A MATERIALIZATION OF POWERS

CASE STUDY ON THE SPATIAL DIMENSION OF THE FORMER DUTCH MILITARY BASE AT Potočari, BONSIA-HERZEGOVINA, 1994-1995 AND 2018

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BA Thesis Gender and Postcolonial Studies | 17 June 2018 | Utrecht University
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Preface

In order to complete the bachelor Liberal Arts and Sciences at Utrecht University, students are expected to write an interdisciplinary and a disciplinary thesis. With this disciplinary thesis I hope to show how I developed my skills as a researcher within gender and postcolonial studies. The subject of this thesis is an analysis of how power relations are materialized within the spatial dimension of a former military base. In order to do this I combined insights from my major in Gender and Postcolonial Studies and my minor in Conflict Studies.

I would like to thank everybody who supported and helped me during this project. In particular I want to thank Katrine Smiet, for helping me during this project as my supervisor. Vasiliki Belia for being my second reader, Hans Schouwenburg for enriching my analysis with his perspective on the use of graffiti as a historical primary source, Lotje van Uhm for her advice on (conflict studies) literature and the interest she showed in my work and Iva VUkusic for advising me on critical literature about the Bosnia conflict. Further I would like to thank all the people I met in Bosnia, who helped me during my fieldwork with opening doors, giving their perspective on the memorial center and for making me feel most welcome. Finally I want to thank my dearest Heleen, for always supporting me and listening to me.

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Zeist, 17 June 2018

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Abstract

Conflict analysis is often focused on the socio-economic/cultural dimension of the territorial dimension. New materialist scholars argue that power relations are at work within space. The spatial dimension of conflict can thus be understood as a materialization of power. Within this thesis, this hypothesis is examined by analyzing the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari, Bosnia Herzegovina. The theoretical framework that is used to examine this, is based upon an integration of new materialist insights and a 'framework of multiple spatialities of contentious politics'. The spatial dimension is analyzed in relation to the proposed different dimension of space: the politics of mobility, network, place, position, scale and time. These different dimensions of space are understood as being co-constructive. Based upon the analysis it concludes that within the spatial dimension different power relations are at work. This reinforces mechanisms of in- and exclusion through the interaction between the human and the non-human.. The spatial dimension is actively propagating these mechanisms, but can also be manipulated into a political tool. At this point the spatial dimension contributes to the divide between different social identities, as gender and ethnicity. However, the analysis and incorporation of the spatial dimension as active, opens up room for a politics of possibilities, which could be used to enable different actors to come closer to each other.

Table of contents

Table of images

Table of images

Introduction

Over the years, feminist and postcolonial scholars have often criticized the idea of 'peacebuilding' and 'peacekeeping'. Both United Nations (UN) and non-UN missions are critiqued as being imperialistic and having colonial tendencies (see among others: Mamdani, 2010; Chandler, 2006). The argument of 'protecting vulnerable groups against the hostility of (uncivilized) others', as it is often used by the UN and national governments, is in line with arguments that were used to implement colonial rule. However, not intervening in violent conflict can be disastrous. As a global community we have the responsibility to protect those under attack, and have no ability to defend themselves. In this respect, issues and ethics relating to peacekeeping and peacebuilding are always highly complicated, because the line between protecting human rights and colonializing others is very fine.

Debates surrounding conflict[1] (both academic and political), usually focus on the socio-political/cultural dimension or on the territorial dimension of conflict. The dimension of 'space' is often not recognized as something that can give insight into the power dynamics of a conflict (see among others: Gieryn, 2000; Demmers and Venhovens, 2016). For this reason, my research project is focused on the spatial dimension of both conflict and peace. My aim is to demonstrate how the spatial dimension can be an insightful starting point towards understanding underlying power structures and to explore a new approach towards understanding the relation between West and East (Western- and Eastern Europe) as embedded within the spatial dimension of both conflict and peace. I will do this based on an integration of insights from new materialism as explained by feminist scholar Karen Barad (2001; 2003) and a 'multiple spatialities framework of contentious politics' as proposed by geography studies scholars Helga Leitner, Eric Sheppard and Kristin Sziarto (2008). To demonstrate the usefulness of this approach, I analysed the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari (Srebrenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina). The main question I will answer within this thesis is: '*How are power relations between Dutch UN peacekeepers and Bosniak refugee/citizens embedded within the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari?*'

During the Bosnian war (1992-1995, part of the war that broke up the former Yugoslavia), the Netherlands sent out a battalion, 'Dutchbat', to the area of Srebrenica, under the command of

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[1] Conflict: within this thesis understood as 'a social action'.

the UN [mission: UNPROFOR] (1994-1995). Srebrenica[2] was meant to be a 'safe haven' for Bosniak[3] refugees from surrounding communities. On July 11, 1995, the Serbian army took over the enclave and over 8,000 Bosniak men were murdered (henceforth referred to as the Srebrenica massacre[4]).[5] During their time in Srebrenica, Dutchbat made use of a military base in Potočari, a small village about 7 kilometers from the city center of Srebrenica. Several sorts of graffiti[6] were left behind in the base by the Dutch soldiers. In 2003, a memorial center opened in the area of the former military base: the 'Srebrenica and Potočari memorial and cemetery for the victims of the 1995 genocide'. The memorial center consists of a museum, a memorial room and a cemetery for the men who were murdered in the massacre. The current memorial center is the case study that I analyzed for this thesis.

I will first elaborate further on my theoretical framework. In the second chapter I will explain my methods as well as why this is justifiable. I present my analysis of the spatial dimension of the memorial center in the third chapter. In the conclusion I give a summery answer to the main question.

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[2] Srebrenica is a municipality and a village in the east of Bosnia, near the Serbian border. Within this thesis I refer with 'Srebrenica' to both the municipality and the village, except when explicitly referred to one these.
[3] Bosniaks are a population group within the former Yugoslavia, who mostly lived within the area of the present Bosnia-Herzegovina. Within western media this group of people is often referred to as 'Bosnian Muslims'. During my fieldwork however, I found that all the people I talked to as well as the museum, which is co-created with members of this population, referred to this group as 'Bosniaks'. Therefor I choose to use this signifier in my research as well, because the addition of religion is a western interpretation of the identity boundaries that create this ethnic identity.
[4] The Srebrenica massacre is ruled a genocide by the ICTY. Because genocide is a highly political term which has a high impact on international intervention obligations I choose to not use the word genocide within this thesis, because I want to focus on the spatial dimension of conflict and not on international intervention policies.
[5] Questions about guilt and responsibility for the Srebrenica massacre are still under discussion. Because of the length of my research I cannot go into this in depth. For more detailed information about the Srebrenica massacre I refer to 'Srebrenica, genocide in eight acts' (http://srebrenica.sense-agency.com/en/). Here an overview is given from the known facts as well as witness statements from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia [ICTY]. In 2013 the High Council judged that the Dutch state was at least partly responsible for 350 of the 8000+ deaths during the Srebrenica Massacre.
[6] Graffiti: both words as symbols or images which are somehow made visible on a fixed object, that can be engraved but also with the use of paint or any other substitute. Can be found in both public and private spaces. Within this thesis this thus include scribbles on public bathroom doors as well as spayed works of art.

Chapter 1: Theoretical framework

At the end of the 20th century, our understanding of space shifted. Beginning with Michel Foucault's observation of the working of power relations in the panopticon (1975), social scientists have given an increased interest to the notion of space. The so called 'spatial turn' refers to a shift from understanding "space as a purely material condition to understanding it as a social product" (Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel, 2016: 3). An important effect of this is that space becomes highly political (Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel, 2016: 3-4). This politicizing of space(s) makes the analysis of spatial dimensions an important feminist project, because it suggests that there are mechanisms of in- and exclusion at work, inherent in the spatial dimensions of life.

Within conflict and peace studies there is also an increased interest in the spatial dimension of a conflict (Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel, 2016: 5). However, the extent to which this influence goes often is questioned. Conflict and peace studies scholars Sven Chojnacki and Bettina Engels argue that "social conflict (…) has constructive power for the physical and material as well as the sociopolitical dimension of space" (2016: 36). They elaborate that social scientists have to overcome the social/material divide, because "space and conflict mutually produce and reproduce each other" (2016: 26). One of their critiques on existing studies on the spatial dimension of conflict is that these "add physical and material features (as another variable) to an analysis of conflict which is based on the assumptions of mostly linear causal relations" (2016: 36). This is important because space is not another variable which helps to analyze conflict, but something in which conflict is embedded. Chojnacki and Engels question to what degree we should recognize that space has autonomy while also acknowledging that it is socially produced (2016, 36). To overcome this problem I integrated new materialist theory, as elaborated Karan Barad (2001 and 2003) and a 'multiple spatialities framework of contentious politics⁷' as proposed by Helga Leitner, Eric Sheppard and Kristin Sziarto (2008), in my spatial analysis.

New materialism builds upon the idea that dualist oppositions are produced in interaction, as for instance the human and the non-human or matter and mind, and that these dualisms are not exhaustive. It proposes "a cultural theory that radically rethinks the dualisms so central to our (post-) modern thinking" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin, 2012: 93). It is important to take into

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⁷ Contentious politics refers to concerted, counter-hegemonic social and political action in which differently positioned participants come together to challenge dominant systems of authority in order to promote and enact alternative imaginaries (Leitner et al, 2008: 157).

account that matter, or an object, is thus no longer passive, but interactive: the making of meaning is reciprocal (van der Tuin and Dolphijn, 2010: 15; Barad, 2003: 815). Dualist oppositions can thus better be understood as part of a spectrum, placing the spatial and social dimension themselves on a spectrum, in which the different possibilities within the spectrum influence and mutually reconstruct each other. As Barad argues:

> Space is not a container in which objectives assume their respective places at a given moment in time. Spatiality is an ongoing process of (re)structuring through (re)making of boundaries which depends upon and plays a productive role in materialization of phenomena. (…) Spatiality is defined not only in terms of boundaries (2001: 91-92).

This is important because it suggests that the borders between, for example gender and class, are reinforced by the making of material borders. Space is thus power-laden. Barad conceives matter with a notion of intra-active agency (2003: 822), which means that the spatial dimension generates and reinforces power relations.

For the analysis of the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari, new materialism gives an interesting perspective on time-space relations. According to feminist new materialist scholar, Rossi Braidotti, matter should not be defined as stable or solid. She argues that we are in need of a 'radically immanent conceptualization of matter' (2002, qtd in van der Tuin and Dolphijn, 2010:13). Note that this makes it possible for 'matter' to undergo transformation over time. Elizabeth Grosz, a professor in women's studies, makes a comparable statement, by arguing that "what is fundamentally immersed in time is not what remains unchanging or the same over time (…), but what diverges and transforms itself over the passage of time" (Grosz, 2005: 111, qtd in van der Tuin and Dolphijn, 2010: 13). New materialism can thus be understood as a theory that "focuses on the dynamic and the virtual, that is, on generativity that is not causally linear (van der Tuin and Dolphijn, 2010: 8). In combination with Barad's notion of 'spacetime manifolds' as "a matter of co-constitution of spatiality and temporality through the dynamics of intra-active inter activity" (2001:93), new materialism opens up the opportunity to think about space-time relations in a noncausal/non-linear way.

For my analysis of the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari, this means that the events of 1994 and 1995 not only determine how the spatial dimension of the military base can be interpreted in 2018, but that these different moments in time are intra-active and mutually constitutive. This is not to say that history changes, but that our memory of history, and therefore our understanding of power relations that are/were at stake, are transformative

and change throughout an interactive relation with an immanent spatial dimension. In line with Barad's work about the 're(con)figuration of space, time and matter', this opens up a space for 'material discursive forms of agency' (2001: 93). Agency is here understood as a structural relation of power, which can be both human and non-human. This means that space is socially produced, but this does not imply that space has no autonomy at all. Space has autonomy in the sense that it is part of and actively influences structural relations of power. In short: we as humans give meaning to space, but through this interaction with space, the space obtains agency.

As mentioned, Chojnakci and Engels argue that "social conflict (…) has constructive power for the physical and material as well as the sociopolitical dimension of space" (2016: 36). From a new materialist perspective I argue that these are not separable dimensions of space but rather interconnected and mutually constitutive. Leitner, Sheppard and Sziarto (2008) propose a 'multiple spatialities framework of contentious politics' to analyze the spatial dimension of conflict and peace. Leitner et al. argue that the spatial dimension is built upon the politics of scale, place, network, positionality and mobility. These are not separated, but are co-constructive dimensions of space and always in a dialogue with each other (2008: 158). The 'multiple spatialities framework' fits with Barad's notion of space as something with inter-active agency, because it acknowledges that space is socially produced and opens up space for the autonomy of the spatial dimension. However, from a new materialist perspective I want to expand the multiple spatialities theory with a sixth dimension: the politics of time. Below I will further explain how the different spatialities can be understood from a new materialist perspective.

Politics of mobility

Leitner et al. explain the spatial dimension of the 'politics of mobility' as "the material or virtual movability of individuals or objects through space-time, within and between places" (Leitner et al, 2008: 165). It is thus about the ability or inability to move, for both bodies and ideas or things/objects. This can be understood in relation to what Barad calls 'a material discursive practice' of boundary drawing (2001: 91).

Feminist scholar Donna Haraway argues that objects are boundary projects, and thus generate and reinforce power relations (1988, referred to in Van der Tuin and Dolphijn, 2010: 15). Chojnacki and Engels argue that territorial boundaries are identity-related, because they construct the self and the other (2016:34). For the politics of mobility this means that the construction of a collective identity through the materialization of boundaries is also a

mechanism of in- and exclusion. Mobility (and immobility) can thus be understood as part of a power relation which is defined by the spatial dimension and therefore a material-discursive practice.

Politics of networking

Leitner et al. describe the 'politics of networking' as dynamic and translocal. An analysis of the politics of networking can show how individuals and institutions are connected with each other. Obstructions in connections can also be analyzed through this lens (2008: 162). What Barad calls 'boundary transgression' can be understood as the politics of networking or connectivity. Barad reasons this as follows:

> Information technologies are often seen as the neutrino of the geo-political-economic-cultural landscape, passing through matter as if it were transparent, innocently traversing all borders whether those of nation states or those of computer platforms with undiscriminating ease and disregard for obstacles (2001: 103).

This is important because it stresses the unevenness of material goods, restrictions for individuals and diminishes possibilities (Barad, 2001: 103). In short, the politics of networking is about the ability to make a connection between individuals as well as institutions with a communicative goal. However, this is not neutral or freely accessible for everybody but a power-laden construction which privileges certain identities or positions over others.

Politics of positionality

For Leitner et al. the 'politics of positionality' is built upon feminist standpoint theory. It presupposes that our understanding of the world is always relational, as we have connections and interactions with differently positioned subjects. Leitner et al. state that positionality is always under influences of power relations (2008: 163). Note that Leitner et al. state that "positionality is thus simultaneously about difference and inequality – while calling into question the generality and normative function of any position" (2008: 163). From a new materialist feminist standpoint it is important to take into account that position is not fixed, and that the social and spatial are mutually constitutive.

Barad argues that 'position' is formed by "material discursive practices amongst people" and is a "contested category that changes over time" (2001: 100). Although Barad does not explicitly take into account the position of the researcher, she does mention the relational dimension which defines position and the creation of the self and the other through boundary-making activities. The politics of positionality is thus important to understand how our

own/my position influences the interpretation and understanding of a specific spatial dimension.

Politics of place

Leitner et al. define the 'politics of place' as spaces that are made into places because people live and work there. Places are, in contradiction to space, areas where people form attachments and from which we relate to the rest of the world. Importantly, places have a distinct materiality, i.e. place is a space with a "material environment that is historically constructed" (2008: 161). Places are thus embedded with meaning, and therefore interesting targets within a conflict. The politics of place is thus about how we make space into a specific place or about 'place making'.

Barad does not specifically name 'place' within her theory, but she does elaborate on the distinct materiality of a specific location (2001: 98), which can be understood as how space becomes a place. In addition to this, Chojnacki and Engels argue that "territorial material references to authority" (2016: 34). Within this context this is of importance because it substantiates how the making of places always is embedded with power relations.

Politics of scale

Leitner et al. conceptualize the 'politics of scale' as a "relational, power laden and contested construction that actors strategically engage with, in order to legitimize or challenge existing power relations". Importantly, actors actively engage with this in order to manipulate relations of power and authority (2008: 159). The framing of something as global, national or local can be a way of manipulating and engaging with power relations. Barad argues that "scale should not be understood as geometrically nested in accordance with some physical notion of size, but rather are understood as being intra-actively produced through one another", as for example global, national and regional (2001:102). The politics of scale can thus be understood as a manipulation of the political level, which enables actors to jump scales between for instance national and regional, in order to engage with different levels of politics. This influences both the legitimacy and narratives of and about actors and events. The politics of scale can be useful to upgrade or downgrade (inter)national attention, which influences the amount of (inter)national intervention, both political and military, and humanitarian or economic aid.

Politics of time

As mentioned above, new materialist scholars like Barad, Braidotti and Grosz argue that the spatial dimension should be understood as immanent and changeable over time, while also

acknowledging that history is embedded within the spatial dimension. To analyze the spatial dimension through the multiple spatialities, a spatiality that encloses the politics of time is thus needed.

Time in this context is understood as non-linear and politically or power-loaded. Time as a spatial dimension can be understood as what Barad names an 'agential realist notion of dynamics' (2001: 90). Time and space are mutually constitutive, but also dynamic and in dialogue with one another. The specific history of a certain space influences our contemporary understanding of that history. Simultaneously, our specific understanding of history influences how time is embedded within space. The politics of time thus refers to a process in which narratives and events are interactive with the spatial dimension. They co-constructively produce the other spatialities, while being influenced by the politics of mobility, network, positionality, place and scale.

Taking the politics of time into account as a sixth spatiality enables me to take into account the ability of ideas, narratives and positions to communicate and move through time. This opens up the possibility of analysing the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari as part of a dialogue between 2018 and 1994/1995. In doing so, I will be better able to analyze the dynamics of the power relations that are materialized in the spatial dimension.

Barad proposes a 'politics of possibilities' as a way of responsible imagining and intervening in the re(con)figuration of power (2001: 104). The politics of time makes room for analyzing not only the past and the present, but also for elaborating on representations of the future. This opens up new possibilities to associate with collective memory while redefining power relations that are materialized through the spatial dimension.

To conclude, the multiple spatialities framework can help to analyze material discursive practices as well as the materialization of power relations within the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari. Within my analysis I shall further elaborate on this and show how the multiple spatialities are constitutive and co-construct materialized power relations.

Chapter 2: Methodology

As stated, the analysis of the spatial dimension of peace and conflict is an important feminist project, because it is an analysis of power relations and mechanisms of in- and exclusion. As Chojnacki and Engels argue, it is necessary to think about how we can acknowledge that space is autonomous and socially produced (2016: 32). Building upon Barad's notion of space as inter-active agency, I have tried to use new materialism to extend the multiple spatialities theory by Leitner et al. (2008). This is important, because it takes into account the multiple constitutive relations between 1994-1995 and 2018. With this I want to show that space is not only socially produced, but that power relations are materialized within the spatial dimension and can be reciprocal.

For my analysis I have been on a fieldtrip to Bosnia-Herzegovina. In preparation for this I have read multiple reports about the Bosnia conflict in 1992-1995 and the Dutch peacekeeping mission in Srebrenica (among which NIOD, 2002; ICTY, 1995-2017; HRW 1995; Klarin, 2016). It was necessary to go there myself, to get a more complete image of the spatial dimension of the former military base. In appendix 1 there is an overview of the field diary that I kept. In appendix 2 I added an extensive description of the area and the narratives that are told in the museum at the former compound. To be able to collect data from the area I took photographs of the former compound, most of which consists of graffiti left by soldiers from Dutchbat.

Chapter 3: Analysis

Image 1: overview of the compound (photo in the museum, no reference)

The former military base that Dutchbat used during 1994 and 1995 consists of a building used as headquarters, an old battery factory, used mostly for storage of goods, and the 'blue hotel', a place where soldiers could rest and spend their free time. Now, in 2018, part of the former headquarters functions as a museum about the Srebrenica massacre, one area in the old battery factory is made into a 'memorial room' and across the street (R453) there is a cemetery for the victims of the massacre (see appendix 2). The museum is cofounded by PAX and survivors of the massacre in collaboration with former soldiers of Dutchbat, the 'mothers of Srebrenica'[8] and male survivors of the massacre. I tried to unravel power relations by

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[8] The *Mothers of Srebrenica* is a group of women who lost their husbands, sons and other family members during the Srebrenica massacre. Together they sued the Dutch state for neglect of and participation in the genocide. In 2014, the international court ruled that the Dutch government was responsible for 350 of the 8000+ deaths (ICTY, 2014).

analyzing the spatial dimension of this former military base through the multiple spatialities. Note that the memorial center, including the museum, is largely depended of Dutch aid.

Image 2 shows a photo which is taken from the main entrance to the memorial center. The small building on the right is new. The old battery factory is on the left. The building in the middle is the former Dutchbat headquarters. There are offices in on the higher floors; the museum is in the back. The front is abandoned now. When Dutchbat was positioned here there was a hospital, kitchen, diner and some bedrooms in that part. Section 3.1 to 3.5 consist of a description of my analysis.

Image 2: the former compound, main entrance

3.1 Photos in the exhibition

Several pictures are exposed as part of an exhibition about the Srebrenica massacre in the museum. The collection includes photos from before the massacre, when Srebrenica was a UN safe haven, from the days the army of Republika Srpska [VRS] invaded the area, from the deportation of Bosniak citizens and refugees from the compound and photos from the months and years after the massacre. These include photos of mass graves, investigations,

testimonies, mass burials and mourning survivors of the massacre. Image 3-6 show a part of the memorial room, which is dedicated to the period after the massacre.

The use of specific photos in the exhibition can be understood as a way of practicing power because the photos used are carefully selected. Below I will explain how this is an exercise of power and how this influences our understanding of the conflict, by elaborating on five of the six spatialities: the politics of place, the politics of time, the politics of position, the politics of scale and the politics of network.

Image 3: a part of the memorial room, hall in the old battery factory

Different positions come with different power relations. A specific position can give one legitimacy to speak about something, while other positions make speaking out about something harder because one's position influences ones granted credibility. Within the pictures there is no clear distinction between Bosniaks or Bosnian-Serbs. However, A clear distinction is made/visible between civilians/refugees, Dutch soldiers (blue helmets) and non-UN soldiers. The pictures shown tell a specific story: a leading narrative on the events of July 1995. Although it is neither made specific through the pictures nor in the accompanying texts, they do show a clear image of victims and perpetrators. Image 4 and Image 5 show how

pictures of scared and crying children as well as mourning women and mass burials are used to give an idea of the circumstances of the refugees and citizens as well as of the survivors and the period after the massacre. Image 6 shows several members of the VRS who are charged by the ICTY and convicted of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The paper with the word 'GUILTY' on it is stuck on the image of the 'war criminals'. The exhibition of the different photos contributes to the dominant narrative in which the Bosniaks are seen as victims of the war and the Bosnian-Serbs as perpetrators in the war.

This victimization of the Bosniak citizens and refugees can be understood as an act of empowerment. The victimhood gives them the authority and legitimacy to give a narrative of the conflict that is understood as the 'truth' about the massacre. By taking control of the story, they get the ability to give their version of the events. This can be understood as a politics of time: the specific history of this place is embedded within the material dimension of this space. By taking this space and using it to give a specific narrative, the narrative is strengthened through the interaction with both the material dimension and its own claims about the truth. The ability to re-use and re-create the spatial dimension empowered the designers of the memorial center. However, it is important to take into account here that the influence of this narrative does not end with empowering the makers of the narrative. It influences the understanding of history for visitors as well as people who are portrayed as perpetrators through this exhibition. Although the narrative might be a large part of the truth, there are also stories that are not told within this spatial dimension, which take away the nuance of history, as for example the story about Naser Orić (also see 3.2)

As argued above, the specific space of the former military base strengthens the legitimacy of the narrative that is told in the memorial room and within the museum. This is not 'just any space', but a specific space which contains a specific history, i.e. 'a place'. The politics of place is important to understand given that the specific geographic location gives more legitimacy to the narrative. The exposing of the photos can be understood as an act of reclaiming the narrative about the massacre and also the specific space. It may be seen as a peaceful contestation against the invasion / takeover of the VRS. The international involvement in this space, like for example the Dutch aid but also the ICTY convictions, strengthens the ability to keep telling the narrative, as well as the legitimacy of the narrative. This can also be understood as a use of the politics of scale: by playing with these international actors the space gets more publicity as well as a larger range to communicate.

The ability to communicate a narrative also relates to the politics of network. The memorial center gives an opportunity to connect with different organizations and individuals. This is in stark contrast to 1994-1995, when the compound was part of the UN safe haven. I will go further into this in section 3.4.
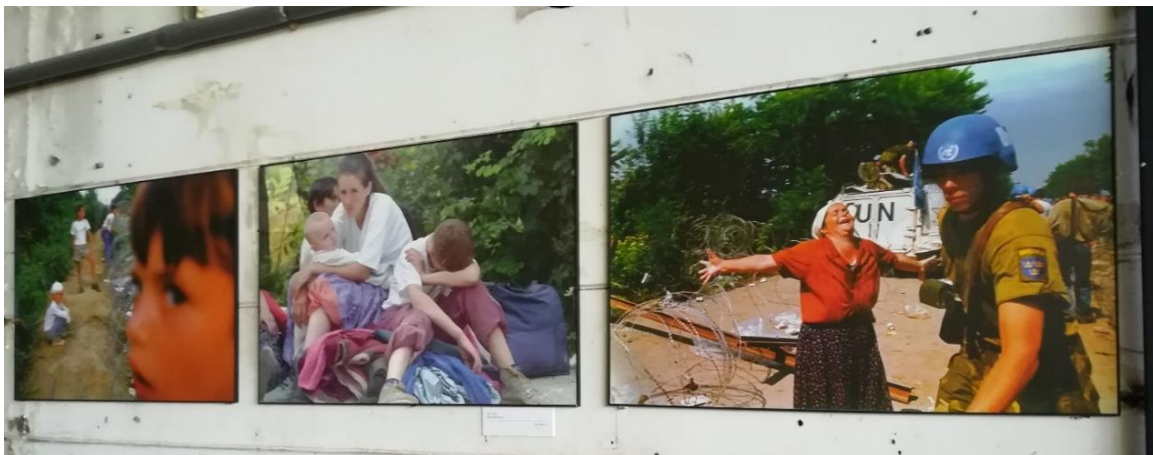

Image 4: wall in the memorial room

Image 5: close-up of a wall in the memorial room

Image 6: close up of a wall in the memorial room

3.2 Storytelling and testimonies

Throughout the museum a narrative is told about the events of 1994-1995 and especially of the events of July 1995, including the Srebrenica massacre. The story is a compilation of several testimonies and reports Because memory can differ from the actual events, multiple videos are shown of interviews and testimonies from different individuals. Image 7 shows a small room in which one can watch and listen to different testimonies about the, sometimes tense, relationship between the Dutch peacekeepers and the Bosniak refugees / citizens. On the setup surrounding the display there are portraits printed from the people that have given a testimony, including a short biography of ones position within the enclave/the military. Note that not one testimony is presented as superior to another. All witnesses are dressed in civilian clothes and are able to give their interpretation of the relationship between the Bosniaks and the Dutch.

Image 7: testimonies about the relationship between the Dutch and the Bosniaks

The narrative that the museum tells mostly corresponds with the official narrative of the UN about the peacekeeping mission in Srebrenica. However, it is important that the ability to tell a certain narrative is never neutral, but always power-laden and sometimes even a political practice. An example of this can be found in the story that the museum tells about Naser Orić. Shortly after entering the museum, in the hallway on the ground floor, one can find pictures

and texts about Orić. The museum discusses his 'heroic actions', in which he and his group of armed men left the enclave to gather food and other necessities for the people of Srebrenica. According to the information of the museum, this saved many from starving to death. In addition, he is said to have protected the enclave, and this all without any self-interest. However, he had to stand trial before the ICTY because he was accused of murder and torture of civilians and burning down 15 villages around Srebrenica. He was convicted for not preventing his men committing war crimes. Other non-official stories state that he raped and tortured Bosnian Serb civilians. His conviction was highly contested because it was perceived as not taking all his crimes into account and as a sign of how the ICTY was biased in favor of the Bosniaks (see ao.: Spoerri and Freyberg-Inan, 2009; Grodsky, 2009).

3.3 Graffiti by Dutchbat

Throughout both the old battery factory and the former headquarters one can find several works of graffiti. Within the museum, the graffiti is integrated as a part of the exhibition. The graffiti was preserved during the renovation of the building (see Image 11 and Image 14) and photos of the graffiti are presented along with an explanation of the graffiti as part of the museum's collection (see Image 8). The museum claims that all the graffiti was left by the Dutchbatters. To me, the graffiti formed an interesting representation of everyday life at the compound as well as an entry point towards the power relations which were at work in the compound and in the area during 1994 and 1995. The graffiti shows a materialization of the politics of time: it captures a moment from 1994/1995 which is still visible in 2018 and in this way influences our (2018) understanding of, for example, the relationship between the Bosniaks and the Dutch during 1994/1995.

Image 8 shows a wall in the museum with a few examples of the graffiti as well as some information about the graffiti. It states that the graffiti was mostly created by Dutchbatters, that different styles were used throughout the area, and that the graffiti was created to decorate the public and private spaces of the compound. Besides that, it acknowledges that some visitors may find the graffiti shocking due to the sexist and racist content. Lastly, it informs visitors that many former soldiers now regret the graffiti but also 'emphasize that they were only meant for the small circle of military comrades'.

Image 8: construction in the museum dedicated to the graffiti

Making graffiti can be understood as a practice of place-making: by embellishing the spatial dimension of the military base, it becomes more of one's own. Image 9 shows a piece of graffiti that I found in an abandoned part of the old battery factory. The references to the Netherlands / Rotterdam are a very clear example of how graffiti can contribute to making something 'one's own'. Creating graffiti is a very literal manner of embedding a specific place with a specific meaning. Besides this, graffiti has a strong communicative tendency: although often left anonymously, it is visible to others and left to be read, interpreted and even reacted upon. Making graffiti can thus also a 'politics of network', as it is a form of communication and can connect (or disconnect) individuals.

The wall on the right in **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.** can be seen as a practice of embedding the material part of space with meaning: there are signifiers of religion (upper left: a cross; below: a Christian cemetery in the hills), signifiers of personal interests which go together with a social identity (upper right: Harley Davidson emblems), and also less socially meaningful and more personal messages (on the left from the big Harley Davidson emblem: a message about the absence of shower water; low right: a message that states '*Bart stinkt*' / 'Bart stinks'). The graffiti was left in an apparently (relatively) public space. The desks, books, documents, phones and other technological devices that are visible on the photo on the left, indicate that this has been some sort of office with a communicative function. Although that does not mean that everybody has unlimited access, it does mean that this is not a private space. The messages on this wall thus have a broader public than only one's roommates and close friends: they are at least meant to be seen by a substantial part of the Dutch battalions that were stationed here in 1994-1995.

For my analysis, I picked two different themes and examples of the Dutchbat graffiti, to help demonstrate how power is materialized through it. First, I will focus on the positioning of the 'other' through the act of making graffiti and second on how gender plays a role in this military space. This relates strongly to the politics of position.

Image 9: piece of graffiti in an abandoned part of the old battery factory

Image 10: a room in the museum

3.3.1 Positioning the other through graffiti

Image 11 and Image 14 show two walls with graffiti. The content designates social identity and the power relation between the Dutch peacekeepers / Western-Europe and de Bosniak refugees and citizens / Eastern-Europe.

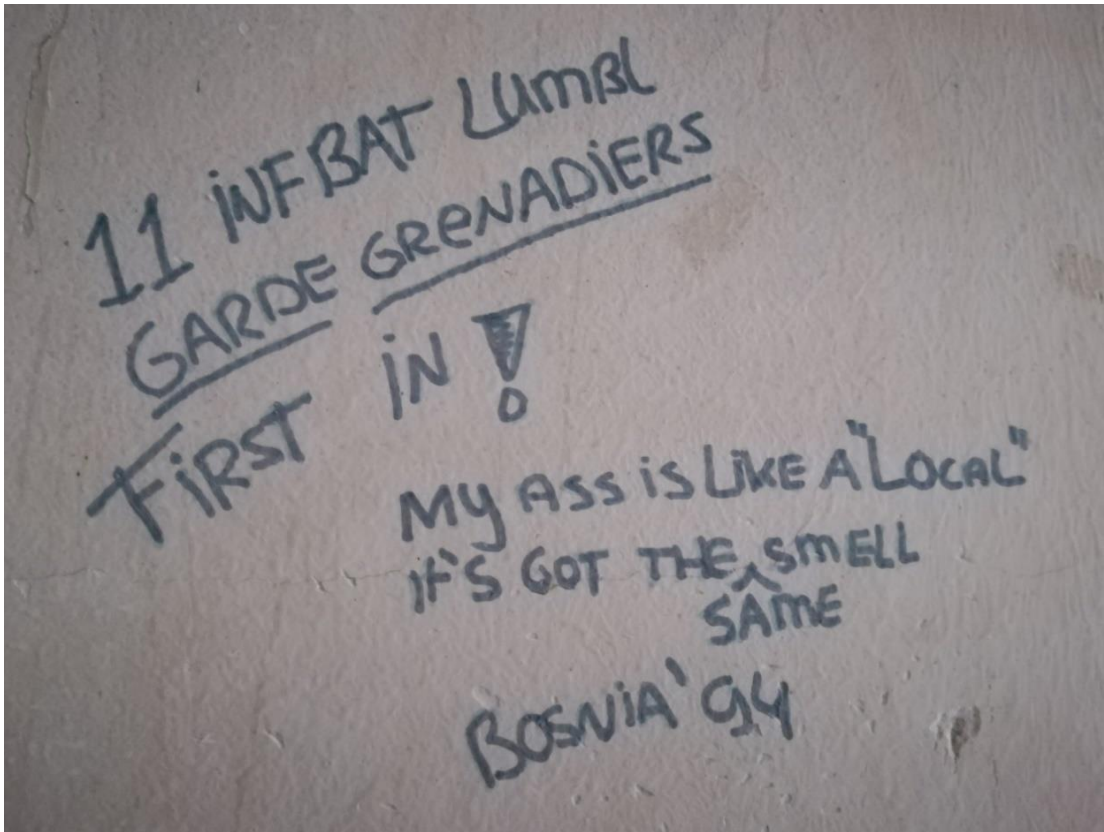*Image 11: a wall in the museum with graffiti*

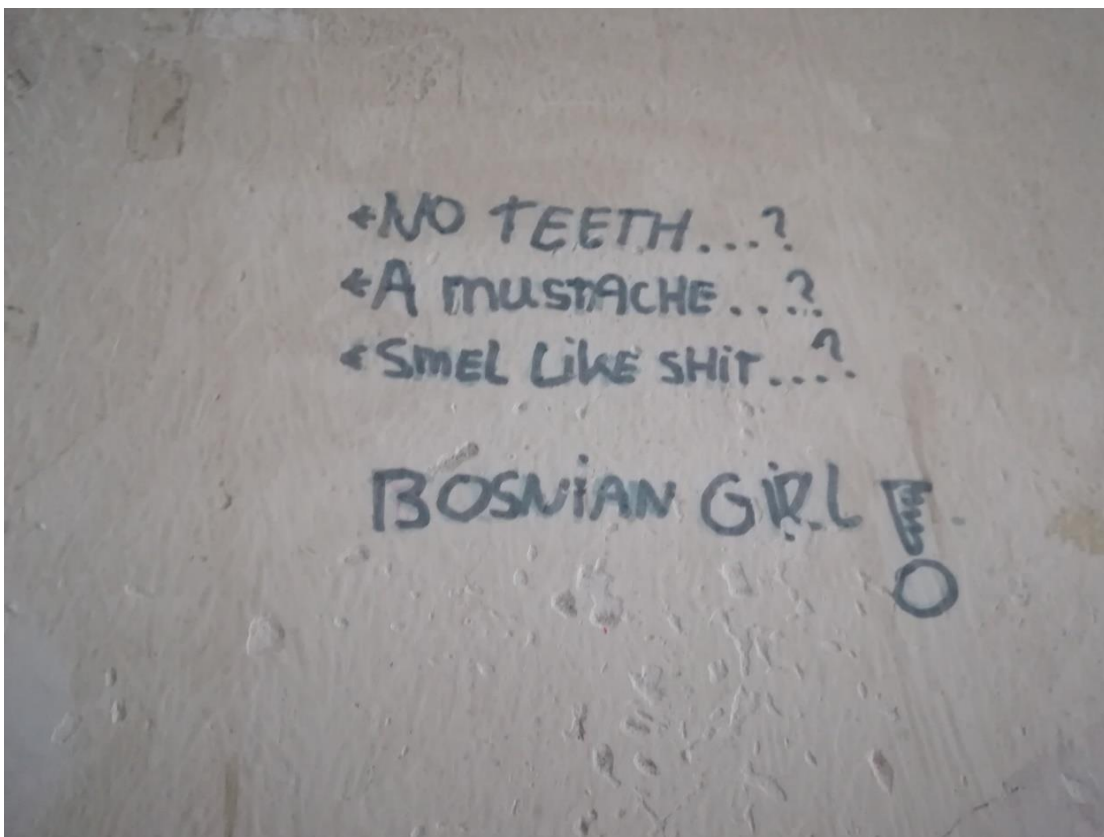*Image 12: close up of the wall in Image 11, in the midst*

Image 13: close up of the wall in Image 11, upper right

Image 12 consists of two pieces of graffiti. The first "11 infbat lumbl, garde grenadiers, First in!" signifies to Dutch military terms[9], referring to a specific Dutch battalion within the peacekeeping mission. The second piece, "My is like a 'local' it's got the same smell, Bosnia '94" can be understood as an act of positioning the 'other'. Image 13 shows a piece of graffiti that states: "No teeth…? A mustache…? Smel like shit…? Bosnian Girl!" [sic]. Like the second piece from Image 12, this can be understood as an act of positioning the 'other'. Although these texts were meant to be 'inside jokes', as the museum states that the graffiti was only meant to be seen by Dutchbatters, they do fit within a larger discriminatory discourse towards Eastern-European citizens / Eastern Europe (see ao.: Todorova, 2009).

The graffiti can be understood as creating a position for the 'other'/Bosniak. Both the pieces position the 'other' as smelly ("smells like my ass"/smells "like shit") and the piece in Image 13 positions more specifically the women of the 'other' in a contrast with the ideal of femininity ("no teeth" and "a mustache"). By comparing the 'other' to a specific part of the body ("my ass"), it indicates that there can be made a distinction between the 'self' and the 'other'. By creating this position for the other, it simultaneously positions the 'self'. However, the specific description of the other also makes the 'self', which is understood as distinctive, as the norm and thus into a superior position. The intersection of different axes of social identity, that are mentioned within the graffiti, ethnicity ("Bosnian"/"local"), gender ("girl!") and age ("girl" indicates a young women), and the superior position that is created for the 'self', can be understood as an indication of the power relations between the Dutch and the Bosniaks. The graffiti thereby not only positions Bosniak women/girls, but also positions non-Bosniak women or in this case Dutch women. The piece suggests an expectation of sexuality and femininity: it makes a statement about how women should look and smell, which indicates an idealized idea about the relationship between femininity and sexuality. Within the gendered space of the military[10] the relationship between protector and protected, which positions women as always in need of protection, creates a position for soldiers of hyper-masculinity leading to sexualizing Dutch women (by desexualizing Bosniak women). The positioning of the other and the defining of what femininity should be can be understood as a material discursive practice of boundary drawing. This graffiti may have been meant as an inside joke, but as a materialization of boundary drawing, this inside joke obtains agency

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[9] "11 infbat lumbl garde grenadiers First in!": The 11th infantry battalion airmobile is named 'garde grenadiers' in the Dutch military. This battalion arrived in April 1994 and was the first Dutch battalion in Srebrenica.
[10] The military is often understood as a gendered space, which is defined through notions of hyper masculinity (see ao.: Puechguirbal, 2014: 254).

through the relation between the material and the human. It signifies mechanisms of in- and exclusion, while simultaneously strengthening this power relation by reproducing (sending out) this message. The politics of position are at work here: the positioning of the other simultaneously positions the self, both as superior and distinctive.

Image 15 shows a close up of the wall in Image 14. A piece of graffiti in the upper right states "no tourists so: no money, no business so: no economy, no peace so: no future. Revolution: Ex-Yugoslavia: a new 3td world country". In line with the pieces discussed above, the graffiti creates a specific position for the 'other', except in this case the 'other' is bigger scale: it is former Yugoslavia or Bosnia-Herzegovina. It creates a position that is opposite to what the writer thinks of as desirable: tourists, business and peace. At the same time it gives an indication of what the outcome of the absence of this will be: a lack of money and economy and no future, which, according to the author, will lead to the former Yugoslavia becoming a third-world-country. This creates a distinction between Eastern- and Western-Europe: the East as underdeveloped and the West as a first-world-country, economically developed, and therefore superior. The consequences of this are, according to the writer, also longstanding: "no peace so: no future." This indicates that the author thinks there is no hope left and that the conflict situation of 1994/1995 will ever have a solution.

Lastly, it is important to note that all the three pieces of graffiti that I described above were written in English. The statement of the museum that the Dutch peacekeepers' intended audience was only other Dutch peacekeepers is not really convincing in relation to this. All other verbal pieces of graffiti that I have found were written in Dutch. This is noteworthy, as these were the only three pieces of graffiti in which the content was about the 'other'. The use of the English language calls into question the idea that the graffiti was only meant to be seen/understood by the Dutch peacekeepers.
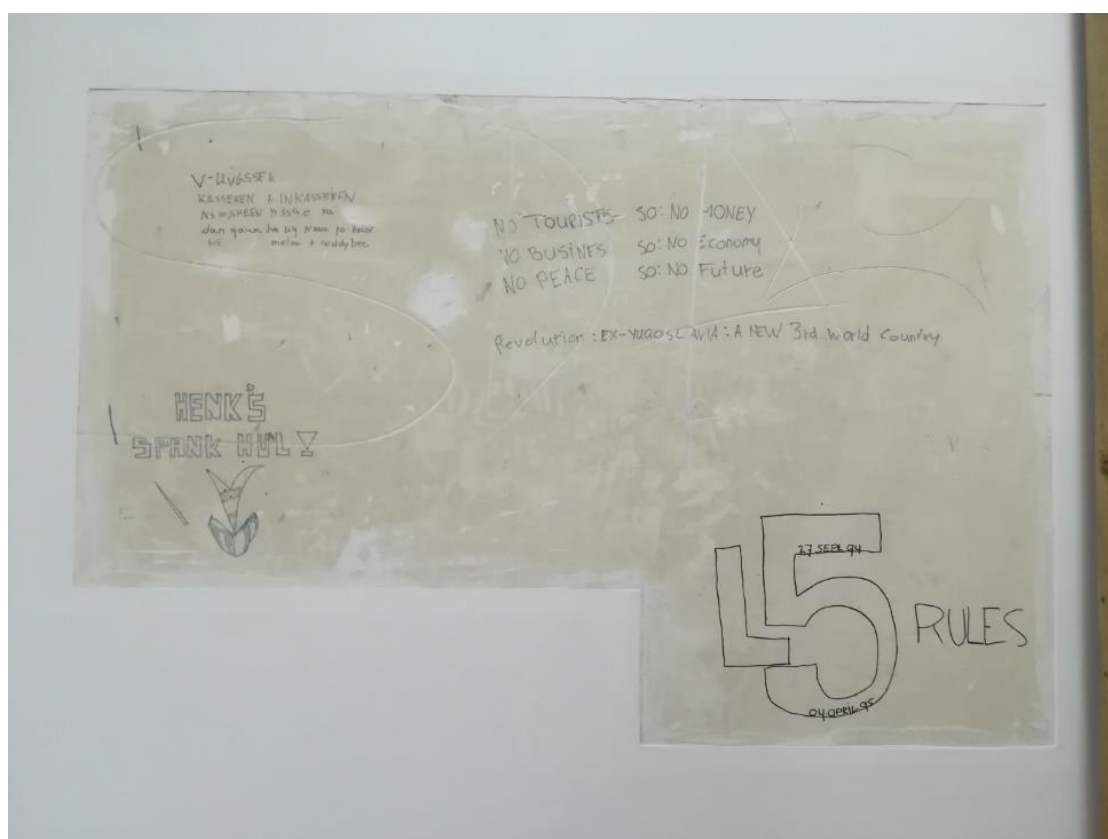
Image 14: wall in a room of the museum

Image 15: close up of the wall in Image 14

3.3.2 Gendered space of the military

Multiple feminist scholars have argued that military units are defined through hyper masculinity (see ao.: Puechguirbal, 2014: 254). Within space, dualist gender identities are often incorporated, as for example in bathrooms. The spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari is no exception of this, bathrooms are divided in female and male spaces. However, there are also other signifiers of gender division, that suggest how the space of the military is gendered.

Image 16 shows a hand that is drawn on a wall. On the wall there are drawn multiple hands, all with different signatures. Interestingly, this one seems to be distinctive from the other, because it is a) the only one that is signed with a female surname, and b) that is reacted upon by others. The original message in this specific graffiti states: "*KPL (korporaal) Monique Wouters , Deze meid "staat haar mannetje wel"* / "KPL (corporal) Monique Wouters, This girl stands her ground". However, the reactions (in different handwriting) seem to question the equal relation with this specific person.

In the top someone wrote "*zuster*", which can mean both 'sister' and 'nurse'. Dependent on the interpretation of the word "*zuster*", it can be understood as an connotation of her equality towards her male colleges (as part of a 'brotherhood') but it can also be understood as a sexualizing message towards her position within the military ('sexy nurse'). The second reaction that is visible is the crossing out of the word "*meid*"/"girl" and replacing it with the word "plork" (a Dutch abbreviation of the sentence "*prettig/perfect lichaam, ontiegelijke rotkop*" / "nice/perfect body, unriviled stupid/ugly head/face). It can be understood as an attempt to sexualize this soldier, by making her into an object of desire: someone can't stand her face but does long for her body. The reaction defaces her equality within the military. The reaction beneath states "*dacht ze*" ("so she tought"), which can be understood as a reaction to the original message that she 'can stand her ground'. The reaction questions the ability of the writer as being capable of functioning within the military space and therefore also questions the equal relationship between female and male soldiers. It can even be interpreted as some kind of threat towards her, as if someone deliberately did something that her ability to work within the military damaged/opposed.

The graffiti of Image 16 can be understood as a materialization of the hyper masculine environment of the military: there is made a distinction between male/female soldiers in which the female is put into subordinated position. This is done by obelizing her ability to function within the military and by objectifying and sexualizing femininity. This can be

understood as a practice of boundary drawing within a dualist gender relation: even though she is a soldier, she is positioned as an exception within the military.
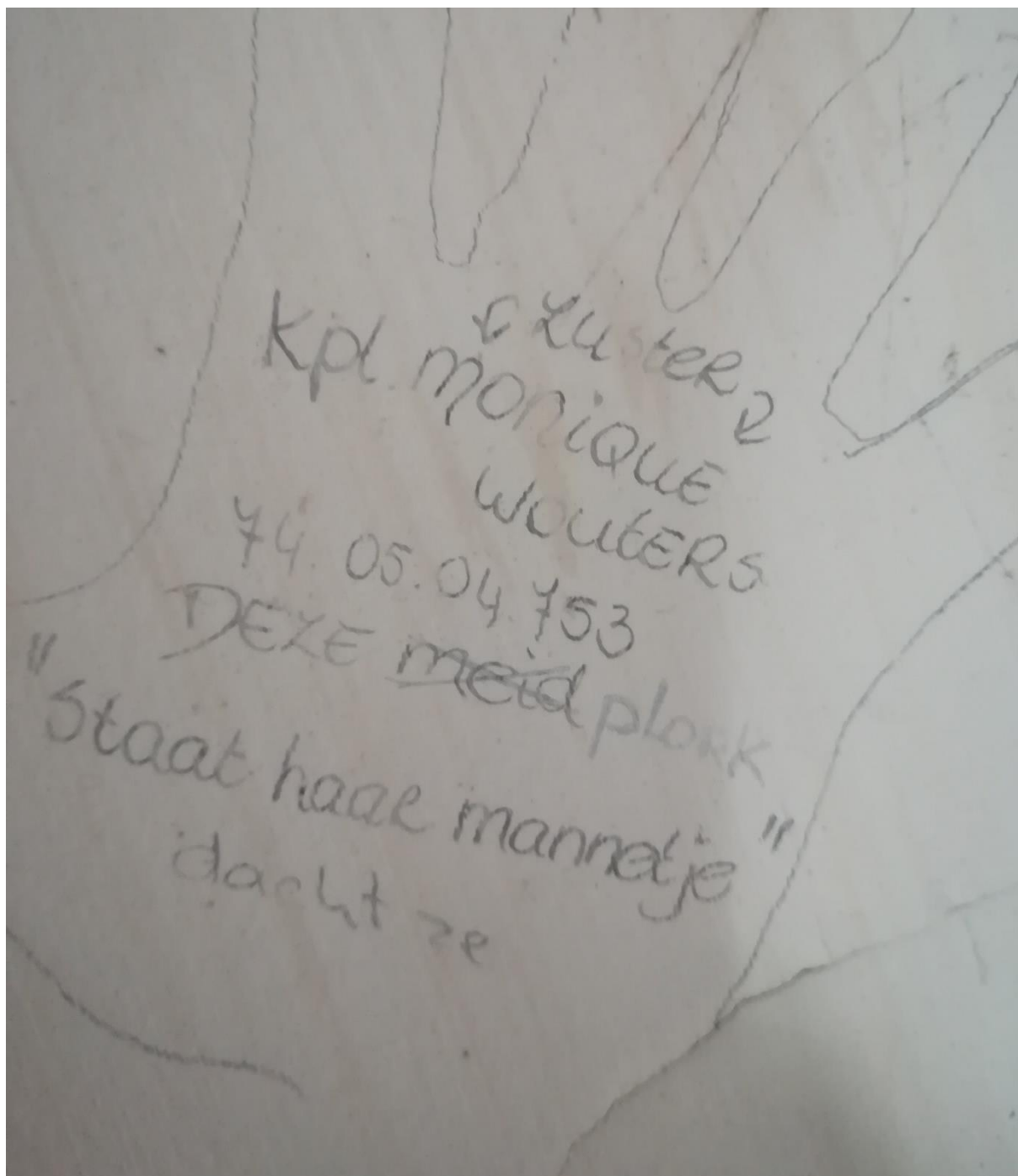

Image 16: the hand of a female corporal / Dutchbatter

3.4 Limited access

The space of the former compound is surrounded by a fence, with multiple openings in it, so visitors can enter. However, within the area of the compound, not everything is accessible. Parts of the former headquarters are locked up. The former kitchen and diner are not accessible due to doors and fences that will not open, as is the bridge that connects the headquarters building with the old battery factory. The basement of the former headquarters is boarded up and in the old battery factory some areas are discarded with tape that hold the words 'стоп полиција' ('stop, police'). Image 17 shows a picture of one of the locked passages as an example of mobility restriction.

Now, in 2018, the area of the compound is largely free to access: entry is free of charge and although not every part of the former compound is meant for visitors to enter, most of it is accessible. There are no restrictions on specific social identities to enter the area, nor are there any control posts of who visits. There is no dress code.

In the period of 1994-1995 these entry requirements were different from now. Military bases are usually not free to access for everybody, nor was this base. In the testimonies which are showed in the museum, Bosniaks who worked for the Dutch, testify that they had to register before entering the compound. The Dutch soldiers, in contrast, were free to enter and leave. This was the same for the larger area of Srebrenica. Dutch soldiers were, to a certain extent, free to move in and out of the area, while Bosniak citizens and refugees were not allowed to go outside the enclave. All others, including Bosnian Serbs, both military and civilian, were not allowed to enter the enclave of Srebrenica, because it was declared as a safe haven for Bosniak refugees. This restriction on mobility leads to one testimony which declares that the enclave was a big prison.

The unequal access to the compound signifies an unequal power relation. The Dutch were in charge of who was able to enter. This social identity bounded accessibility can be understood as a material discursive practice of boundary drawing between the Dutch, the Bosniaks and the Bosnian Serbs. Although perhaps appropriate, as there were weapons and limited goods such as food and fuel on the compound, this can be understood of a mechanism of in- and exclusion, which reinforces the ethnic divide between the above named.

Image 17: hallway in the former headquarters with locked passage

3.5 Claiming space

The cemetery is part of the memorial center, but it is on the other side of the road. The area where the cemetery is, was not part of the former military base. The victims that died due to the Srebrenica massacre are buried here. Each year there is a mass burial at which the newly identified bodies are buried during a collective mourning ritual. Image 18 shows a part of the cemetery. Mourning and valedictory rituals in relation to death are culturally defined, but do concur in almost all parts of the world. This does not mean that it is apolitical. In the contrary: acts of (collective) mourning and burials are highly political, especially in the specific context of the spatial dimension near the former military base at Potočari.

Image 18: the cemetery for the victims of the Srebrenica massacre

The burial of the victims of the massacre and the cemetery can be understood as a way of claiming space, or a politics of place. By burying the bodies of loved ones in a specific space, the space becomes embedded with meaning and therefore becomes a specific place. The highly political dimension of this place, due to the Srebrenica massacre, strengthens the meaning of the cemetery. It makes the extent of the massacre highly visible.

Mourning is often understood as a private and individual activity, but occurs often in the context of a collective ritual, as for instance memorial ceremonies. Here the mourning is no longer a private event but it becomes a political tool to communicate a narrative. A ritual of collective mourning can be understood within the politics of network: it connects different individuals. This does not only spread out a message but also triggers a reaction. The network that is triggered can give a reaction of sympathy/compassion but it can also provoke a reaction of anger/revenge. The last can be seen in reaction to the mass burials at Potočari in 2007 and 2009, when members of extreme right movements wore clothes which implied sympathy for Chetnik ideology[11] and admiration of general Mladić[12]

In this manner, the mourning as well as other emotions, become political. As argued before, the politics of network can strengthen the victimhood position and therefore gives a narrative more legitimacy, but at the same time it can strengthen an opposite position. It can thus also be understood as a practice of boundary drawing between social identities: the position of both the victim and the perpetrator are strengthened through the use of mourning as a political tool, which in this case reinforces ethnic identity of both groups.

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[11] Chetnik ideology is an ethnic nationalist ideology that aims to make the area of the former Yugoslavia an all and only Serb country.
[12] Ratko Mladić was a general of the VRS and commanding officer in the Srebrenica massacre. In 2017 the ICTY convicted Mladić for war crimes, crimes against humanities and genocide.

Conclusion

Throughout my analysis, I have showed how different power relations, and mechanisms of in- and exclusion, are operating within the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari. The spatial dimension can be understood as a materialization of power relations, which is then actively carrying out these power relations on its own. These mechanisms of in- and exclusion can become visible by analyzing the spatial dimension with the multiple spatialities framework. The politics of mobility, network, place, position, scale and time can be understood as different dimensions of space which are co-constructive in propagating these power relations. Together, they contribute to the construction of social identity, as for instance ethnicity and gender, and materialize practices of (discursive) boundary drawing. The different social positions, that are reinforced through the spatial dimension, influence the ability to move, connect, speak out, write history and involve with different actors.

The analysis shows that there are different levels of power structures at work within the spatial dimension of the former military base, at different scales. From small scales, as for instance the power relations between different positioned soldiers (male/female), to the scale of the area, as for instance the relation between the Bosniaks and the Dutch within the context of the peacekeeping mission, to large scales, as for instance the relationship between Western- and non-Western countries. These different relations are all influenced by mechanisms of in- and exclusion, as for instance by positioning the 'other' as deviant or a 'third-world-country', and are interrelated to each other: the larger scales influence how we understand the relationship within the smaller scales and vice versa. Within these scales the multiple levels and connotations that come with the specific positions are important to take into account. The intersections of identities influence the politics of mobility, network, position, scale, place and time.

Within the specific context of the spatial dimension of the former military base at Potočari, it is important to note that the differentiation between soldier/citizen is sometimes a necessary power relation, for example to create an opportunity to sustain peace. However, the intersection with other axes of identity that come with it in this case, are no longer practical boundaries between military/non-military units, but are personal and discursive boundaries. They are based upon social categories, which that are based upon a social construct that gets meaning within a specific context, as for example gender and ethnicity, but which have no influence on for example ability to serve within the military. It thus becomes a discriminatory discourse towards less powerful social groups. The spatial dimension should be undestood as

a power laden structure which propagates and reinforces power relations, as for example ethnic division

Although space is embedded with meaning by humans, it also actively carries out this meaning. Matter can be understood as being co-constructive with social life. The agency of 'matter' is created through the relation and interaction with the human. Matter thus has agency on its own, but it can be used as a political tool. The intersection between different axes of social identities that construct a specific position are hereby crucial in understanding the power relation that are at work within the spatial dimension.

The politics of time, which are materialized within the spatial dimension, also open up room for a politics of possibilities. The memorial center takes the responsibility of telling a narrative and should also take the responsibility of being accountable for this narrative. We, as humans, write our history which influence our future. To be able to open up room for new possibilities and dialogue, the spatial dimension can be manipulated into carrying out specific power relations. To open up possibilities for the future it is necessary to question how the spatial dimension of the former military base can be made more inclusive towards all different parties involved, including people who identify as Serb. The need to tell a narrative that acknowledges the victims of the massacre is deeply understandable, however, it also strengthens and reinforces ethnic identity boundaries instead of deconstructing these social constructs.

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Appendix 1: day to day description of fieldtrip

Day 1, April 9, 2018

Arrival in Sarajevo, from Amsterdam.

Day 2: April 10, 2019; Sarajevo

On my first day in Sarajevo I visited the 'Bey's mosque', one of the largest historic mosques in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the museum about the 'legacy' of Gazi-Husrev-Bey, one of the best known founders of Sarajevo. After this I took a walk through the city, over the 'Baščaršija' square, from which the different neighborhoods in Sarajevo spread. The mix of western and eastern cultures is especially present in the architecture of the city. Influences from the Ottoman empire and the Austro-Hungarian empire are visible everywhere. Mosques, churches and synagogues are within a hundred meters from each other. A guide tells me that this is because Bosnia-Herzegovina knows a long history of religious freedom.

My walk continues via the 'cemetery at Kovači or Shahid/martyr cemetery, a Muslim cemetery for soldiers from the Bosnian war near the center of the city. A bit higher on one of the hills surrounding Sarajevo I pass the *Žuta Tabija* (yellow fortress), the *Višegradska Kapi-Kula* (the gate tower to Visegradt, a city in the east of Bosnia-Herzegovina), the *Bijela Tabija* (white fortress) and on my way back the '*Jajce Barracks*' (former military building and hospital which it is badly damaged) and the *Viječnica* (the City Hall). What I notice most is that throughout the city you can see the last war everywhere. Almost all buildings have some sort of unrepaired damage from grenades or shootings. On several places you can find a 'Sarajevo rose', which are places on the street where during the war a grenade hit and killed more than three people. Citizens of Sarajevo painted with red on the damages on the street which the grenade left.

Day 3: April 12, 2018; Sarajevo

Today I visited the 'War Childhood' museum and the 'Crimes against Humanities and Genocide' museum. I felt very touched by the War Childhood museum, which collects stories and items from people who grew up during the conflict. The museum is not only about the

horror of war but collects also happy memories. At the moment they are working on a project for children in Syria. The women who works at the museum tells me that their aim is to show that the experience of growing up during war is one that is shared between many and that they hope that this will help people connect and eventually make peace. Besides this I really liked that the museum was not about ethnicity or an ethnic frame of the war, as the international community is often using when referring to the war. It can be that there were some ethnic references in names or cities, as some names and cities are specifically 'belonging' to specific groups from the society or were in hands of a specific group during the war, but nothing explicit was to be found about ethnicity. The focus was really on a shared childhood experience, and not on social identity (nor on ethnicity nor on gender).

The Crimes Against Humanities and Genocide museum was very different from the first museum I visited today. All walls were painted black, there was no daylight and a large part of the photos exposed were very graphic. The narrative the museum tells was very clear: the Bosnian-Serb army (VRS), with support of the former Yugoslav army, committed horrible crimes against the Bosniak population, a small part of the narrative was about crimes committed by the Bosnian-Croat army, also against the Bosniak population. The museum did not tell much about the Dutch involvement in the conflict or about Dutchbat. There were a few photos and stories about how Dutchbat soldiers helped the local population and one sign stated that the Dutch state was held responsible for 350 of the 8000+ deaths in Srebrenica.

I was shocked to learn about the amount of concentration camps that were used to detain the Bosniaks. I knew there were a few concentration camps, of which one in Visegradt which was used only for girls and women as a 'rape camp', however, I did not know that there were this many camps. What surprised me was the openness of the museum about how rape was used as a manner of torture. Most stories told how women were separated from the man and brought to 'rape camps' or were individually / gang raped in separate areas in the concentration camps. One sign told the story of a man that was raped by soldiers. I thought that could be something that happened more often but isn't testified against because of the taboos surrounding rape, especially among men.

Something else I noticed was the relation between the women working at the museum and the museum. All women were wearing headscarves and one of the women told me the museum told the story of 'their people' and how they were attacked by the 'Chetniks'. This made me think about the bias of the museum and how the narrative that the museum might be framed.

That is not to say that I think that the story is not true, but that there are also stories that are not told in here.

Day 4: April 12, 2018; Sarajevo

Today I visited the National museum and the History museum (1945-1995). The National museum was mostly about the nature, animals and ancient history of Bosnia-Herzegovina. One small part of the museum was about 'ethnography in the 19ᵗʰ century', but this part only showed some woodwork and clothes. In the archaeology section I noticed that the story about the 'mix of cultures' in Bosnia-Herzegovina also came back here. The Balkan area is often seen as the border between East and West and there were a lot of wars fought in this area. It almost seems like the clash between cultures is used as the defining identity of the area, which correlates with the book I read from Maria Todorova, 'Imagining the Balkans' (2009). Not everything in the museum was in English.

The History Museum (1945-1995) was not really what I expected it to be: it was mostly about the last conflict (1992-1995) and not at all about the time that Tito ruled over Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of the former Yugoslavia. The main focus of the museum was the siege of Sarajevo, which lasted for 4 years. Besides this there were two photo exhibitions, one from several photographers who mad pictures from refugees (2007-2017) and one from one photographer who took pictures from borders between countries.

What I found notable is that there was almost nothing in the museum about the communistic period or the period between 1945-1992, although the name of the museum does imply that there is. With almost nothing I mean that I did found a statue of someone, I think it was a statue of Tito, but this was covered with a sail and moved to an area of the museum that was actually not open for visitors. I found this very remarkable. In the rest of the city I, so far, only found one clear reference to this period, which was a sign that stated that one of the main streets used to be named after Tito. Further than that there is nothing really specific, except from some buildings, mainly apartment buildings, which seem to be from those years.

Day 5: April 13, 2018; Sarajevo

Today I visited 'Gallery 11/06/1995', which is a gallery which is opened by photographer Tarik Samara, about the Srebrenica massacre. There were a lot of photos from the refugee

camp in Tuzla, the mass graves, the memorial center and victims of the massacre. Besides this there were testimonies which you could listen to, a virtual map of the events in the weeks before and the week of the massacre and a couple of documentaries. One wall contained pictures from the graffiti that Dutch bat left in the former military base. Four of the six pictures from the graffiti contained explicitly discriminating or hostile graffiti about the local population and refugees in Srebrenica.

Day 6: April 14, 2018

I traveled to Srebrenica by bus.

Day 7: April 15, 2018; Srebrenica

I took a walk through the city center of Srebrenica and went up a hill to the 'old town'. I spend a lot of time talking with my host about politics and the conflict in Bosnia, which got me thinking about my research project. We talked about the graffiti in the former military base, he was not aware of this but I showed him some pictures from the internet. He didn't see it as something which was problematic, but more as a 'boys will be boys' kind of thing. It got me thinking about to what extend we should politicize everything. Is it really that problematic or is it just the way it is? Does this (the graffiti) fit within a larger discourse of Balkanism (yes) or is it just because of frustration and irritation among soldiers which ends up in an inside joke?

It also made me think about scientific research on conflict and the ethics surrounding this. What if people don't want to be part of a research, but then they will always be because others do want to do research? We as researchers want to understand as much as possible, but how is it possible to go on with one's life, if old wounds are constantly being triggered again? Should we just 'let go', but then how do we learn from history? What if locals want to go on but the international community isn't done yet with their justification processes?

When walking through the town of Srebrenica I noticed some images hanging on the inside of a window. There were three images, facing the outside. In all of the pictures one could see general Mladic (Bosnian-Serb / Chetnik army general, convicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide) standing in the street where I was standing at that moment.

The pictures dated July 11, 1995. My host told me later that the building was used by political parties of the Republika Srpska, one of the three entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Day 8: April 16, 2018; Srebrenica

Walked through the city again and visited the water springs. I feel a bit nervous about visiting the memorial center at Potočari. Today it is closed.

Day 9: April 17, 2018; Srebrenica

I visited the memorial center at Potočari today. In Appendix 2 you can find a more extensive description of the former compound. I met Hasan, a survivor of the massacre who now works at the museum as a tourist guide and informant. He showed me how I can get into the non-touristic parts of the former military base and gave me some tips on where to look for graffiti. I spend most time in the museum, watching some documentaries and a lot of photos and testimonies and reading the different stories that the museum told. To be able to collect data I took pictures. In Appendix 2 there is an overview of the narrative about the massacre that the museum tells.

Day 10: April 18, 2018; Srebrenica

Today I went back to the memorial center and spend most of my time in the non-touristic part of the former headquarters of the military base. There was a lot of graffiti in this part of the base. I collected my data by taking pictures. At the end of the day I visited the memorial room in the former battery factory (a part of the military base).

Day 11: April 19, 2018; Srebrenica

I stayed the day at the hostel and made notes with all the pictures I took.

Day 12: April 20, 2018; Srebrenica

I went back to the museum and the memorial center and walked around the former compound. In the back of the former battery factory I found some more, really interesting graffiti, among which the painting of the 'Devil's Bar', which is spread on the internet. I took pictures upstairs in the former headquarters. At the end of the day I went to the 'Blue Hotel', the place were the soldiers slept and spend their free time. It was harder to enter because there were a lot of plants and trees growing around and inside the building. It seems like it has been painted over again since 1995. I found a lot of old furniture and a lot of books and documents in Serbian (Cyrillic alphabet). There were no signifiers to Dutchbat or anything related to the conflict. I didn't dare to go upstairs because the ceiling/floor and the stairs looked and felt like they might come down. My host told me later that there opened a new factory in the former 'Blue Hotel', but that it was closed down again after a couple of months. He said that people did that because they could get government subsidy for opening something that gave work opportunities but then they didn't have any accountability for keeping it open and they'd just kept the money.

Day 13: April 21, 2018; Srebrenica

Today I stayed at the hostel to do some work on my thesis, mainly making notes with the pictures I took and writing out some of my thoughts. Tomorrow I will visit the memorial center for the last time.

Day 14: April 22, 2018; Srebrenica

Last day at the museum. Normally they are closed on Sundays, but Hasan told me that I could come because they would be open for a group that made a reservation. I visited the cemetery for the first time. The amount of graves makes the extent of the massacre really visual. Every year there is a official national mourning day, on which victims of the massacre come together and mass burry the newly identified bodies. At this point there are 6300+ bodies buried, but there are still over 2000 unidentified bodies. It makes me think about the what this collective mourning ritual does with the healing process after the war and how this is used as a political tool.

Day 15: April 22, 2018; Srebrenica

I planned on taking the bus back to Sarajevo today, but then I missed my bus and my host invited me to stay a day longer. We talked for a long time about nationalism, national identity and politics. The political situation in Bosnia is very complex, given that they have three prime-ministers who all have a veto within the parliament. This way hardly any decisions can be made. As for example: the national anthem of Bosnia-Herzegovina doesn't have any lyrics because they couldn't agree on what the lyrics should contain.

Further here an overview of some other notes I made during my visit. There are three official languages in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian), but they are all kind of the same. My host told me that it is more like different dialects instead of different languages. The major difference is that Serbian is written in Cyrillic alphabet and Croatian and Bosnian is written in Latin alphabet.

Something that is notable to me is that in Srebrenica, so far, I saw a lot of Serbian flags and just one, very little, of the flag of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Most of the people that I met here identify as Serb. Not Bosnian-Serb or Bosnian, but as 'just' Serb. I wonder, as I understand that it matters here with what ethnicity you identify, because although I never asked almost everybody told me, how these social identities are gendered. The Srebrenica massacre was highly gendered, as only men and boys were killed, but I wonder what the relation between gender and ethnicity is now. My host told me that there is a stereotype about Bosniak women that they have mustaches (something that can also be read in one of the graffiti's I found), but I wonder than how this relates to 'Serbian women'.

Day 16: April 23, 2018

I took the bus back to Sarajevo today.

Day 17: April 24, 2018

Flight back home to Amsterdam, from Sarajevo.

Appendix 2: Description of the area

The area my research project is dedicated to is the Srebrenica – Potočari genocide memorial center and museum. In this appendix I added a description of the area which includes a description of the narrative of the Srebrenica massacre as the museum it tells.

On one side of the road is the cemetery of the victims of the massacre. So far there are 6300 graves, but over 2000 bodies have not yet been identified. On the other side of the road there is the former compound of the Dutch UN battalions Dutchbat I, II, III and IV (UNPROFOR mission). The compound exists of a former battery factory which was used as a storage by Dutchbat, the 'blue hotel', a place where soldiers could rest and spent their free time and the headquarter compound building of Dutchbat, including a kitchen, hospital, offices and sleeping rooms for people who held higher positions in the military. Now, in 2018, a part of the headquarter building is used as a museum and for offices belonging to the museum. The rest is empty and partly closed or not enterable for visitors. In the museum one can find a documentary on the week in July 1995, several audio and visual materials, pictures and some items which were already there when Dutchbat was based there. In a small part of the former battery factory there is now a memorial room for the victims of the massacre.

I have made a division of two times three parts to be able to describe the area: the tourist part, including the cemetery, the memorial room in the former battery factory and the museum in the former headquarters, and the non-tourist part, including the blue hotel, the abandoned part of the former headquarters and the former battery factory. Unfortunately I could not get access to the part of the former headquarters where there are now offices of the museum. Image 1 shows an overview of the former compound to give an impression of the base.

The tourist part, description of the area

The part of the area which is made accessible for tourists is clearly mend to inform about the Srebrenica massacre. It consists of a museum in the former headquarters of Dutchbat and a memorial room in the former battery factory. It also includes the cemetery for the victims of the massacre. You can find information about the time before the massacre in which Srebrenica was a UN safe haven, the week the Bosnian-Serb army [VRS] attacked the city and the aftermath of the massacre. This includes testimonies for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia [ICTY] in The Hague. I met Hassan, a survivor of the massacre, who is a tour guide for the museum and shares his personal story with groups of visitors. He is also one of the people who created and designed the museum in cooperation with PAX, former soldiers of Dutchbat, the mothers of Srebrenica, a group of women who

lost their husbands, children and other family members during the massacre, and other survivors of the massacre.

The museum in the former headquarters

The narrative that is told in the museum is clear and in line with the official narrative from the United Nations: Srebrenica was a safe haven where Bosniaks could come to get protection from the UN against (para-) militaries from the Bosnian-Serbs and the VRS. In January 1994 the Dutch battalion Dutchbat I came to take over from the Canadian peacekeeping mission that was stationed there at that time and the Dutch stayed until August 1995 (Dutchbat I, II, III and IV). At the beginning, the conditions in Srebrenica did get better because of humanitarian aid, but in the spring of 1995 the VRS started to block humanitarian aid, including fuel, food and mail for Dutchbat. In April 1995 colonel Karremans (than head of the Dutch battalion stationed in Srebrenica) warned the UN and the Dutch government that his battalion was no longer capable of protecting the area because of a shortage of ammunition, fuel and food.

In July 1995 the VRS started to attack the outposts of the Dutch, who withdraw back to the city center. On the 11th of July 1995 the VRS entered the enclave and thousands of refugees fled to the Dutch compound in Potočari. Dutchbat was not capable of stopping the VRS. In the days before, Colonel Karremans requested multiple times for air support, however, air support never came and the Dutch, with only 450 of the 600 soldiers they were supposed to have and a shortage of ammunition, didn't stand a chance against the upraising army.

The leader of the VRS, Ratko Mladić, arranged three meetings with colonel Karremans and a representative from the Bosniak refugees and gave them the choice between surrendering or dying. Because the UN safe zone wouldn't allow civilians to carry weapons nobody was able to defend themselves (although there were a few men from the Bosnian army who did carry weapons, but the museum is vague about this).

After this the deportation of Bosniak refugees starts. Women and children were brought to busses and the men were separated. When the VRS entered Srebrenica, a few thousand of the refugees, mostly men and boys, decided to fly through the mountains to safe ground. The Dutch were not allowed to ride with the busses and had to wait. However, in 2014 the Dutch court ruled that the Dutch state was responsible for 300 deaths of young men, because the Dutch wouldn't allow them to stay in the compound but send them outside into the hands of the VRS.

Whether the Dutch soldiers knew what was happening is unknown. Some say they knew it was going wrong and that they knew the VRS was executing all men, others testify that they had no clue of what was going on. The VRS ambushed the people flying through the mountains and forest and kept the other men captive until they executed most of them. In the weeks following the 15th of July, it gets more clear what was happening to the international community. The VRS buried the bodies in mass graves, but then between September and November 1995 moved most of the bodies to secondary mass graves. Until today there are 8300+ bodies discovered of which 6300+ are identified through DNA. However, there are still people missing and there is a high probability that not all mass graves are yet discovered. The ICTY convicted several people of the SVR, who were concerned with this operation, for crimes against humanities and genocide.

The story that is told in the museum is a clear one: there were perpetrators (Bosnian Serbs) and victims (Bosniaks), and then there were the Dutch, who couldn't do much but should have done something. Not every testimony is the same, but the overall story is a clear sign of victimhood. It is a story about how helpless innocent people got murdered, only because of their ethnic identity, about the failure of the UN to protect these people, and of the VRS who committed genocide against the Bosniaks.

Two parts of this narrative that I want to highlight here is the story about Naser Orić and the testimonies on video about the relationship between the Dutch peacekeepers and the Bosniak citizens and refugees. Naser Orić is in the museum portrayed as a local hero. Orić and 'his armed group of men' defended Srebrenica and they were taking great risk to capture food, weapons and ammunition from nearby (Bosnian Serb) villages to bring this to the hungry people from Srebrenica. However, the ICTY convicted him for letting his men murder and torture Bosnian Serb citizens in villages surrounding Srebrenica. Multiple stories testify that Orić was not only capturing supplies for the people of Srebrenica, but was often involved in the torture and murder of civilians with no ability to defend themselves. In the museum however, he was one of the great hero's, thanks to who the people of Srebrenica could survive the years before the Srebrenica massacre. It is notable that Orić and his men disappeared from Srebrenica just before the enclave felt into the hands of the VRS.

The other narratives I found notable where the testimonies about the relationship between the Dutch peacekeepers and the Bosniaks. The museum shows testimonies about the 'tension' between these two groups. Where some testify that the Dutch peacekeepers where helpful and friendly, others testify that they would humiliate the locals, laugh at them and make them seek

food in garbage while taking pictures. One women describes how the they would offer her friend cigarettes in exchange for sex. According to her the Dutch peacekeepers where only looking for oral sex because "we were not good enough for something more natural" (testimony of Kada Hotic). The Dutch soldiers also give various testimonies about their relationship with the local population. Some said that they had a good relationship and they helped each other when they were able to. Others testify that they would try to help people but that the Bosniaks were hostile to them (testimony Adje Anakotta).UNPROFOR had ruled that the contact between the Dutch and the Bosniaks should be minimalized, because the Dutch should only be there as peacekeepers and not choose any side of the conflict (this is in line with the UN strategy for peacekeeping of that time, see for example: United Nations, 1992, 'An Agenda for Peace, Preventive diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping. Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992', A/47/277-S/24111).

One Dutch soldier (Marco Smit, a medical orderly) testified that his relationship with the local population was good but that he had also heard other stories, including 'stories about rape'. The written information from the museum states that the relationship between the Dutch and the Bosniaks was good, and that they would play games with the children and give them candy. However, that they would have sometimes had enough of it. One women however, testifies that the Dutch would wave with candy to the children and then eat it themselves. She calls the behavior of the Dutch peacekeepers 'inhumane' (testimony, Hamdija Fejzic). All pictures that are showed imply a friendly relationship between the Dutch and the refugees.

In one room of the museum there is information about the graffiti Dutchbat left in the compound. Most walls are redone with plaster and paint, and not all graffiti is still visible. However, sometimes a part of a wall is left in the old status to show the graffiti. Hassan told me that all the graffiti that was in the compound is kept visible.

The memorial room in the former batter factory

The memorial room in the former battery factory is a large room, about 200 meters square. On the walls are hanging photos and in the middle there are made two smaller areas with black curtains as walls. In these smaller areas you can find video material of testimonies of the ICTY. On one wall there are hanging photos from Tarik Samarah of the graffiti that Dutchbat left, and the artwork of Sejla Kameric about the graffiti. There are photos from skeletons / bodies, mass graves, (mass) burials and ceremonies, mourning women and the memorial

graveyard for the victims of Srebrenica. The room, as the name does imply, seems to be dedicated to memorial and collective mourning.

On another wall in the area one can find photos of people from the VRS who are convicted for genocide, crimes against humanity and murder. On the photos of the heads of these people there is a paper stuck on with the word 'GUILTY' on it. Besides this one can find a small explanation of who this is/was and of what they are convicted of.

The cemetery for the victims of Srebrenica

At the cemetery there are about 6300 graves, and every year there are coming more graves with a mass burial of the newly identified bodies. There are still about 2000 bodies unidentified and the museum informs me that there are still undiscovered mass graves. Something that I can imagine, but are questioning because I wonder how they know that there are more mass graves if the mass graves are undiscovered. Their argument for this is that there are still people from Srebrenica missing, but there are also over 2000 unidentified bodies, which makes the argument not a really strong one. Notable about this cemetery is that there are only male victims. It is a highly gendered place: the man are buried and the woman mourn.

The non-tourist part, description of the area

The non-tourist part of the former compound exists of a part of the battery factory (now used to storage coal, old signs of the museum and a few cars/attributions for maintenance of the area), the 'blue hotel' and a part of the former headquarters. Not everything is accessible, as sometimes doors are locked, as for example to the kitchen and diner area, or closed up with wooden piles.

The headquarters – non tourist part

In the parts of the compound that are accessible used to be rooms for the soldiers, most of whom where of higher rank, and a hospital. It is clearly abandoned for a long time. About half of the windows are broken and the paint scrolls of the walls. In several rooms I find graffiti, most probably created by members of Dutchbat. The graffiti is sometimes dated and there are a lot of references to the Netherlands, as for example sayings (Oost West, Thuis Best), language and names. Besides this I find a lot of images which consist sexual content, and some sorts f flags/group signifiers, calendars and maps.

The former battery factory – non tourist

Within the former battery factory there is not a lot of light. The rooms or areas are large, and a lot of the machineries from the battery factory are still there. In the back I found the 'famous'

image of the 'Devil's Bar' and the 'menu', on which several blogposts on the internet are very sore. Behind this there is another building of the former battery factory, it looks like this is been used as a place to sleep, shower and spent time for the soldiers. There are a couple of drawings on the walls.

The blue hotel

There is a fence surrounding the 'Blue Hotel' area. It consists of a large building, that seems like it is been built to be a factory, and a smaller building, with smaller rooms, a kitchen and several bathrooms. During the period that Dutchbat was stationed here the smaller building was called the 'Blue Hotel' by the soldiers. It was a place where soldiers could sleep and spent their free time. Now, in 2018, the place is trashed and looks like it might fall down altogether. Within the smaller building everything is been painted over since 1995, there is no more graffiti left. There is some old furniture and a lot of old books, maps, data and more, all in Serbian language, in Cyrillic alphabet.