

BETWEEN PLANNED AND EXECUTED – A MULTISCALE SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF THE MONUMENT PROZIVKA

ABSTRACT

This research delves into the dialogue between monuments and their context, focusing on the Prozivka monument, a socialist Yugoslav monument dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle. Created by renowned sculptor Oto Logo, the monument was erected in 1977 as a centrepiece in Prozivka, the largest socialist mass housing neighbourhood in Subotica, Serbia. The analysis follows the monument from its conception to the current state and takes a multi-scale approach, examining the monument's relationship with its material and immaterial context, from the urban plan to the level of detail. The study draws on archival materials, including technical documentation, restoration projects, old photographs and newspapers. The paper is divided into two sections. The first section provides a brief biography of Oto Logo, highlighting his notable works, exhibitions and awards. The second section is dedicated to the Prozivka monument, one of Logo's largest creations.

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KEY WORDS
MONUMENT
SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA
ENVIRONMENT
MULTISCALE ANALYSIS
SUBOTICA
OTO LOGO

This research delves into the dialogue between monuments and their context, focusing on the Prozivka monument, a socialist Yugoslav monument dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle. In general, the monuments of the People's Liberation Struggle refer to thousands of monuments constructed in the second half of the 20th century in Yugoslavia. The monuments aimed at affirming the ideas of antifascism, revolution and “brotherhood and unity” which represented the symbolic core of Yugoslavia. These monuments varied in terms of their commissioning, dedication, and relationship to their locations. They honored a range of subjects, from fallen fighters to civilians, and were often placed on historical sites, such as burial grounds and battlefields, but they were not always tied to a particular event or site, in which case they were connotating broader antifascist themes. Their architectural styles also differed significantly; they ranged from realistic and figurative forms to abstract designs, varying in size from small plaques to extensive memorial parks. Moreover, their placements were diverse—some were situated in urban areas, while others were found in remote natural landscapes like mountains and valleys (Kulić, 2012). Despite this variety, most of these monuments are located at historic sites associated with the Partisan struggle, often outside urban areas in open landscapes (Burghardt, 2012).

Because of their frequent placements in natural settings, memorial parks—which are not unique to Yugoslavia—have proven to be an effective format for commemoration, and were thus often in use. These parks, besides the role of commemoration, had utilitarian functions, often featuring picnic facilities, cafes, restaurants, hotels, museums, or open-air amphitheaters for educational activities and ceremonies (Burghardt, 2012; Horvatinčić, 2015). While monuments can also be found in urban areas, they tend to be smaller, designed to fit public spaces like squares, or take on the utilitarian forms of public buildings, such as schools, museums, bridges, or drinking fountains (Horvatinčić, 2015). Instances of memorial parks within urban settings, like Slobodište in Kruševac, Šumarice in Kragujevac, or the Necropolis at Sremska Mitrovica, are relatively rare, and when they do exist, they are seldom planned concurrently with the surrounding urban areas.

In this context, one could argue that the Prozivka monument is a unique example, as it is not only embedded within the urban fabric of Subotica, but also situated in a mass housing neighborhood, an architectural and urban typology which socialist Yugoslavia is also known and recognised for. The neighborhood, along with the Prozivka monument and the surrounding memorial park, not only share a name, but were also designed and built concurrently as a cohesive entity—a sort of socialist urban *gesamtkunstwerk*. Furthermore, the memorial park was planned as part of a city-wide network that was only partially executed, which greatly influenced the perception and life of the monument. This makes it an intriguing case study that could enhance the understanding of the relationships between monuments and material and immaterial elements of their context.



FIGURE 1: Monument Prozivka in 1979. godine. Source: Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture Subotica. Fotografije Aleksandra Jurige 11. Jun 1979. godine..

The Snop monument (Figure 1), better known by its working name Prozivka is located in Subotica, the northernmost city in Serbia near the Hungarian border. Roughly translated, Snop means sheaf, which corresponds to the form of the monument - a grand bronze stylised sheaf of grain inspired by the numerous

crop fields characteristic for the landscape surrounding the city of Subotica. Over time, the working name Prozivka, roughly translated to roll-calling or summoning (depending on the context), became the name that referred to both the monument and the mass housing neighbourhood surrounding it. The name arose from the competition brief for the memorial and poet Dejan Merković's lyrics "Summoned by freedom the dead also live" (Original: Slobodom prozvani i mrtvi žive), which is engraved on the monument in both Serbo-Croatian and Hungarian, as Subotica is a multicultural city and has multiple official languages in use.

The monument was revealed in 1977 as part of the festivities for Yugoslav Army Day, Tito's jubilee and the thirtieth anniversary of the Union of Associations of Fighters of the National Liberation War (hereinafter referred to as SUBNOR, an acronym derived from the original name) in honour of the fallen fighters of the VIII Vojvodina Brigade formed in 1944. The authors of the monument are the academic sculptor Oto Logo and his collaborators, architect Nebojša Delja and academic painter Čedomir Krstić. The monument was conceived as part of the memorial park located in the centre of the newly built mass housing neighbourhood Prozivka. It was supposed to be located at the final part of the promenade that connects the Prozivka neighbourhood in the south of the city with its counterpart, the Radijalac neighbourhood in the north. Such a large-scale urban development, which could even be described as megalomaniac, was not realised in the end, nor was the memorial park, leaving the monument isolated in a neglected lawn and wild crops for the next three decades of its existence (Duranci, 2001).

A short description of Oto Logo's life and works will be briefly presented in the first part of the paper, as he created numerous sculptures and monuments but is still unrecognized, especially in relation to memorial architecture. His thoughts and observations on the topic of monuments will complement the second part of the paper, in which the Prozivka monument will be analysed through the available archival material, which includes technical documentation of restoration projects, given that the location of the original project for the monument is unknown, technical descriptions, newspaper articles, meeting records regarding the competition, design and instalment of the monument and old photographs. The spatial analysis will be carried out on three levels, namely: the city, the neighbourhood and the level of the monument itself with the aim of illustrating the changing physical, socio-economic and political context in which the monument has been placed since its creation until today, thus allowing a complex reading of the interrelatedness between the monument and its surroundings.

1. OTO LOGO

Biography

Oto Jovan Logo was a “silent man. Concrete. In the material. Reduced to the form he seeks.” (Jevtić, 1995, p. 5). He was born in Belgrade in 1931 in a working-class family - his father was a carpenter and his mother an unqualified worker. As a child, Oto spent most of his time alone in his apartment, drawing while his parents were at work. In 1941, when World War II broke out, the Logo family moved to Subotica, where Oto’s father had relatives. They hoped this would give them better access to food during the war due to its proximity to the countryside and crops (Jevtić, 1995).

Despite having a name and origin that fit in well with Subotica, Oto found it difficult to adapt there because he did not speak Hungarian. During the occupation of the city by enemy forces, he was forced to attend school in Hungarian, which made it challenging for him to be a good student. In 1942, he saw his father for the last time before he went to work in Budapest, leaving Oto alone with his mother. Due to these circumstances, Oto had to find work towards the end of the occupation and eventually found a job in a frame factory and later in an artificial flower factory. During an interview, he reminisced about his childhood and stated that his work in these factories, in a way, could be interpreted as something to do with art (Jevtić, 1995, p. 13). Even during this challenging period, Oto drew and painted with great devotion.

After the end of the war, Oto transferred from the civic high school he was forced to attend during the war to the Gymnasium. In 1948, he moved to the newly opened art high school in Novi Sad, where he was introduced to sculpting, specifically working in clay. Before that, he had only seen clay in Subotica in the studio of the old sculptor Almaši Gabor and claimed that it was “love at first sight” (Jevtić, 1995). However, due to the lack of a sculpture department, he enrolled into the architecture department at the school. He studied under the architect Đorđe Tabaković, brother of the painter Ivan Tabaković, whose advice and lessons he said came in handy later in his life. Two years later, he took the entrance exam at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade, but he was not accepted. Just a few days later, he took the Academy of Applied Arts entrance exam, which he successfully passed.

During his time at the Academy, he studied painting under Ivan Tabaković, drawing under Pavel Vasić, and sculpture under professor Rade Stanković. He was particularly interested in stone processing and was fortunate to have Professor Josip Grasi as a mentor, who was responsible for creating the striking

caryatids on the monument to the Unknown Hero in Avala and Meštrović's mausoleum. Oto worked and studied under the tutelage of Professor Stanković with his peers and fellow students Nebojša Mitrić, Nandor Glid, Midorag Živković, and Bogoljub Teofanović, all well-known sculptors today. Despite completing the five-year program in just four years, Oto was one of the few students who had to present his thesis twice. He chose Ivan Goran Kovačić's famous poem "Jama" (Translation: pit), which revolves around the horrors of war, but admitted he struggled to interpret and adapt the poem to "the requirements of applied art" (Jevtić, 1995, p. 21).



FIGURE 2: Portrait of Oto Logo. Source: Salon muzeja savremene umetnosti. (1967). Oto Logo [Exhibition catalogue].

After he graduated from the Academy in 1954, he mainly focused on creating graphics since he did not have a sculpting studio. He worked on his graphics at the "Cvijeta Zuzorić" Pavilion, where there was an exceptional lithography press. During this period, he also made sculptures in his kitchen, between his mother's sewing machine and the kitchen table. Oto recalls this time by saying, "When I was casting something in plaster, I sent my mother to the cinema so that she would not see all those marvels and that mess" (Jevtić, 1995, p.40).

He organised his first exhibition in Subotica in 1945 before enrolling into the Academy with his friends and local artists. He stated that it was perhaps one of the first post-war exhibitions in Yugoslavia. After graduating in 1954, he participated in an exhibition organised by The Association of Fine Artists of Serbia, of which he became a member the following year. He had over 30 individual exhibitions, including 11 abroad he was invited to do. He also went on study trips to Italy and France, where he lived in Paris for a year during 1962/63. Throughout his life, his work was followed by numerous critics such as Denegri, Trifunović, Čelebonović, and Kadijević. He passed away in Belgrade, where he spent most of his life after graduation, on January 4, 2016, at the age of 85. He was buried in the Alley of Meritorious Citizens at the New Cemetery in Belgrade (“Odlazak Velikog Vajara,” 2016).



FIGURE 3: Sculptures by Oto Logo. Source: Salon muzeja savremene umetnosti. (1967). Oto Logo [Exhibition catalogue].

Most significant works, exhibitions, and awards

Otto Logo created 1,215 sculptures during his career. Among these, over 500 were busts, 32 were publicly placed monuments, and 35 were graphics (Jevtić, 1995; “Preminuo Vajar Oto Logo,” 2016). The following text will cover the most significant works, independent exhibitions, and awards.

Following the 1954 exhibition at the Art Pavilion in Belgrade, titled “XVIII ULUS Exhibition,” Oto held his first independent exhibition in 1957 at the Gallery of the Graphic Collective, displaying his sculptures and prints. He went on to hold several solo exhibitions in Belgrade over the next few years, including ones at the ULUS Gallery in 1959, the Museum of Applied Arts and Atelier 212 in 1962, and the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art in 1967. Eventually, he began exhibiting abroad, starting with Sarajevo and Skopje and later expanding to Liège, Brussels, and Zurich in the early 1970s.

Oto also showcased his work in various museums in regional cities such as Zagreb, as well as museums in Oslo, New York, Paris, Geneva, Brussels, and Los Angeles. Among his notable awards is the Golden Pin of ULUS, which he received in 1961, the sculpture prize at the 6th October Salon in Belgrade in 1965, the sculpture award at the exhibition “People’s Liberation Struggle in the Works of Visual Artists of Yugoslavia” in 1966, and the October award of the city of Belgrade in 1967 (Salon muzeja savremene umetnosti, 1967; Likovna galerija kulturnog centra Beograda, 1972).

As this paper primarily focuses on memorial architecture, a few of Oto’s monuments, which best represent the themes he was mainly interested in as an author, will be presented. Oto says about his creative process:

I have always strived to let the theme allow my fundamental sculpting belief to come through - to achieve a form that will entirely independently, without any stories, affect the viewer. So I wanted my sculpture to act in a visual language, with as little context as its name can give. Those themes were - shells, birds, armadillos, cathedrals and portraits of machines (Jevtić, 1995, p. 29)

He created the following monuments, in chronological order: the monument to fallen fighters in Kovačica (1954), the monument to Dragojlo Dudić in Valjevo (1971), the monument to Topolovac in Kragujevac and the Prozivka or Snop monument in Subotica (both in 1977), the monument to the 1941 Battle of Ljiška in Ljig (1981), the Monument to Ivan Sarić in Subotica (1984), the monument to the 1942 Victims of Bojnica in Bojnik, and the monument to Vojvoda Živojin Mišić in Mionica (1988), for which he was awarded the first prize in the design competition, as well as the half-century monument to Jovan Cvijić in Belgrade (1994) located in the Student Park in the city centre.

Although Otto claims that he “approached the problematic of the monument in the same manner, regardless of whether the form should be figurative, realistic or possibly even associative, that is, a sculpture” (Jevtić, 1995, p. 32), it is impossible not to notice that most of the monuments he made are figurative or realistic in form. One of the exceptions is the Prozivka monument, which leans towards what he refers to as the associative form and is much closer to his usual sculptural work (Figure 3). It is important to note that although he may not have distinguished between monuments and sculptures during the creative process, he is aware that “a monument requires more responsibility than easel work” (Jevtić, 1995, p. 33) and emphasises:

In fact, the monument marks an environment. It is known that it is

often pointed out that it is enough to be born in Italy to be talented. That, of course, is not true, but it is true that the Italians are indeed at an advantage. As soon as they go out into their city, they can absorb the endless beauty that is all around them. Thus, the monument is an endless, timeless, aesthetic and didactic object. It serves the constant education of all those who watch it (Jevtić, 1995, p. 33).

2. PROZIVKA - A MEMORIAL REDUCED TO A MONUMENT

The beginning: idea, design competition and unveiling of the monument

The primary intention behind constructing the Prozivka memorial was to pay tribute to the VIII Vojvodina Brigade formed on September 12, 1944, on Fruška Gora mountain. The brigade reorganised in Subotica, and about eight hundred citizens joined it, making up almost half of its fighters. This intention, as well as the core theme of the organised design competition for the monument, can be recognised in the following sentence: “The premise of the Subotica monument, matured in the year of Tito’s and our jubilee, is the most humane appreciation of human sacrifice for freedom and independence through the attitude that ‘summoned by freedom the dead also live’” (Duranci, 1977, p. 3).

Only invited artists could participate in the competition. The jury for the competition consisted of 10 members: Špiro Mitrić, Antun Milodanović-Dela, Berkeš Laslo, Boroš Đerđ, Bogdan Simendić, Ilija Burzan and Ilija Šujica, all delegates of various socialist organisations in Subotica and respected professor of History of Art Bela Duranci, architect De Negri Karlo, painter Siladi Gabor and academic sculptor Aleksandar Zarin. Before the competition, a discussion was held with the artists to answer any questions and resolve possible objections regarding the competition brief. Artists Ana Bešlić, Nandor Glid and Oto Logo from Belgrade and Gabor Almaši and Ferenc Kalmar from Subotica attended the session, while Peter Čarne and Janez Boljka from Ljubljana did not come. From the jury members, the chairman of the jury, Špiro Mitrić, and member Bela Duranci were present at the meeting (Duranci, 1974b, p. 1)

There were objections to the deadline, the monetary compensation the authors would receive by participating, as well as the monetary compensation for the winner. Nandor Glid, Oto’s friend and colleague from the Academy, believed that the number of experts on the jury was in the minority, which presents a good opportunity for another remark by Otto on the importance of responsibility such positions hold:

I have advocated for years - and now I use the opportunity to say it publicly - that I would like, if it were possible, for every monument to have a plaque with the names of the members of the jury who chose

that monument and under what conditions (whether the monument was directly ordered, was there a competition and the like). I believe that then the number of bad or, at least, unseemly monuments would be very small, because juries would show more responsibility (Jevtić, 1995, p. 36).

All the competition works, drawings and physical models were exhibited in the City Museum of Subotica gallery from September 26 to December 6, 1974. Duranci (1977) states that the other competition works also proposed very successful solutions, but that Oto Logo's work stood out because of the symbol of grain tied in a sheaf, which corresponds to the landscape character of Subotica and favours collectivism, which is in line with the socialist ideology of the time - "A substantial ear of wheat on a thin stalk tied in a sheaf takes on the strength that adorns the collective" (p. 3).



FIGURE 4: Photos of the ceremonial unveiling of the monument. Source: Photography collection of the Historical Archive of Subotica F:180.

Oto worked on the design proposal for the memorial site in the summer of 1974, and it was followed by several changes and only partly executed in 1977. Only the monument itself was built thus far, while its environment was left as it was – a neglected grass area, except for the immediate surroundings which were paved. Still, this was considered enough for the unveiling of the monument which was announced on the front page of the Subotica newspaper, stating that it would take place on December 18 as part of a multi-day celebration during the upcoming Yugoslav Army Day on December 22 ("Svi smo mi armija", 1977). The ceremony began with the official session of SUBNOR in the Hall of Sports. A bilingual performance of the poem "Summoned by freedom the dead also live" was performed during the meeting, followed by a musical number "Mother of Freedom" by Petar Varga. He composed a cantata for the choir, orchestra, and reciters, and Istvan Baloga wrote the text in Serbo-Croatian and Hungarian. The poem is directly associated with the monument and an introduction to its revealing that followed the ceremony in the Sports Hall. Ceremonially arrayed soldiers of the Subotica Garrison performed a

salutation platoon, an honorary fire, signalling that the monument could be unveiled (Nikolić, 1977; “Otkriven spomenik borcima revolucije“, 1977). The monument was unveiled by Stipan Kopilović, the secretary of the municipal committee of the Communist League, in the presence of many representatives of socio-political organisations of the Province and citizens of Subotica (Figure 4). The author himself attended the unveiling. On that occasion, a telegram was sent to Comrade Tito with the following content: “On the memories of the battles for freedom, we raise the young generation, on the memories of our battles, we draw inspiration for actions that enrich our socialist self-governing relations” (“Spomenik slobodom prozvanih“, 1977).

After the monument was revealed, Duranci writes:

A cold winter day. Over the frozen ground, barely peaking above the thin veil of fallen snow, grass was sprouting. Like wintry wheat on Vojvodina’s ploughland. Upon this December ambience, rose a bronze, ripe ear of wheat, tied in two sheaves. Behind the monument, a slender crane stands next to the new buildings in Subotica’s new neighbourhood “PROZIVKA” - like an exclamation mark signifying that construction works here are ongoing and will continue, works which are changing the face of the city (Duranci, 1977, p. 1).

Multiscale analysis of the monument

City level

At the city level, the monument was designed as a part of a larger city-wide spatial concept. It was intended to be one of the main landmarks, not only of the Prozivka neighbourhood where it currently stands, but also of the boulevard and promenade that would link the two biggest socialist housing neighbourhoods of the city: the aforementioned Prozivka neighbourhood in the south of Subotica and the Radijalac neighbourhood located in the north. This idea to connect the two neighbourhoods stemmed from the “Directive Urban Plan” drafted in 1952, which proposed introducing two boulevards – one oriented east-west and the other north-south. The north-south boulevard was supposed to pass through the old city centre and connect the existing city park - Dudova forest behind Radijalac and the large People’s Park planned on the outskirts of Prozivka (Mrkić, 2012).

The Radijalac neighbourhood was constructed in the 1960s, based on a concept that originated in 1910, when the first plans for the boulevard were conceived. Over time, the idea evolved in accordance with the changing urban planning paradigms. Instead of the initially planned baroque boulevard aligned with palaces, Subotica got a new promenade named Alley of Marshal Tito, in line with the new socialist ideals of Yugoslavia. The promenade, which is

900m long and 20m wide, is adorned with greenery and is bordered by car lanes and the first residential towers in the city, reflecting the socialist principles of urban planning. The combination of towers and slabs constitutes the spatial framework of the promenade, which is carefully oriented to provide a view of the tower of the Town hall - the pearl of Secession architecture, for which Subotica is well-known, and the symbol of the city (Mrkić, 2012).

The completion of Radialac and the end of the 1960s marked the successful finish to the first half of the large boulevard, and the planning of the second half of the boulevard, which included the Prozivka neighbourhood, began. Subotica's planning institute created the "Detailed Urban Plan for Part IV and IX of the Municipal Community in Subotica", on which Prozivka is based in 1974 and started construction of the neighbourhood in the mid-70s. The concept for the spatial layout of the neighbourhood was similar to Radialac - the buildings were symmetrically placed around a linear public space. Prozivka's public space was planned as a 100m wide memorial park officially named The Memorial Alley of the VIII Vojvodina Brigade. The buildings were constructed from the city's outskirts towards the centre, surrounded by cleared land, rubble, and weeds. However, the distance of approximately 3 kilometres from the outskirts to the city centre proved to be quite an ambitious feat even for the socialist building industry known for its quick and efficient housing construction, causing several departures from the original plan. The construction of this ambitious project halted during the 90's, among other factors, due to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, leaving Prozivka finished only halfway to the centre, separated from it by blocks of unpaved streets and old houses. Due to this isolating factor and the lack of public amenities, which were not built, Prozivka acquired the status of a ghetto among the inhabitants during the 90s (Žombor, 2002; "Prozivka među guskama", 2015; "Slobodom prozvani i mrtvi žive", 2018).

The unfinished part, between the city centre and the built part of Prozivka - today's Prvomajska street, was initially supposed to grow into the Prvomajska promenade. The promenade was envisioned to be lined with residential slabs and towers as a continuation of the mass housing development of Prozivka (Zavod za Urbanizam i Geodeziju Subotica, 1974). The end of the promenade on the Prozivka side was supposed to represent the entry point of The Memorial Alley of the VIII Vojvodina Brigade (Duranci, 1974). However, due to a series of unfinished projects on the city-scale, such as the pedestrian route along Prvomajska Street, the public amenities within Prozivka and the large People's Park behind it, the neighbourhood no longer attracted residents from other parts of the city after the ceremonial unveiling of the monument, leaving it out of sight to most of the city residents. Although the intention was for this monument to be a "living, functional and permanent detail in the structure of the city of Subotica" (Duranci, 1974, p. 3), its integration was not only absent at the level of the city, but also at the level of the settlement itself. (Figure 5)



FIGURE 5: Diagram – the position of the monument in relationship to the city and the planned boulevard: Source: Drawing by Dezire Tilinger, 2022.

Neighbourhood level

This notion of the monument becoming a victim of unfinished plans is even more evident on the neighbourhood scale, as the monument is only partly executed and left without adequate surroundings even though it is the focal point of the whole neighbourhood.

The location of the monument within the memorial complex was previously determined by a decision made during a joint session on June 26, 1973, which was organised to address the urban planning of The Memorial Alley of the VIII Vojvodina Brigade “Prozivka”. Unfortunately, like the original project of the monument itself, the location of the urban plan for the memorial park is not known. However, essential information about the spatial conception of the memorial park can be found in textual form in a document that resulted from the aforementioned joint session for the memorial complex. The basic elements of the memorial park include stone cubes, a linear pool, and a vertical structure with space for an eternal flame and a wall with inscriptions at its end (Durnaci, 1973).



FIGURES 6,7: The position of the monument today. Source: <https://gradsubotica.co.rs/prozivka/>, Date of download: January 2022.

Duranci (1973) states that the number of white stone cubes corresponds to the number of people who died during the war from Subotica. The cubes should be placed in order to compose “oases of peace and memory”- in several groups in the grass followed by a gentle unevenness of the terrain and shallow craters, presenting the number of battles the brigade went through, interlaced with footpaths around (p.3). The pool, with a black bottom, would stretch in the central part of the memorial complex from the former Gabrić ćuprija site, which has certain folklore connotations among Subotica’s citizens, to the other end of the memorial alley. Gabrić ćuprija, an old little bridge famous among the people for the custom of carrying the bride across it after the wedding ceremony, was located near the beginning of the memorial alley, but was removed during the construction of Prozivka. It was intended to bridge the pool’s beginning, which would preserve the existing tradition but also provide a slightly elevated viewpoint of the entire memorial complex of an approximate area of about 5 ha (Duranci, 1973, p. 3).

It is worth noting that this textual description foresees a different position of the monument from its current placement. According to Duranci, the monument is located at the end of the linear pool as its crescendo, which places the monument deeper in the park, closer to its end, than its current position at the planned entrance to the memorial park. Moving the monument from one side of the memorial park to the other brought it closer to the position of the former Gabrić ćuprija, which would later, when the idea of reintroduction of the bridge in the park arose, cause a conflict between the two toponyms of the Prozivka neighbourhood (Figure 6, 7, 8, 9).

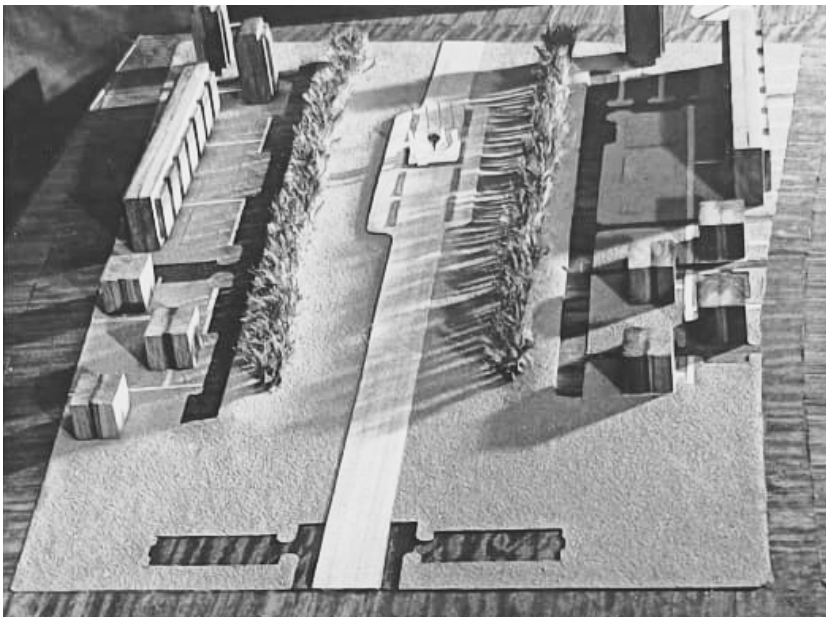


FIGURE 8: The position of the monument in the competition work by Ferenc Kalmar. Source: Gradski muzej Subotice, Zbirka dela jugoslovenskih autora Projekat K256L – konkursni rad Ferenc Kalmarija.

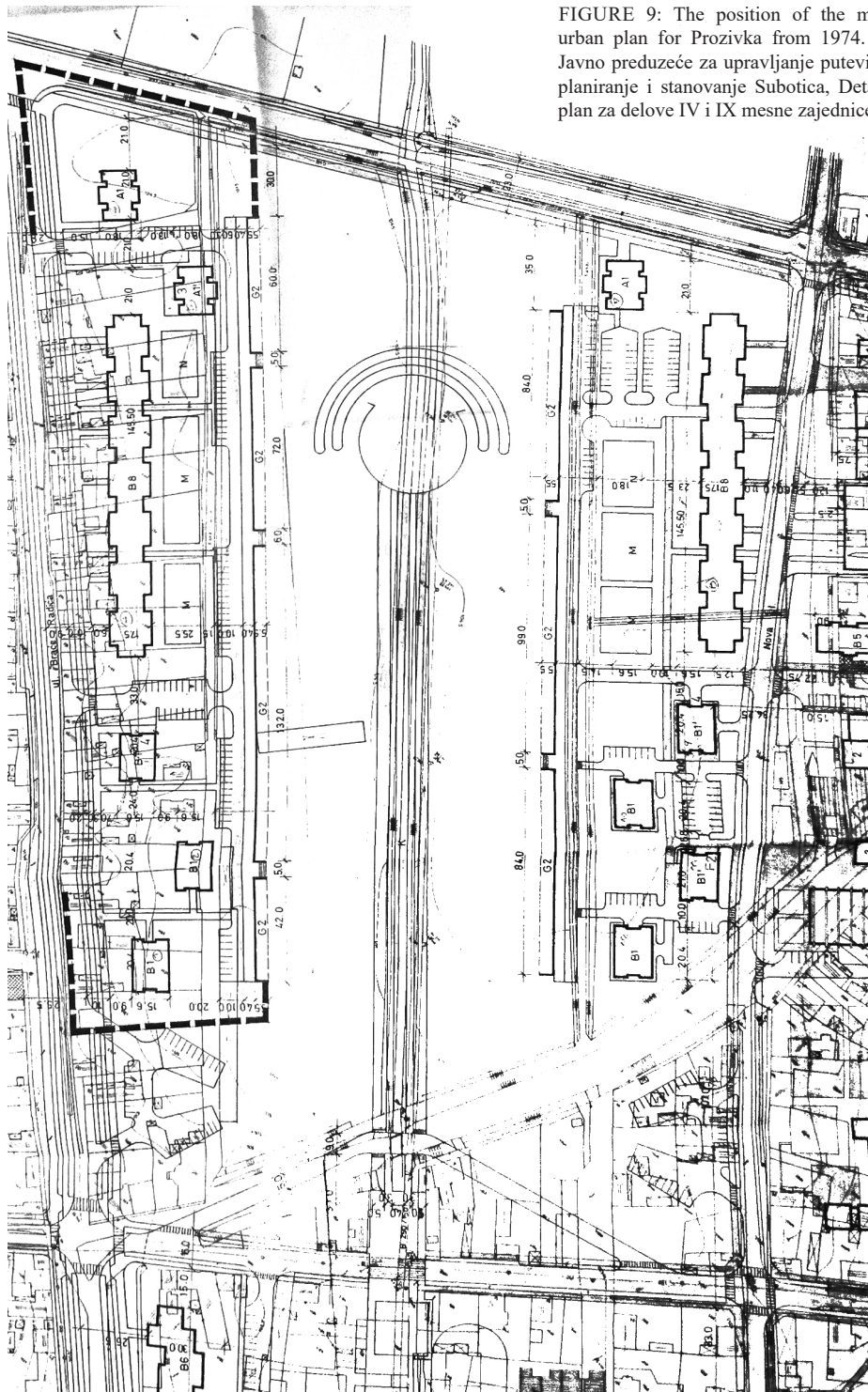


FIGURE 9: The position of the monument in the urban plan for Prozivka from 1974. godine. Source: Javno preduzeće za upravljanje putevima, urbanističko planiranje i stanovanje Subotica, Detaljni urbanistički plan za delove IV i IX mesne zajednice 1974.

Monument level

The spatial analysis of the monument will describe the monument in detail, from its symbolism to its construction and materialism. The monument is a bronze sculpture of monumental form and dimensions, a stylised sheaf of grain, which is placed on a pedestal in the shape of two joined crescents whose ends face opposite sides. The monument is placed in the centre of a circle with a diameter of 842 cm, paved with stone blocks. The pedestal of the monument, measuring 515 x 350 x 155 cm, is made of reinforced concrete, covered with a copper sheet from above, and a stone lining supported on steel anchors. The sculpture is made of bronze and measures 600 x 310 x 550 cm (Figure 10).

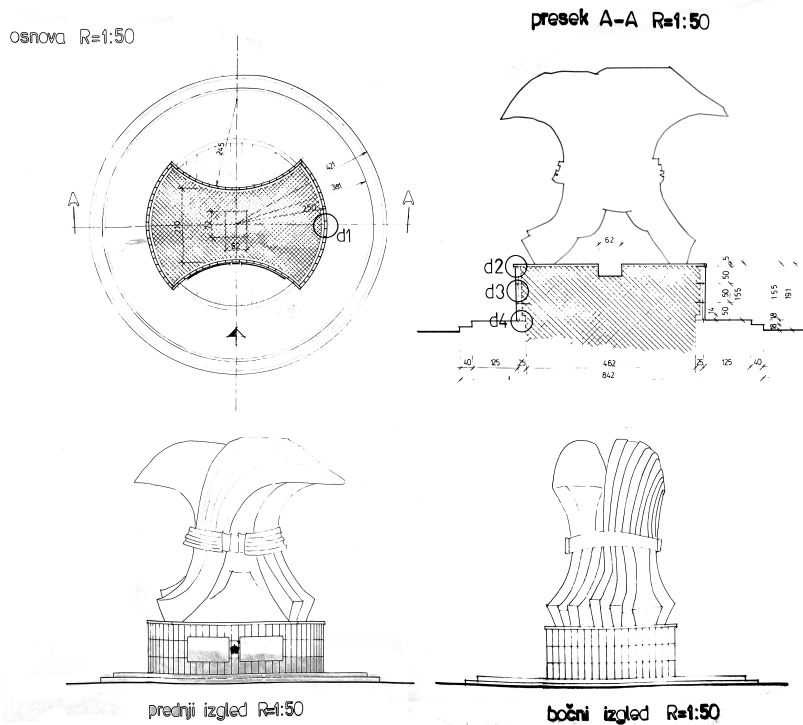


FIGURE 10: Project for the reconstruction of monument Prozivka from 1988. godine. Source: Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture Subotica.

On the front side of the pedestal are placed two groups of bronze letters that write the verses of Lazar Merковиć: “Summoned by freedom the dead also live,” followed by “To the fallen fighters of the socialist revolution of the municipality of Subotica” in Serbian and Hungarian. Between them is inserted the emblem, the bronze sign of the fighters of Yugoslavia (Figure 11).



FIGURE 11: Original inscription on Monument Prozivka in 1979. godine. Source: Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture Subotica. Fotografije Aleksandra Jurige 11. Jun 1979. godine.

“Even though an agrarian sign” the monument “is shaped as a pure form of modern, technical civilisation”, as Duranci (2001) points out (p. 106). The sculpture is made of two wheats of grain held together by a belt positioned at half the sculpture’s height. The volume of the sculpture is arranged in such a way that below the belt, there are only supports - the stalks of the grain wheats, while above the belt, they become one volume, thus forming a sheltered space between the pedestal and the supports of the sculpture for the placement of the eternal flame, an often used antifascist symbol in Yugoslav memorial architecture. The symmetry and stability of the composition are also reflected in the moment of joining or tying the ears of wheat into a bundle, clearly indicating the balance the two wheats provide to each other, both visually and constructively. The sculptor Otto was greatly influenced by architect Goran Tabaković, under whom he studied architecture in high school. This influence is reflected in Otto’s understanding of the process of constructing the sculpture:

It (the sculpture) requires a masonry system, in the literal sense... It is a long-term work. Among other things, it also takes physical work, construction work. Naturally, in such circumstances, the sculptor has no time for inspiration. He has to deal with what I usually call the construction of a sculpture (Jevtić, 1995, pp. 30, 31).

Even though the mass of the structure is located in its upper part, which is additionally emphasised by the grooves that almost perforate the monument

on its supports and then gradually disappear in the mass of the upper parts of the wheat, the effect of lightness that Durnaci perceives has been successfully achieved:

If we carefully examine this bronze form, we will notice that this considerable mass has an extraordinary, thin and curved movement of life, directed from existence to the top in the form of the letter “S”, visible from two sides. However, from the other two viewpoints, we have a completely different rhythm that firmly imposes itself on us. Moving around these two rhythms, from various points of view, gives a multitude of unexpected experiences (Duranci, 1977, p. 9).

Duranci (1977) believes that playing with the symbol of grain was risky, considering that it is an often exploited motif, but still, the use of this symbol in a plain, grain-bearing region proved to be a wise choice because it evokes a specific emotional connection among the inhabitants of that area. It will be shown in the coming decades that Duranci overestimated the emotional connection of the grain with the inhabitants and that the monument will go through numerous attempts at reconstruction due to neglect and vandalism, leading him to stop this kind of romanticisation of the monument he is prone to and even to propose its relocation if it continues to be a target of dissatisfaction and aggression of the local population. He thinks of closing or limiting access to the monument but admits that in that case, “it would cease to be a monument” (Duranci, 2001, p. 109). Thus, the spatial analysis of the monument will be further explored through the small changes that happened to it and around it in the upcoming decades with the aim of stopping its further vandalization, which resulted from its unsatisfactory implementation on the city and neighbourhood level, but also the apparent inability of the monument to connect to the neighbourhood residents.

Maintenance

Less than ten years after the placement of the monument, in 1986/87, and according to Duranci and Gabrić (2001), even before then, in 1983, there was already need for restoration due to the heavy devastation the monument endured. Demeter (1986) reports on the damage done to the Prozivka Monument and indicates that the large area around the monument seems “extremely neglected and not thought-out” (p. 4), that the surrounding contents have not been implemented and that every single one of the existing light fixtures has been destroyed.

Photographic documentation shows damage to the lower edge of the monument, damage to the covering copper sheet on the pedestal and numerous graffiti on all parts of the monument. It was also noticed that the opening on the upper panel of the pedestal, intended for the eternal flame, is also stuffed



FIGURE 12: The devastation of the monument in 1986. Source: Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture Subotica. Opis postojećeg stanja i ponuda za popravku nastalih oštećenja na spomen kompleksu kod Prozivke.

with garbage (Figure 12). Nevertheless, Demeter points out that “The saddest picture is given by the monument itself, which is a victim of vandalism and the uncontrolled destructive impulses of children from the surrounding buildings, who express their aggressiveness instilled by the inhumane environment and the lack of space to play towards this extremely significant monument” (Demeter, 1986, page 4). In the same year, untamed grass and weeds were removed, broken granite plates on the pedestal were replaced with the same material, dirt, graffiti and cracks were removed, and a bronze plate with a bilingual inscription was installed due to the frequent destruction and disappearance of the individual letters that made up the original text (Figure 13).



FIGURE 13: The inscription on Monument Prozivka after reconstruction. Source: Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture Subotica. Fotodokumentacija 1990. godina

In 1988, a new report on the damage to the Prozivka Monument was drawn up, where it was noted that the monument's surroundings were in a similar state to two years ago, and it repeated almost verbatim the same sentences from the previous report. Minor repairs were carried out again, and the granite stone cladding was replaced with a cheaper, autochthon to the Balkan area, marble called Plavi Tok (Demeter, 1988). Similar reports were drafted in 1989, and the 1990s witnessed two new reports being issued within only a few months. Gabrić (1991) states that all the restoration works have been unsuccessful so far: the stone slabs are broken again, the bronze Fighters of Yugoslavia emblem has been removed, the copper sheet is once more damaged, and the bronze inscription plate begins to fall off due to the corrosion of the screws. The following proposal is presented: "Almost every year such interventions are carried out, so it would be advisable to change the entire pedestal and make it in natural concrete with built-in bronze plates and an emblem" (Gabrić, 1991, p. 1).

After a few years, in 1994, a new restoration project was created. At this moment, the monument is completely stripped, and apart from a shiny but graffiti-written sheaf of grain, nothing remains of the monument. All the bronze plates have disappeared along with the marble cladding, fully exposing the concrete plinth covered with evenly spaced steel anchors that once supported it. After implementing the project, the pathway to the monument and the plateau were finally paved with granite blocks and yellow clinker bricks. Reinforcing wire was attached to the steel anchors driven into the pedestal, the copper sheet was removed and the entire pedestal was covered continuously, without a break between the horizontal and vertical surfaces, with "yellowish" cast terrazzo, thus ultimately closing the opening for the eternal fire (Figure 14). All edges have been rounded to prevent chipping, and the bronze letters have been replaced with text carved in terrazzo and painted bronze. The sign of the fighters was found, cleaned and embedded in the terrazzo coating (Konzervatorski uslovi za restauraciju Spomenika "Prozivka", 1994) (Figure 15).

Otto was well aware of the importance of the composition between the monument and its surroundings, stating that "a monument that stands on a street, in a square or in some other open and frequented space is an extremely important object, for several reasons", primarily because a monument is a "communal problem", around which "communal projects, such as greenery, roads, streets, maybe even a square and the buildings next to it" are being resolved (Jevtić, 1995, p. 33). Yet, despite this awareness about the communal role of monuments the author had, the Prozivka monument found a resolution to its communal problems only just in 2008, 31 years after it was installed.

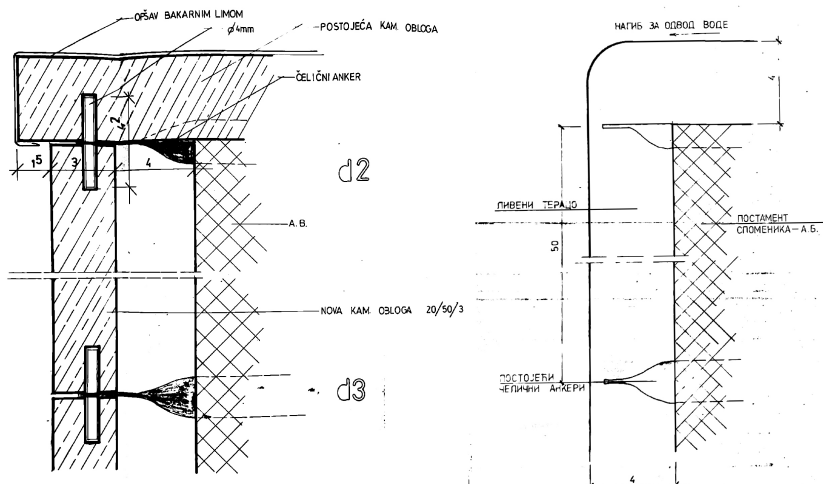


FIGURE 14: Detail of the lining of the postament in 1988 and 1994. Source: Међуопштински завод за заштиту споменика културе Суботика. Пројекат реконструкције споменика Проживка, 1988. година and Међуопштински завод за заштиту споменика културе Суботика. Пројекат реставрације споменика Проживка, 1994. година.

FIGURE 15: The emblem of Fighters of Yugoslavia. Source: Међуопштински завод за заштиту споменика културе Суботика. Пројекат реставрације споменика Проживка, 1994. година.

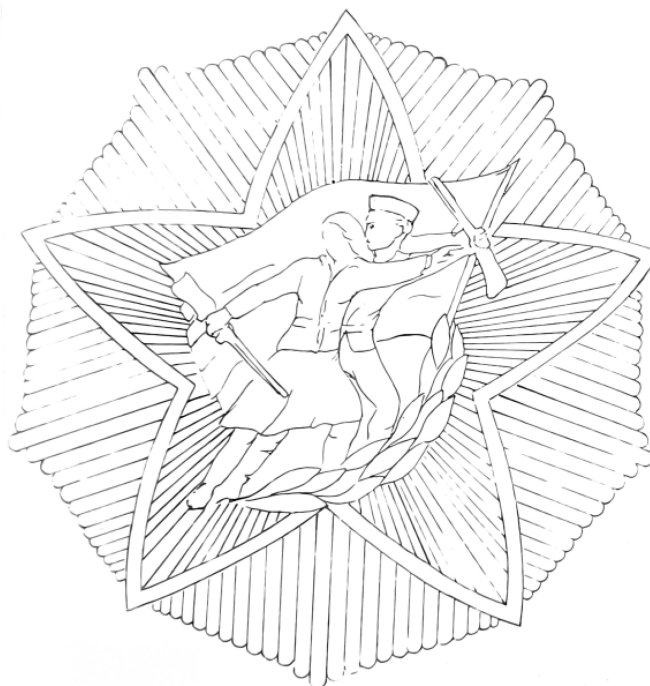




FIGURE 16: The condition of the monument in 2008. Source: Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture Subotica. Projekat sanacije spomenika Prozivka, 2008. godina.

Current state of the monument

In 2008, the monument was restored the last time. Although the terrazzo on the plinth proved more durable than the stone slabs, the blocks on the plateau around the monument, which were not replaced with asphalt as suggested by the conservators, served as a convenient tool to damage the monument. There are recurring problems with graffiti and lighting fixtures (Projekat sanacije spomenika “Prozivka”, 2008) (Figure 16). However, considering that this time the monument was restored for the first time after more than ten years, and not on an annual basis as before, the restorers decided to follow the same approach, in the hope that this time a complete reconstruction, in synergy with the ongoing implementation of the new urban plan for the entire park, will finally give satisfactory and long-term results.

For the first time, not only the immediate surroundings of the monument were treated, but rather the park was treated as a whole, finally leaving behind the lingering, never to be idea of The Memorial Alley to the VIII Vojvodina brigade. The entire area of the park was decorated with paved footpaths, and benches and children’s playgrounds were installed. A horticultural project was devised for the area surrounding the monument, and some of the contents mentioned in the original competition brief for the memorial were finally executed, although they were in no way in line with the initial plan. Gabrić ćuprija was built near the monument as a separate spatial element, rather than in relationship to it, as planned. Essentially, Gabrić ćuprija is a stylised oval pool with a bridge over it, small in size compared to the one Duranci described in his report. In addition to the very postmodern and kitsch style of the bridge, its position directly in front of the monument seems inappropriate in relation to the original idea, when it was modestly interpreted as an integral part of the memorial alley and not the first impression one gets when entering the area. Therefore, the two toponyms, the monument and the bridge, clash because of their proximity, although, there was space for the Gabrić ćuprija in other places nearby, and consequently for more adequate shaping of the surroundings of the monument, which could in some measures incorporate some of the original features from the plan. The Gabrić ćuprija and the newly built residential area on the site of what would have been the beginning of the Prvomajska promenade, if the initial urban plan was executed, do not aesthetically communicate with

the monument or the socialist neighbourhood around it, as is often the case with new urban developments near socialist mass housing neighbourhoods. Still, the biggest pity lies in the loss of an unobstructed view of the monument's striking and recognisable silhouette, once visible from Prvomajska Street, by placing it in the background behind the Gabrić ćuprija (Figures 17 and 18).

FIGURE 17: The view of the monument from the direction of Prvomajska Street before the newly built residential area and Gabrić Cuprija. Izvor: <https://gradsubotica.co.rs/prozivka-medu-guskama/>, Date of download: januar 2022.



FIGURE 18: The view of the monument from the direction of Prvomajska Street after the newly built residential area and Gabrić Cuprija. Source: <https://gradsubotica.co.rs/gabric-cuprija-zatvaranje-gradilista/>. Date of download: July 2022.



3. CONCLUSION

It is evident that even though the monument, or to be more precise, the planned memorial park, was imagined as: 1) an integral part of the city, as it was planned on one of its main axes, 2) the main toponym of the Prozivka housing neighbourhood, carefully planned around it, and 3) as a symbol of collectiveness, it unfortunately failed to put this imagination into practice.

The poor integration of the monument due to its unfinished condition can be read on all three levels of research. The analysis from the city level indicates that the monument was poorly integrated within the wider urban area for two reasons: firstly, it was left unconnected, just like the Prozivka neighborhood, from the city center and secondly, there were no public amenities or spaces that would give reason for people outside the neighborhood to visit it, or pass by it, often enough for it to resonate with a broader group of Subotica's residents. At the neighborhood level, the realisation of only the monument, without a memorial park surrounding it, leaves the monument situated in an untamed grass area. This lack of a proper setting decreases the respect of the structure once intended to serve as the main symbol and landmark of the neighborhood. The monument's inability to assume this role is even more evident today, as its significance is further reduced by the development of the park which took the monument and original plans into very little account. Finally, research at the level of the monument itself indicates that, despite its robust appearance, it has been subjected to decades of vandalism, further underscoring the role it was meant to embody. Continuous alterations made during various repairs have additionally changed the monuments appearance distancing it even more from the original vision.



FIGURE 19: The view of the monument from and its surroundings in 1988. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HR-HPyGPja4>, Date of download: March 2024.

It is important to emphasise that many different factors stand behind the many years of vandalism and abandonment the monument endured. Additionally, one might question whether the monument would be better placed in a different location, as it has no genuine connection to the site where

it currently stands. Although it was built to honor the fallen fighters of the VIII Vojvodina Brigade which did reorganise in Subotica, its placement in Prozivka is primarily symbolic; it does not mark a significant event, gathering spot, or battle site. This could also be a reason why the residents have never viewed it as significant and contribute to its poor acceptance. It can even be argued that, the monument may be one of those created in the “uncritical affirmation, mythologization, and hyperproduction of places of memory that commemorated the constitutive moments of the political regime: People’s Liberation Struggle, the socialist revolution, and the tradition of social uprising and the workers’ movement” (Horvatinčić, 2015, 37). Still, it must be admitted that some of the blame can be attributed to the ad hoc approach to planning, both in the socialist period and after it, which can be partly recognised as the reason for the monument and park being in such bad shape for decades. One could argue that while the socialist idea was maybe overly ambitious, the post-socialist period was not ambitious enough, as it was not able to, for a long period of time, at least regularly clean the park from garbage, keep the grass cut and install some sturdier lighting fixtures around the monument (Figure 19).

In general, viewed in relation to the original idea and conception of the monument, which itself can not be thoroughly understood due to lack of archival material, the question arises to what extent was it possible to take it into account when planning the park in 2008. Incomplete documentation, the lack of an original project and a large number of changes in the plans and accompanying text documents reduce all attempts to see the original intentions to mere guesswork, and it is necessary to try to find the missing pieces of the puzzle in further research. High ambitions and a large number of changes in the plans, along with the shift in the planning paradigm after the breakup of Yugoslavia, made it almost impossible to react from today’s position, which is politically, economically and in every other sense different from the one in which the monument was created, in a way that will meet all the necessary criteria, adhering both to original intentions and contemporary life.

Although the monument has been in good condition since the park’s renovation, it must be admitted that something has been taken away from it by that renovation. It can be concluded that by changing its environment, to the benefit or disadvantage of the monument, the monument itself has changed in some sense, or at least the way it is perceived. The Prozivka monument is no longer the target of vandal attacks, but thanks to the still unfinished promenade and the decades-long delay in arranging its surroundings, the monument is still not the “living, functional and permanent detail in the structure of the city of Subotica” as it was once hoped it would become, mainly because it was reduced from a memorial park to a sculpture, and could be understood as just one more victim of unfinished modernisations, of a gap between the planned and the executed.

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