore through. As the terrain gently descends toward the center, people are gradually disappearing into space, the journey detaches them from the cityscape. Inside the memorial, people walk over the floor, covered with an arrangement of stone tiles and recessed lights. Anyone is allowed to sit on, jump over or lie down on the stones, but walking is the major activity of the entire experience, a commemorative movement.

It is what makes it special, that the memorial evokes different interpretations from the visitors, according to Heinrich Wefing, a journalist and critic. It doesn't even preclude misinterpretation, one may feel anxiety, another may simply enjoy the playfulness of the dynamic landscape. What the architect is forcing the individuals, is only to discover their response throughout the journey.

You cannot represent the horror and the enormity of what happened in Germany. You cannot represent it. It's impossible.

-Peter Eisenman

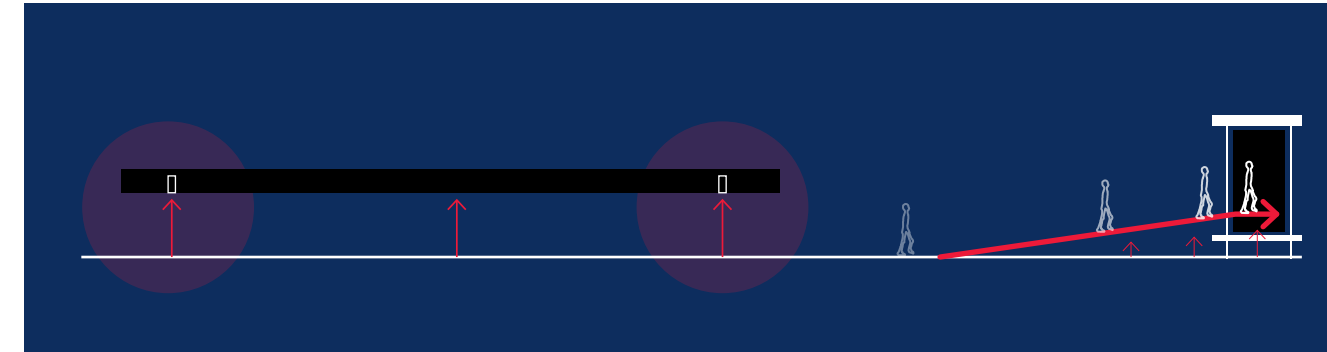


Precedent Study_ Memorial

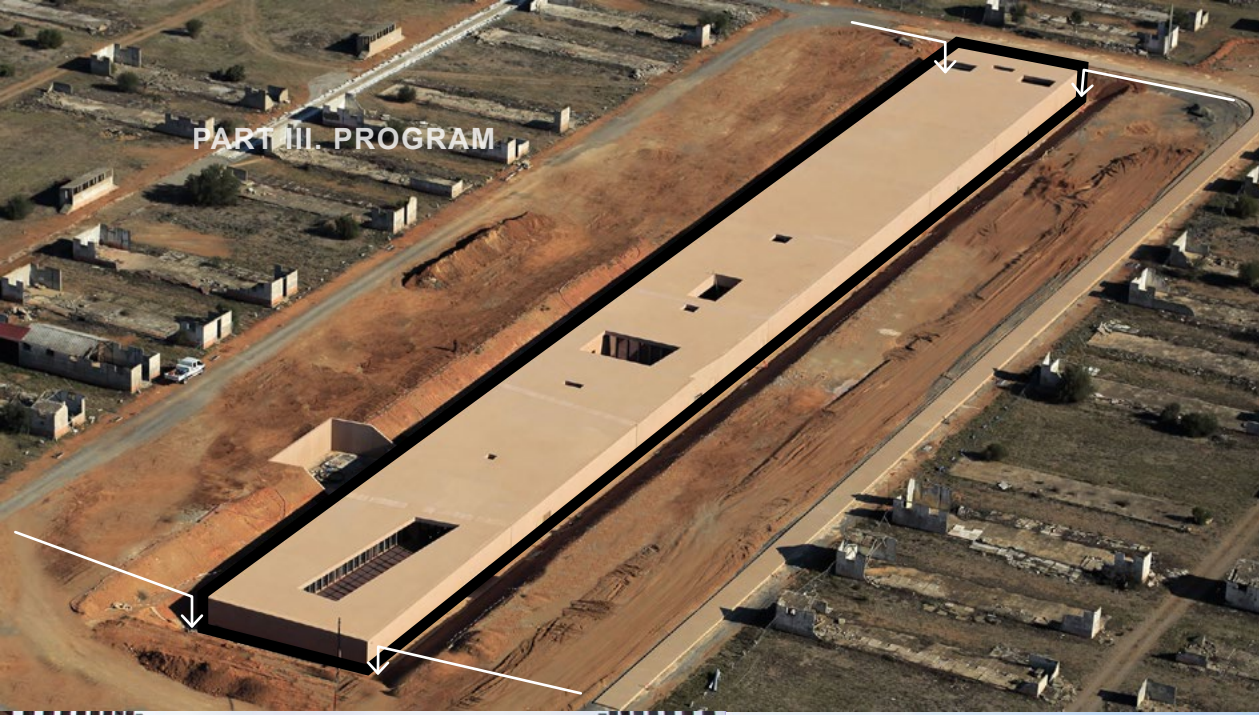
(2) Steilneset Memorial by Peter Zumthor and Louise Bourgeois (2011), Norway

Steilneset Memorial was designed to commemorate the 91 victims who were persecuted by the Finmark Witchcraft trials in the 17th century. Zumthor's 400-foot long cocoon is elevated from the ground with tiny lightbulbs behind 91 windows and these windows are accompanied by individual stories of the victims. The journey ends in Bourgeois's installation space, where people pause and have a reflective moment in front of a burning chair surrounded by mirrors.

with tiny lightbulbs behind 91 windows and these windows are accompanied by individual stories of the victims. The journey ends in Bourgeois's installation space, where people pause and have a reflective moment in front of a burning chair surrounded by mirrors.



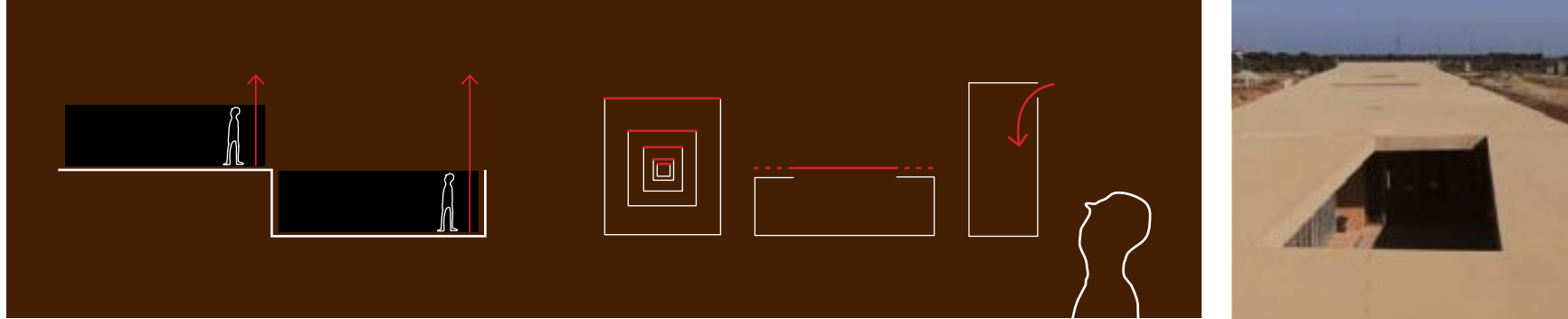
The bridge is a powerful component that enables the visitors to prepare the mental space for a better immersive experience in the dark corridor. It is a moment of mental preparation into the journey and also a moment of gradual exit out from the dark history. In a memorial space, planning how users enter and exit the immersive space is as important as how the actual memorial story is being told.



Precedent Study_ Memorial

(3) Rivesaltes Memorial by Rudy Ricciotti + Passelac & Roques (2012), France

The Rivesaltes Memorial, 240m long concrete block building, is located in the former French military and internment camp. Three patios constructed with herringbone patterned red brick, doesn't have any external windows, every aspect is directed to inward/ up to the sky.



When it comes to contemplative space, the sky/ ceiling becomes an important part of the experience as is somewhat implies the presence of any spirituality that people pray to/ rely on. vertical frame memorial space important. It is where the user's site will stay as they move throughout space. So it is important how the vertical frame to capture the sky.





Memorial of Sexual Slavery

Defining Memorial with Arthur Danto

“We erect monuments so that we shall always remember, and build memorials so that we shall never forget...Monuments commemorate the memorable and embody the myths of beginnings. Memorials ritualize remembrance and mark the reality of ends...Very few nations erect monuments to their defeats, but many set up memorials to the defeated dead...The memorial is a special precinct, extruded from life, a segregated enclave where we honor the dead.”

In one of the writings on Washington’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial, American art critic **Arthur Danto** articulates the definition of ‘Memorial’ in comparison with ‘Monument’. According to him, a memorial is somehow funereal architecture for specific victims of tragic history, whereas a monument is erected for symbolic moments.

Memorial is an emotional space. The experience becomes a solemn ritual, that the visitors will encounter thresholds of continuous moments of tribute throughout the space. In that sense, the entire experience is designed to be a phased process. Designing each stage, including how it invites visitors, how to educate them, and what message will be delivered at the final moment is a major task of the memorial. Furthermore, connecting each stage subtly is also significant in order not to burst the solemn atmosphere. The velocity of the movement, meaning how to make the visitors pause and move forward, has to be planned thoroughly.

Memorial of sexual slavery is a place where we will visit to remember individual victims of the war crime by Japan, also how they have, and will fight for a sincere apology. Here, we will sympathize, pray, and even cry with the presence of the victims that guide us throughout the journey. The memorial as a whole is the initial stage, preparing ourselves in constructing a better relationship between South Korea and Japan.

REUSING EXISTING TENSION

PART IV. INTERVENTION STRATEGY



1. FENCE

Reuse of construction fence as exterior material



2. GAZE

Penetration straight from gaze of statue



INTERVENTION STRATEGY

(1) FENCE_ Reuse of construction fence as exterior material

Reuse of construction fence, temporary border. As it is used as an exterior wall material, this strategy implies temporality of the space, which means, it is a flexible architecture, reflecting the change of diplomatic relationship.

Through three steps of intervention, the construction fence will be relocated along the lost border, footprint of the former Japanese Embassy building. It is to create a new volume for memorial space, as an attempt to bring back the memory of the old building.

< Construction Fence (2020)



CONSTRUCTION
FENCE

22ft

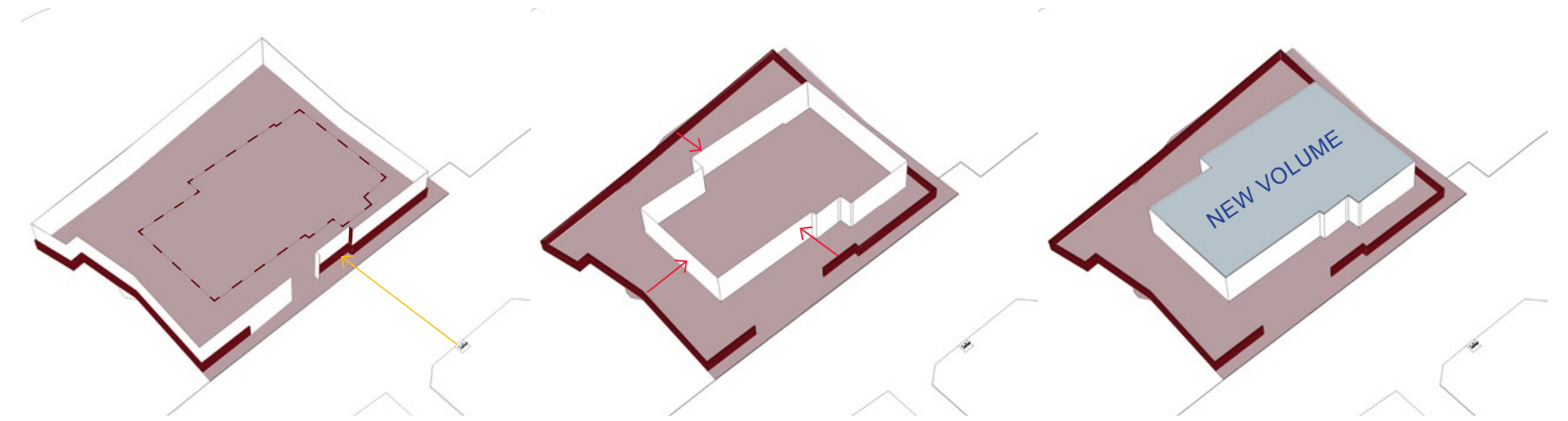


TEMPORARY
BORDER

(2015~?)

INTERVENTION STRATEGY

(1) FENCE_ Reuse of construction fence as exterior material



(1) Footprint of former embassy

(2) Construction fence
as new facade

(3) New volume inside

State of current tension

Tracing lost memory

Regenerating tension

< Construction Fence (2020)

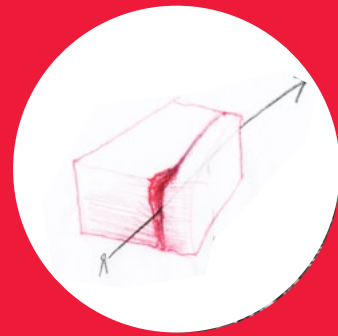
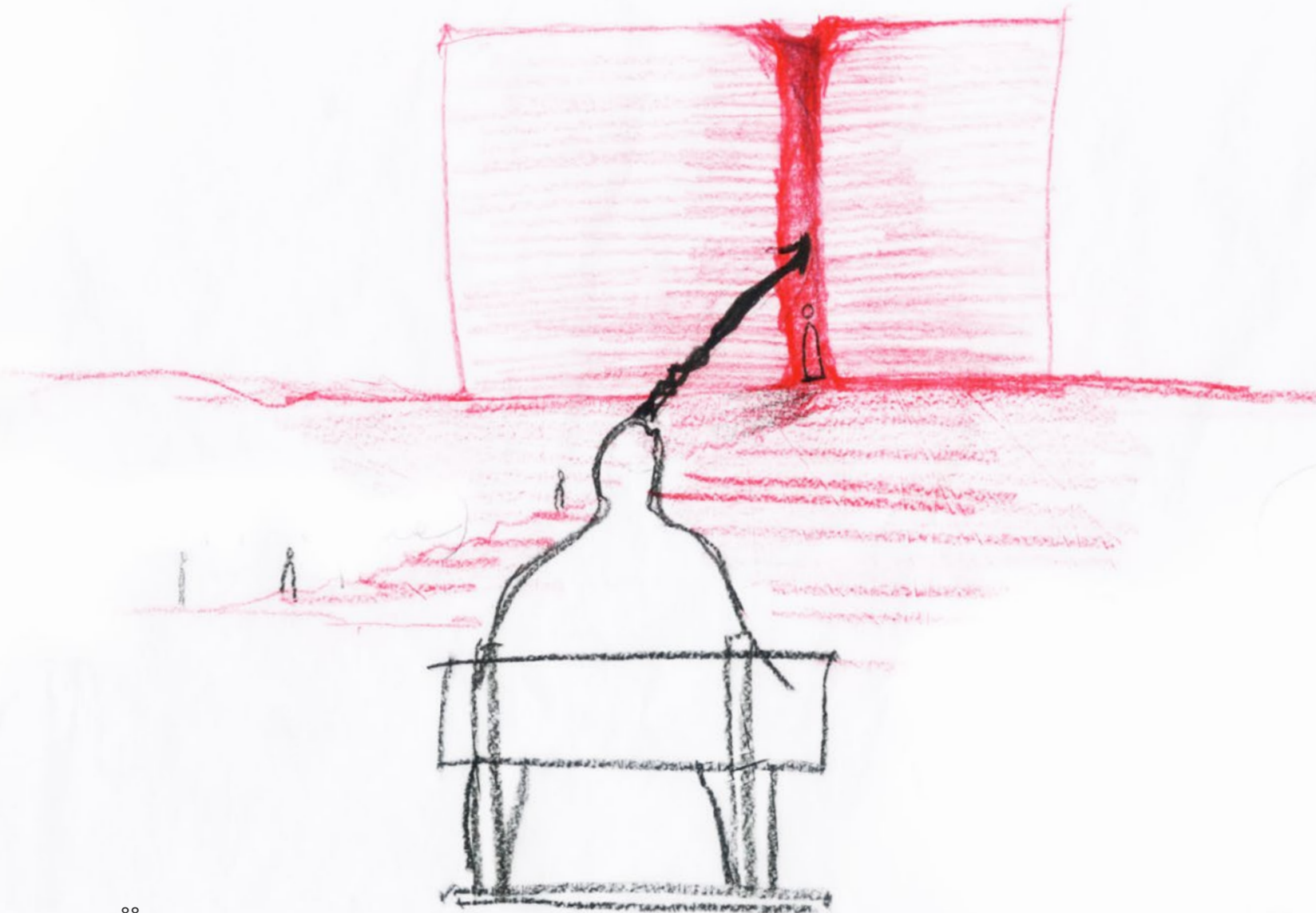


INTERVENTION STRATEGY

(2) GAZE_ Penetration straight from gaze of statue

The gaze, is an aggressive moment toward japan. Also, standing evidence of a tragic history. It is so powerful, that it will cut through whatever is in front.

To emphasize this moment, as an extension straight from the gaze, it is now actually penetrating through the new volume. As a result, it creates such straight forward entrance corridor in between two separate volume. And one of the volumes sinks in to create an intimate underground memorial space.



TOWARD JAPAN

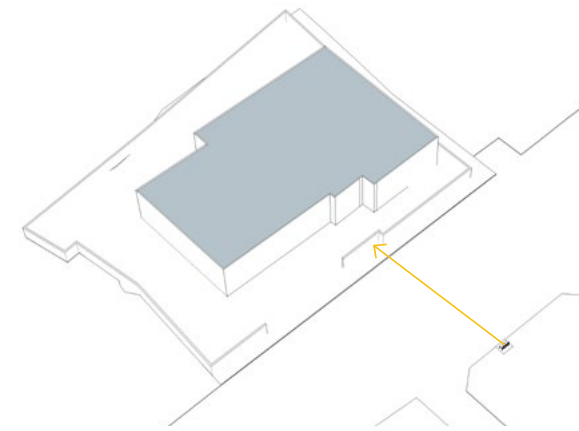


STANDING EVIDENCE

(2011~)

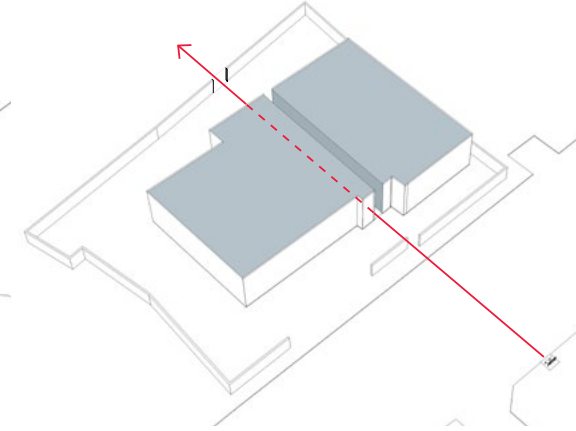
INTERVENTION STRATEGY

(2) GAZE_ Penetration straight from gaze of statue



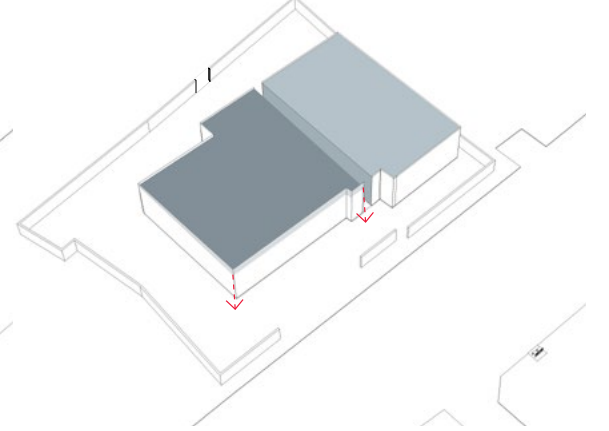
(1) New volume

Gaze confronting heaviness



(2) Penetration from gaze

Corridor dividing volume into two



(3) Sinking

Underground space

< Conceptual Sketch, Gaze (2020)

PART V. INTERVENTION

GENERATING TENSION

Existing Condition

SITE PLAN

- 1. LOST BORDER:
Boundary of Japanese Embassy building
- 2. OLD BORDER:
Fence of Japanese Embassy
- 3. TEMPORARY BORDER:
Construction fence



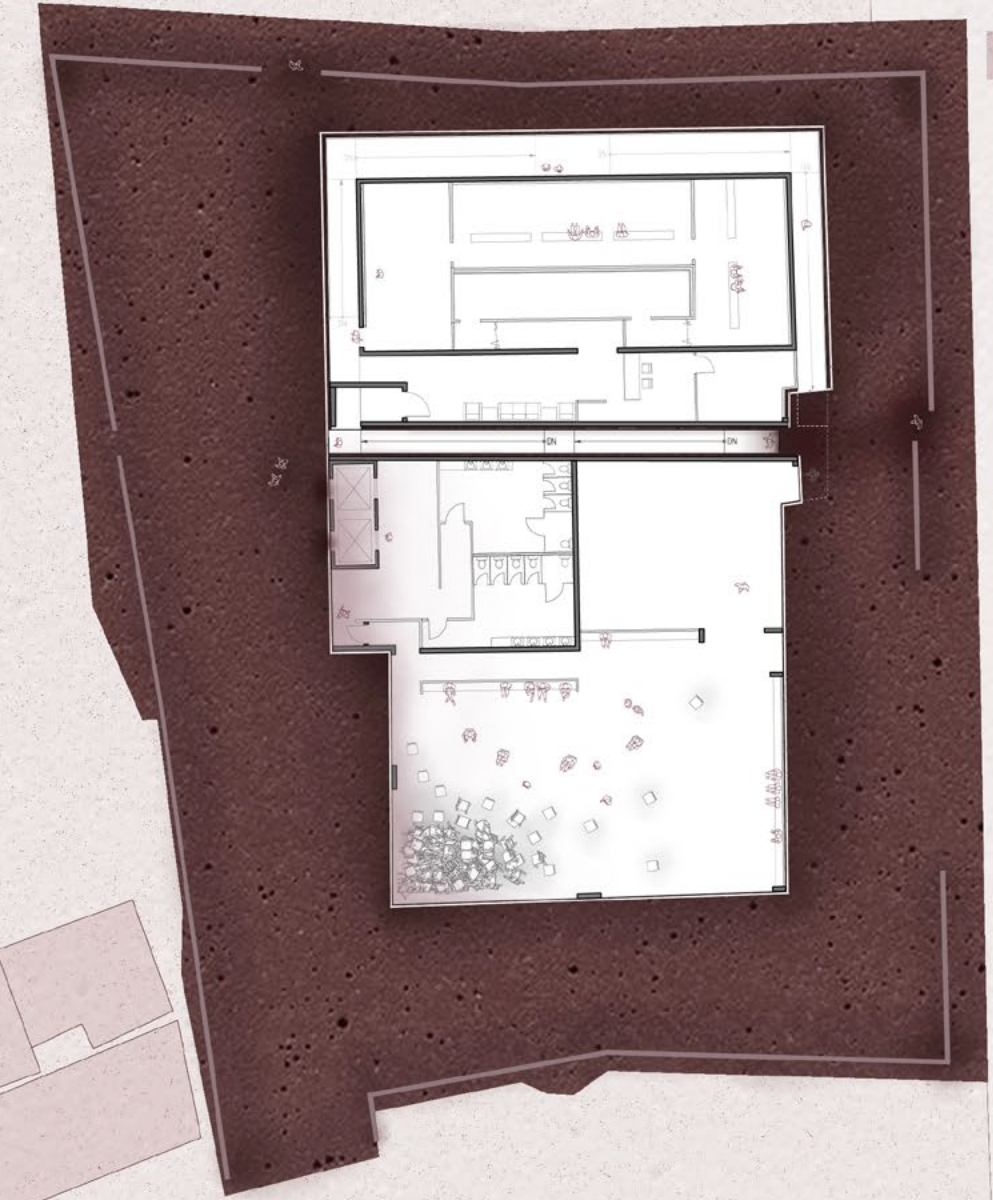
AFTER INTERVENTION

After (1) Construction fence as exterior material, (2) Penetration from gaze of statue

SITE PLAN

- 1. LOST BORDER:
Boundary of Japanese Embassy building
- 2. OLD BORDER:
Fence of Japanese Embassy
- 3. TEMPORARY BORDER:
Construction fence





PLAN

SECTION A



PART V. INTERVENTION



SECTION B



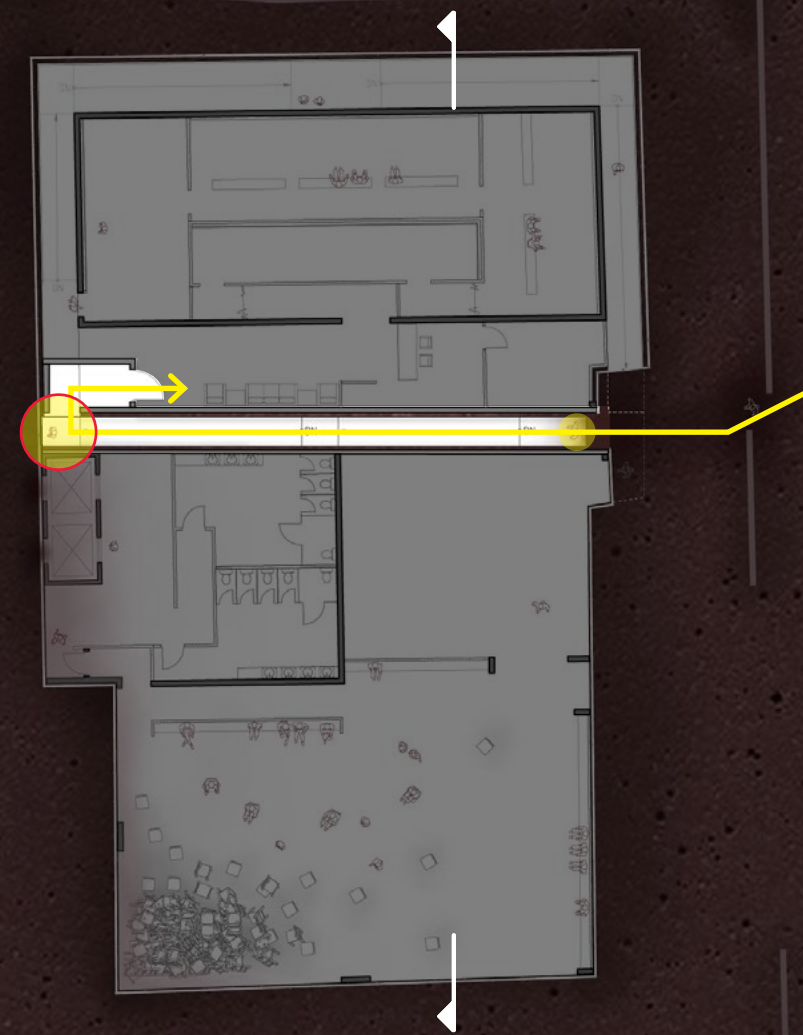
PROGRAM



B. EXHIBITION SPACE

A. ENTRANCE RAMP

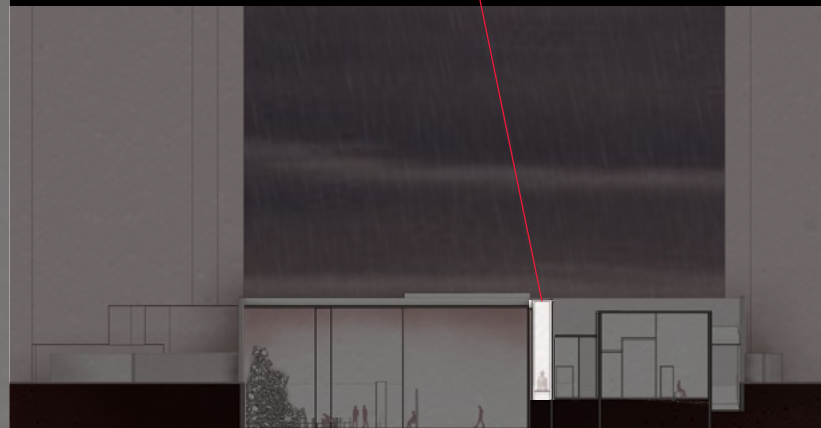
C. MEMORIAL PLAZA

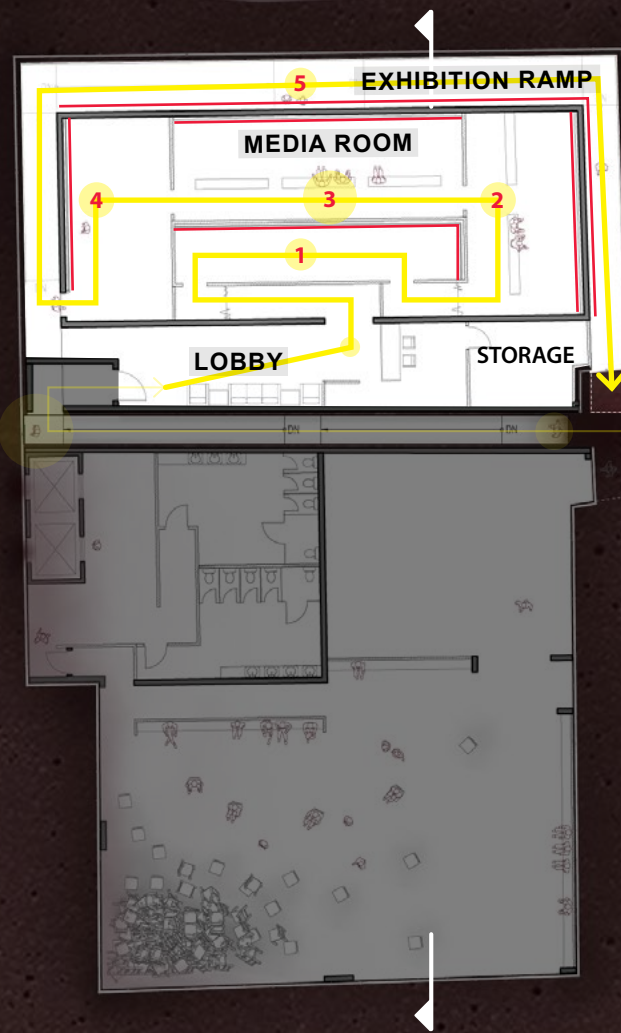


A. ENTRANCE RAMP

Entering through the entrance ramp, created from the gaze, visitors gradually descend into space. At the end of the ramp, they encounter the reflection of the statue, which is on the opposite side of the road.

Throughout the space, including the entrance, there are no stairs but subtle ramps, (1:16 comfortable slope). It was designed, especially in consideration of the living victims, as their average age is 92.





■ EXHIBITION CONTENT

- 1. MEDIA BOX
: Introduction
- 2. SCREEN A
: Beginning of Tragedy
- 3. SCREEN B
: During Tragedy
- 4. SCREEN C
: After Tragedy
- 5. EXHIBITION RAMP
: From victims today

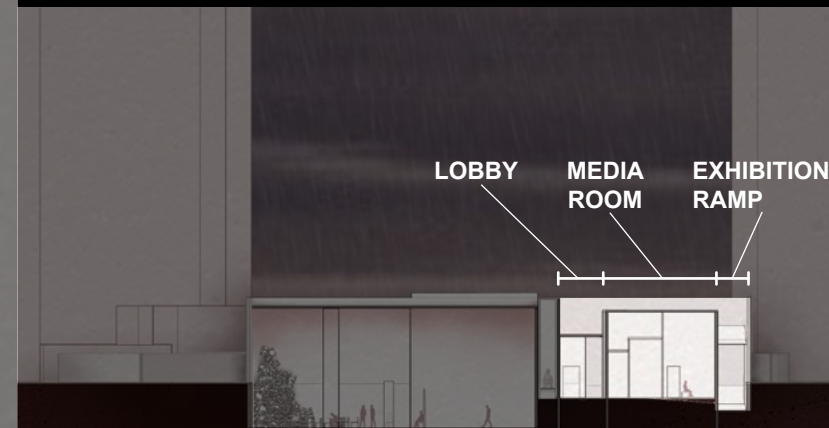
B. EXHIBITION SPACE

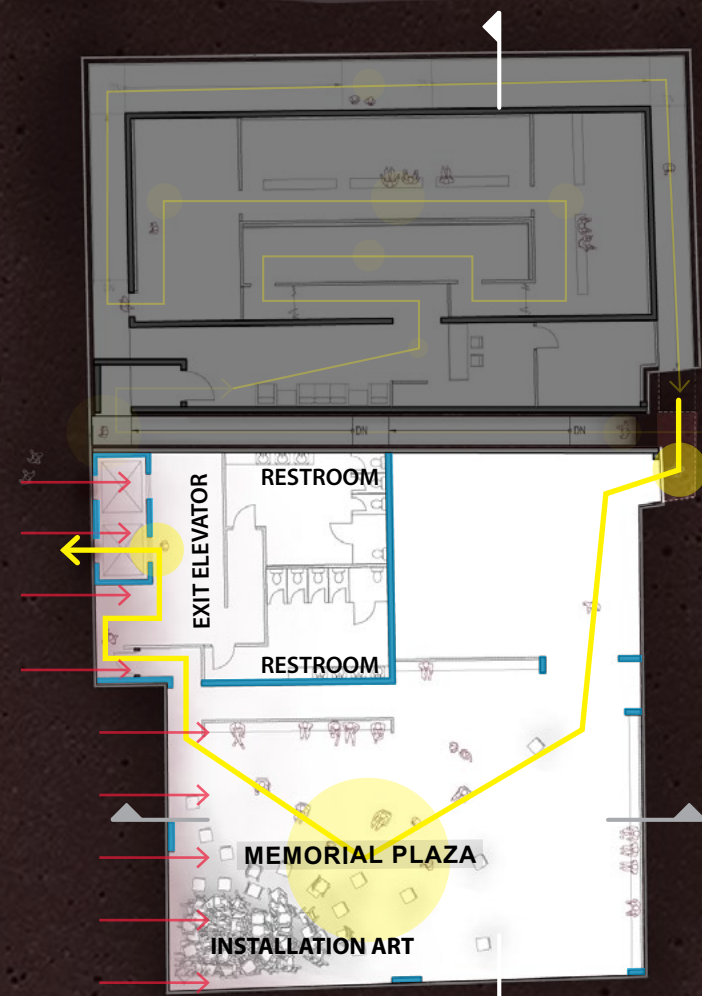
Then visitors will go through exhibition space. It is again, divided into the lobby, media room, and exhibition ramp that takes them down to the memorial plaza level.

The media room is the most informative part of the entire experience, where visitors can learn about the tragic history through a series of different documentaries or movies.

Specifically, after the media box, a general introduction, there are three connecting screen rooms starting from how the sexual slavery started, how horrible the tragedy was, and finally how, until today, the victims have been fighting against Japanese government who still denies the fact that sexual slavery was a war crime.

And then the visitors exit the media room, walking down through the exhibition ramp, the exhibition starts again, where they encounter the real voice of the victims today. The highlighted part of the wall is filled with portraits and handwritten letters from the victim/ or families of the victims. This part of the space is designed as a corridor, to prepare visitors before massive memorial plaza, through such narrow intimate experience.





- STRUCTURAL WALL
- NATURAL LIGHT

C. MEMORIAL PLAZA

Lastly, arriving at the underground memorial plaza level is the end of the journey by the audience becoming part of reflective installation art at one corner.

The sculpture is created through stacking duplications of the empty chair from the statue, which originally, was designed for a room for sympathizing with the victims. Looking at how such small chairs as a collective, create such massive sculpture, visitors will confront the enormity of the war crime. They can either sit in the surrounding bench or even become more engaged by becoming part of the sculpture, sitting in one of the empty chairs.

The plaza space mostly doesn't have additional walls but the construction fence, only minimal structural walls are to support the tilted roof. As a result, From outside, it looks as if the plaza part of the volume has been sunk into the ground. Also, the roof subtly lets natural light from this side, to not only highlight the installation but to gradually lead visitors to the exit area.



EMPTH CHAIR
: Room for sympathy



JOURNEY



**Yellow butterfly leads the visitors throughout the journey.
It is a symbol of comfort women, victims of sexual slavery.**



DESCEND

Visitors meet with the building, which is enclosed by a construction fence, the material of temporality. Narrow ramp gradually invites down into space.





GAZE

The corridor is covered with a Corten steel panel, that gives contrast with the construction fence to emphasize the penetration by gaze.

In the end, visitors encounter the reflection of the statue on the opposite side of the street. It is printed on a perforated panel to give an effect of fading, to depict the pass of time.



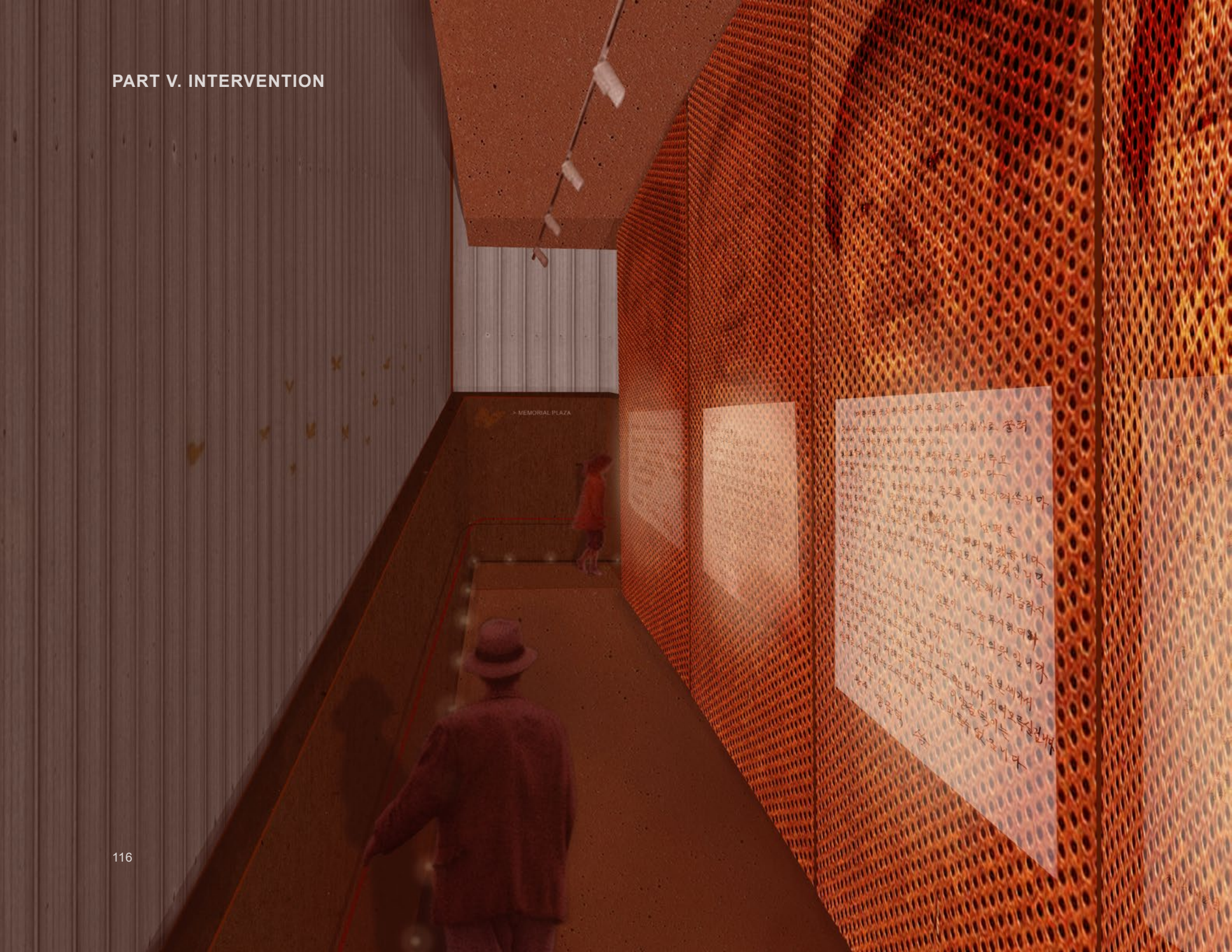


HISTORY

View of one the rooms of the screening space, where visitors learn about history through watch different documentaries, movies.

It is a concrete box with wooden flooring, to detach the visitors from the city, to focus better throughout an immersive experience.





TESTIMNOY

And again, the exhibition ramp takes down to the underground memorial level, as the visitor reads through portraits and a handwritten letter from the victims.

The texture of the floor and part of the wall, achieved by mixing fly ash to strengthen the earth, gives the powerful feeling as if you are carving into the ground.





MEMORIAL

The final part of the journey. The massive sculpture, enormity of war crime, invites you.

Sitting, in one of the empty chairs, is a commemorative experience. The audience becomes part of the sculpture. It is the moment of pause, reflection.





PART VI. CONCLUSION

LEAVING LIVING TENSION

LEAVING LIVING TENSION

This project was generated by the living diplomatic tension within the site, from the Statue of Peace, the epicenter of living rage against the Japanese government. Diplomatic confrontation has gotten worse with Wednesday Demonstration happens every week around the statue, the Japanese government has halted the reconstruction of the Embassy building. The current state of the site as the statue staring at the empty plot urges the necessity of the project is moving forward to construct a different relationship than how it is now. The tension breathes within the site with the presence of the Statue of Peace.

Memorial of Sexual Slavery is a temporal architecture. The objective of the project is not necessarily a reconciliation, but to construct an initial step in the long process of diplomatic dialogue. As the wound of South Korea from a tragic incident has its roots from a long history, the living tension is never an issue that can be healed in a short amount of time. With the new intervention in the site, the building itself is a symbol, an initiation of architectural effort. I, as a South Korean architect, is leaving a personal contribution, the memorial. It will keep pushing us living today and the posterity that will live tomorrow to move on to the next stages.

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IMAGE_Street View of Statue of Peace (p.44)

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