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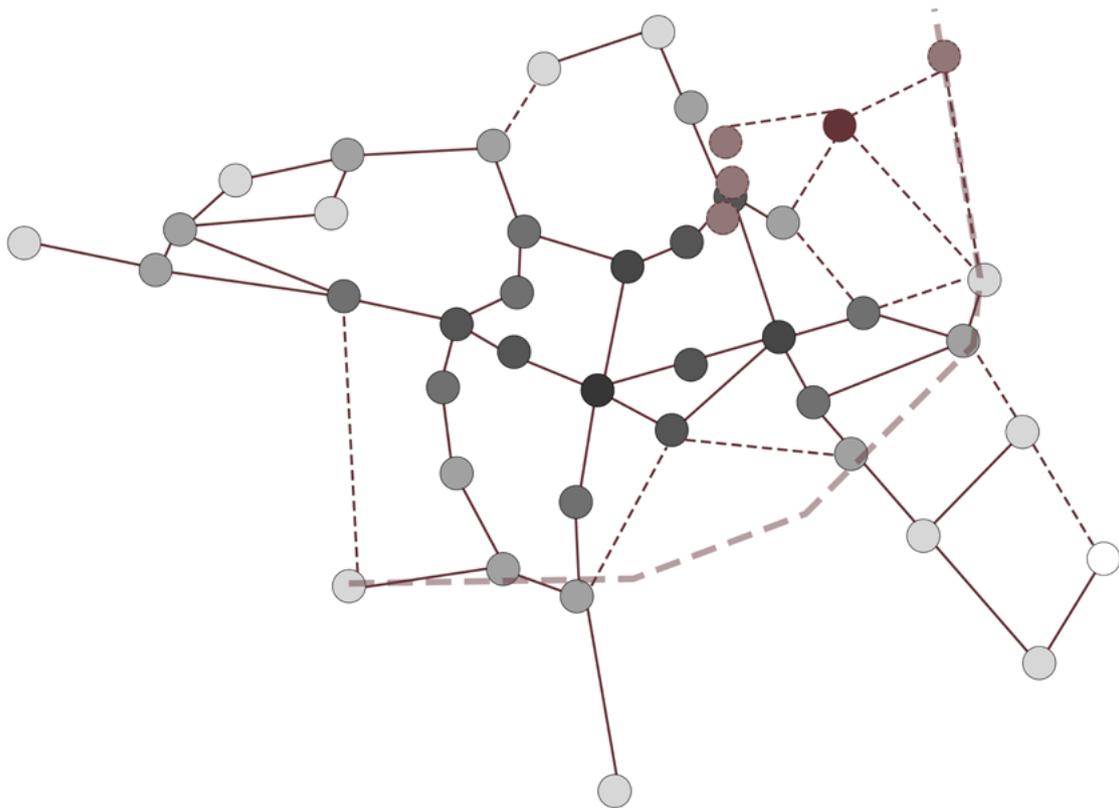# RETHINKING PRAGUE'S CULTURAL PROMENADE

Students:
Ahed Hajj Hassan
Seren Kuzukiran

Supervisor:
Prof. Domenico Chizzoniti

DOT TO DOT:
RETHINKING PRAGUE'S CULTURAL PROMENADE

Supervisor:
Prof. Domenico Chizzoniti

Co-supervisor:
Arch. Amra Salihbegovic
Arch. Flavio Menici
Arch. Qi Wang

Thesis:
DOT TO DOT:
Rethinking Prague's Cultural Promenade

Ahed Hajj Hassan[903936]
Seren Kuzukiran [903489]

POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

SCUOLA DI ARCHITETTURA URBANISTICA
INGEGNERIA DELLE COSTRUZIONI

INDEX

Abstract

The work presented in this paper is the outcome of the research carried out during the entire work process. It aims to analyze all the components required to have an adequate design proposal.

The project site is the Old Town of Prague, known as Josefov the ancient Jewish Ghetto. Prague is a rich historical area with a strong influence of the Jewish culture, which allows this city to have several contradicted identities making the design process more intriguing.

The project is the result of a detailed research done on the morphology of Pragye, using and analyzing several cartographies and bibliography sources which enabled us to investigate on a deeper level the historical evolution of the city and allowed us to identify the main problems that need intervention. Taking into consideration the outcome of all the analysis done, the proposal of the project is the urban and architectural solution suggested for Prague.

The research paper is divided into five main parts:
First, it presents an urban analysis of the different layers of Prague, allowing us to have a deeper understanding of its assets.
The second part shows the impact of several Jewish Ghettos, their evolution through time and their influence on the cities.

The third part is a more detailed historical analysis, showing all the different changes that Prague went through on an urban level, allowing us to identify the main problematic topic to address.

The fourth part presents all the different concepts and their analysis for both the urban and the architectural scales.

Last part is a presentation of the projects realized in four different sites of the Old Town, as an outcome of all the study carried out on Prague.

Keywords: Urban morphology; Architectural Composition; Architecture Design; Urban design; Prague Old Town; Cultural tourism.

Introduction

Prague's cultural promenade is an urban proposal of four architectural projects spread across the river side of the city to reconnect the morphology of the old town by linking its monuments in one cultural ring.

The morphological analysis of the city and the touristic research led us to find a gap in the cultural services provided in Prague concerning its history and how the heritage can be used.

The main aim of the urban promenade if to redirect the flow of both pedestrians and vehicles in a way that could be useful to revive the important historical areas of the city that are currently left aside. Such as the side of Saint Agnes convent, the location of the old town wall, etc...

As for the architectural concept, the link with the water was always one of our main criteria's that was translated in different architectural solutions in the buildings.

The result of this research was an architectural intervention made on 3 different sites:

First project representing the start of the urban promenade is a monumental building reshaping the old town wall. This building is as well an underground link between the city and the riverbank.

Second project is a complex of two buildings, a Jewish museum of memory and an art school for kids. The riverside can be reached from both underground of the buildings, hence the ring circulation is created.

Third project is a complementary public and semipublic project to the Intercontinental Hotel. It presents different types of closed and open circulations connection the main street, side streets and the riverbank all together. It functions as a cultural and social hub for the area.

As for the architectural language, the main rule that was applied in all the buildings was following the urban morphology of the surrounding areas. This morphology created the base grid, in each lot, for the planar architectural composition. The plans are the result of overlapping three different layers: the previously mentioned grid, the water direction, and Prague's monuments reference.

As for the geometrical volumetric of the projects, the same approach was used when designing the circulation. Our aim was the minimalize the impact of the buildings on the skyline of the city that was translated in split levels buildings following the topography of the land in each lot. This approach helped making the projects more sustainable and compact buildings.

Throughout all three projects, the connection to the riverbank was always maintained by opening public squares in each project and connecting them from under the street to the water and keeping them accessible for all citizens. Thus the name of the project "DOT TO DOT".

01

01 URBAN EVOLUTION OF PRAGUE

01 Urban Evolution
of Prague City

1.1 Emergence and beginning of settlements until 1235

Prague is located in the center of the Czech basin, surrounded by mountain ranges. The main reason for its location was a set of fords with an advantageous central position on the Vltava River, which draws the south-northern axis of Bohemia. In addition, the Vltava river flows through deep valleys with steep slopes, so in old times it was difficult to cross.

From early Iron age, appeared large settlement at the north of Prague castle, in the basin that today forms Bubenec, with developed crafts, metal processing and trade links. From the Bronze age, the tribe called Boji named the country Boiohem and probably also supplied the names of the main rivers-Vltava, Labe and Ohre. One of the most important oppidum called Zavist after a later settlement was on the southern part of what was then Prague.

Empire of the German Markomans, whose king was Marobut, built somewhere in Bohemia a town whose remnants were not found yet. From 5th to 6th century, it is a significant turn in the history of Prague. Because the dates associated with the arrivals of first Slavs to the region and later 7th-8th century they established trading centres: Butovice, Sarka, Hostivar, Zamka. At 870, it was marked as the foundation of Prague castle, that made possible of controlling the territory. The first Romanesque buildings were made in the castle. Establishment of Vysehrad on the opposite side of the river in 9th century, 4km far from the Prague castle, made a cornerstone of the regulation of the size of the town's development

in the next 1000 years.[1]

At the 10th century Jewish settlement was established at the ford across Vltava river. 1041 the Romanesque reconstruction of Vysehrad was made. Later at 12 century the consolidation was made of settlements around the Old Town marketplace including present streets Karlova, Kaprova, Husova and Celenta. Beggining of 13the century the Jewish Ghetto and cemetery was made.

## 1.2 Mediaeval metropolis 1235-1400

From the beginning of 1235 the system of fortification is improved. The lesser Town as now known as Mala Strana on the left side of the river Vltava was found. The ramparts of Mala Strana were connected with the Stone Bridge to the Prague Castel. The town was located with many older settlements, therefore new market place was made with the center St. Nicolas Church(1283) in the center. In the 14th century the construction of the town hall of the Old Town began. The absence of development of Prague city as a medieval town was marked by the construction of the New Town of Prague by the king of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV.

The huge amount of building activities were done due to the intention of making Prague as a permanent seat for Holy Roman Empire. The new

1 Prague: The Architecture guide, Chris van Uffelen,Markus Golser: edited by Markus Sebastian Braun,Braun Publishing, 2013

Vetus urbs.
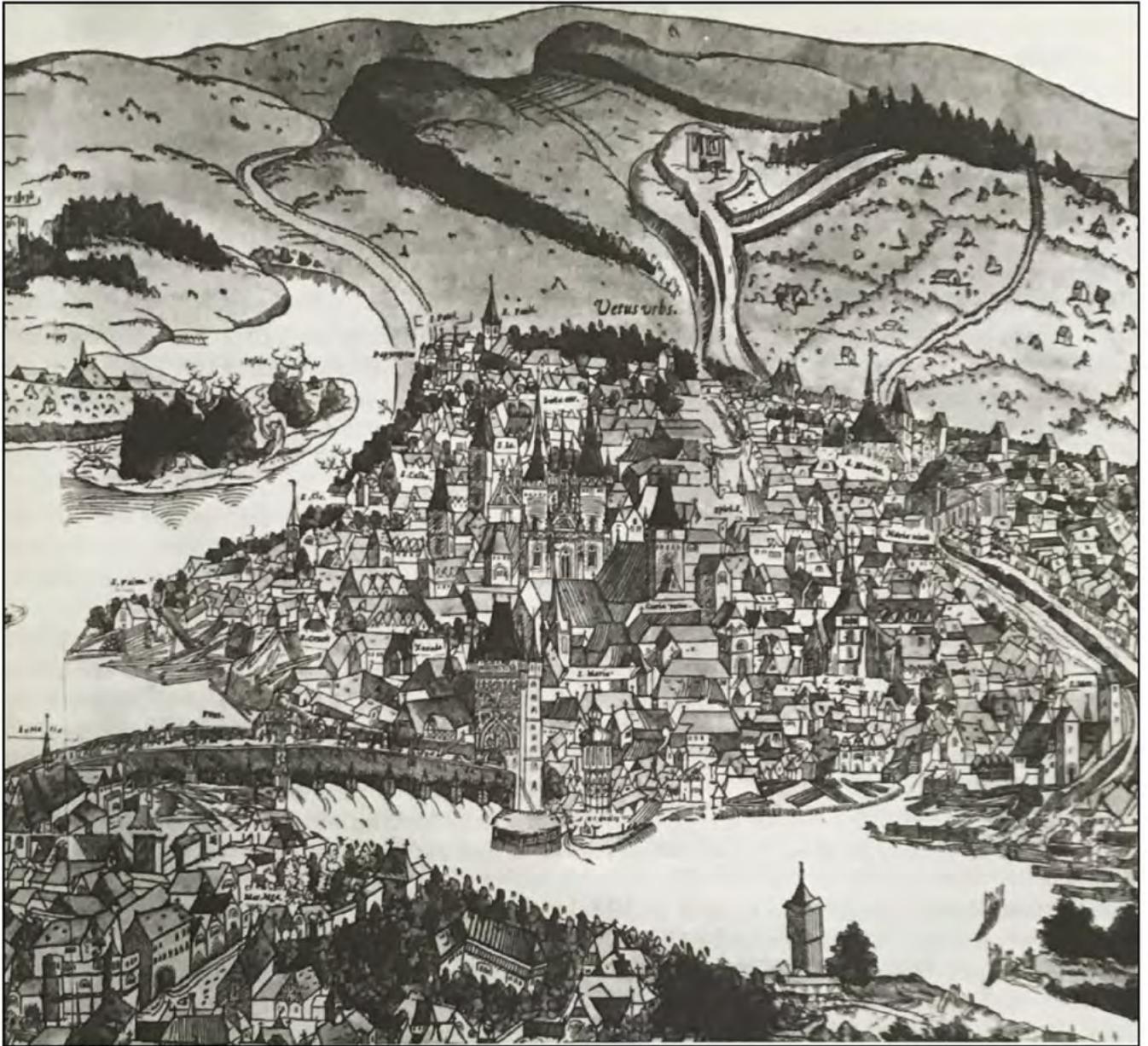
1.1 J. Kozel and M. Peterle from Annaberk
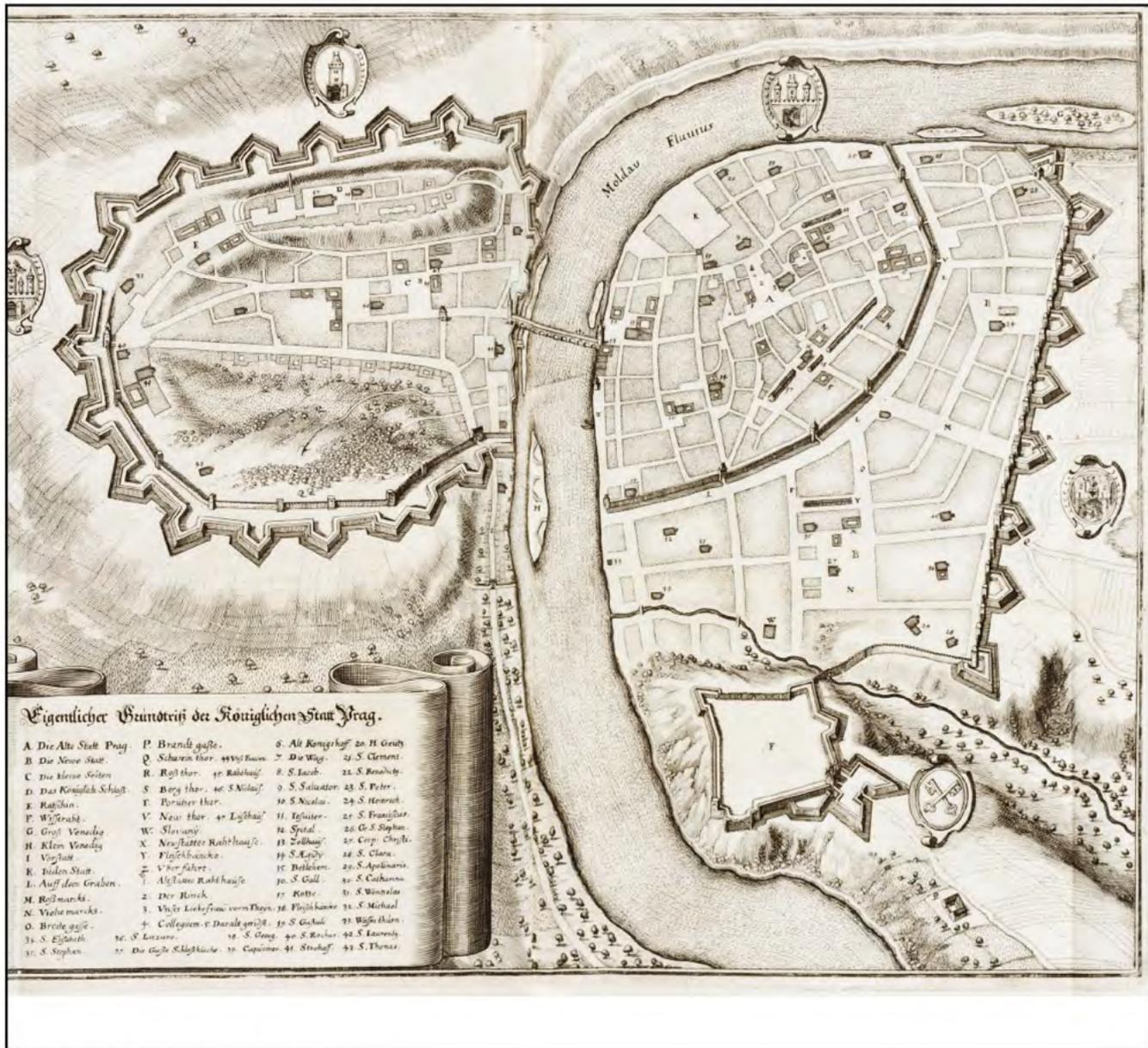
1.2 Floden Moldau, 1663. map of Prague

town covering 360ha has three large marketplaces: Hay market; Horse market; Cattle market, which covers more than 8ha and one of the biggest in whole Europe. Charles IV reconstructed Prague castle and made new buildings, including St. Vitus Cathedral. Due to the flood the old bridge washed out, and the new one was constructed by Peter Parler. The new fortifications were done at 1360 and it doubled the size of the city. Prague become more than eight square kilometers. Charles ordered to cover the outer perimeter with wines which were brought from France. On that time only Rome and Constantinople were covering larger area than Prague.

1.3 Renaissance and Baroque   1400-1815

Gothic dominated the artistic scene in the Bohemian Kingdom from the second third of the 13th century to the beginning of 16th century. Its strength is such that it can still be felt throughout the
entire 16th c. and Gothic motives appear in the works of Renaissance and baroque architects until the 18th c. The same is true of Prague as a whole whose Gothic disposition, thanks to the generosity of nature and location, are enough for the needs

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2 Prague: An Architectural Guide Radomíra Sedláková, Mark E. Smith Antique Collectors Club Limited, 1997, p 33

of the town's building development throughout the entire Renaissance, baroque and Classicist periods, particularly until the beginning of the 19th c.[2]

1493 - The windows of the Late Gothic Vladislav Hall are the first manifestation of Renaissance although the Hall is built in Gothic style. The Renaissance royal garden north of Prague Castle was laid out. It is the sole expanded mediaeval district of the town containing Queen Anne's summerhouse and the Ball Room.

Turn of the 16th and 17 c. - Under the rule of Emperor Rudolph II, Prague once again became the center of the Holy Roman Empire. At that time the Renaissance reached its apex in Prague with the construction of a number of palaces and gardens for the aristocracy, houses for burghers, town gates, town halls and other structures. In spite of all these building activities Prague retained its original Gothic character and scale.

1620 - Defeat of the rising of the Czech, mainly non-Catholic, Estates against the emperor resulted in economic exhaustion along with the start of a process of ruthless re-Catholicization, departure from the country of a considerable part of the population and the permanent removal of the ruling court to Vienna. Prague thus became a provincial town of the Habsburg monarchy for the next 300 years.

1630 - The depopulation of the city and the enormous confiscation of property made it possible to enlarge the cityscape scale thanks to the construction of

large building complexes. These include, primarily, cloisters (Klementinum), churches (St. Nicholas), as well as palaces of the aristocracy (Wallenstein 1623, Cernin 1669).

Turn of 17th and 18th c. - Following the decline of the economy and power after the 30 Years' war, the city recovered and embarked on a period of baroque construction and reconstruction. Dozens of palaces of the aristocracy with gardens, churches and cloisters, the houses of burghers and other structures together with new domes and towers changed Prague's image to such an extent that one can speak of its "barokization"[3].

18th c. - New ramparts and bastions are built around the Lesser Town and New Town of Prague from Poiiti to Vysehrad. New gardens were laid out at Letnå, Troja and on Petiiny.
1760-81 - City avenues such as Na Piikopé and Nårodni were built which altogether created the first Prague boulevards.

1784 - The four Prague towns – Old Town, Lesser Town, Hradcany and New Town – were merged administratively into the single "imperial and royal capital of Prague" as a result of the reforms of Emperor Joseph II. Simultaneously, many church institutions and their buildings were reconstructed or put to use as military barracks, hospitals and administrative headquarters. Centralization of the administration of the Habsburg monarchy reinforces

the position of Prague as a provincial center.

1.4 19th century Prague 1815-1918

The Kingdom of Bohemia in the Habsburg monarchy at that time was its most developed part and Prague continues to remain the natural center. Industry began to develop, in which first textile production dominated, but was soon replaced by mechanical engineering, which has remained the most important Prague industrial branch.

1817 - The first industrial suburb of Prague, Karlin, built behind Poflti gateway, was followed by Smichov, HoleSovice and Bubny.

First half of 19th c. - Demolition and reconstruction of the Old Town, building up the city's infrastructure: city sewerage system (1816), the first Prague gas works (1845).
1833-43 – Construction of the first Vltava embankment (called Smetanovo today) and other city boulevards.

1840-78 - Construction of five new bridges across the Vltava.

1845-70 - Building a railway line south to Vienna, north to Dresden and Berlin, and to eastern and western Europe. Construction of the first Prague railway stations (Center- Prague, West- Smichov, Main Station - Franz Joseph Station, Northwest - Tésnov).

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3 Prague baroque architecture, Milan Pavlik, Vladimir Uher, Pepin Press, Amsterdam, 1998

1.3 Pinasuv plan Prahy around 1700

1.4 Map of Prague before the demolition of Josefov ghetto 1893 - 1913

1848-50 - The ramparts of the Old Jewish Town were torn down and it became the fifth Prague district.administration of the Habsburg monarchy reinforces the position of Prague as a provincial center.

1849-81 - Seven new wards were merged.

1874-76 - City walls were torn down.

1893-96 - The Jewish Town were torn down and Paiizska Avenue and Only the town hall, the old Jewish cemetery and the most important synago-gues were left of the original ghetto.

End of 19th c. – National Theatre, National Museum and other Czech and German national and Land institutions were constructed chiefly in neo-Renaissance style.

1885 - The first water works at Podoll erected.

1891 - Horse-drawn city street cars were electrified.

1891 - The Fair Grounds, where large-scale exhi-

bitions and trade fairs took place, were built as an expression of economic and cultural prosperity.

1900 - New main railway station was built.

End of 19th c. - Prague began to become an agglomeration which by the end of the century was continued together with suburbs surrounding the historical core and it now has more than half a million residents.

1901-10 - The Vltava was regulated, the right side embankment was built along the Old and New Towns ending at Vysehrad tunnel. The Legion and Svatopluk Cech Bridges were constructed, a harbor was built in HoleSovice, the sewerage gutter was modernized, as were the city's sewerage plants and water mains. More communities were merged including Vysehrad (1883), HoleSovice (1884), Liben (1901).

1879 -1907 - Vinohrady, ZiZkov, KoSiie, Liben, Nusle, VysoCany, VrSovice, Smichov, Bubenec, Karlin and Bievnov were given the statute of independent towns of the Prague suburbs.

1.5 The capital of CSR 1918-1948

1918 - Prague became the capital of the newly created Czechoslovak Republic.

4 Prague: 20th century Architecture, Wien Springer, 1999

1919 – Prague Castle was declared the seat of the President. Many palaces were turned into administrative offices of the young republic or the residences of diplomatic representatives of foreign countries.

1922 – In the new conditions the former resistance of the suburbs to being merged with the city abated. With the merger of 37 communities a Greater Prague was established on the territory of 174 square kilometres with over 670,000 inhabitants. A state regulatory commission was formed to examine the question of drawing up an overall, urban concept of the city's future development and its special interest territory - now including 71 neighboring communities - with a view to the level of more construction.

1929 - A directive plan was adopted4.

The Twenties - Emergence of new housing settlements in Bubenec and mainly in Dejvice where architect Antonin Engel applied the urbanist principles of his teacher Otto Wagner. The outskirts of new agglomerations, garden towns were built: Ofechovka, Spoiilov. Barrandov and Hanspaulka with model family houses at Baba (1927-33).

The Thirties - Appearance of more ensembles of small flats were built mainly through city financing: Bievnov, Pankrac. Krc, StraSnice, Michle.

1933 - Construction of liraskr'rv Bridge. As a result of the economic crisis and worsening international situation the planned underground was not realized, nor were other big communication and civil engine-

1.5 Pinasuv plan Prahy around 1700
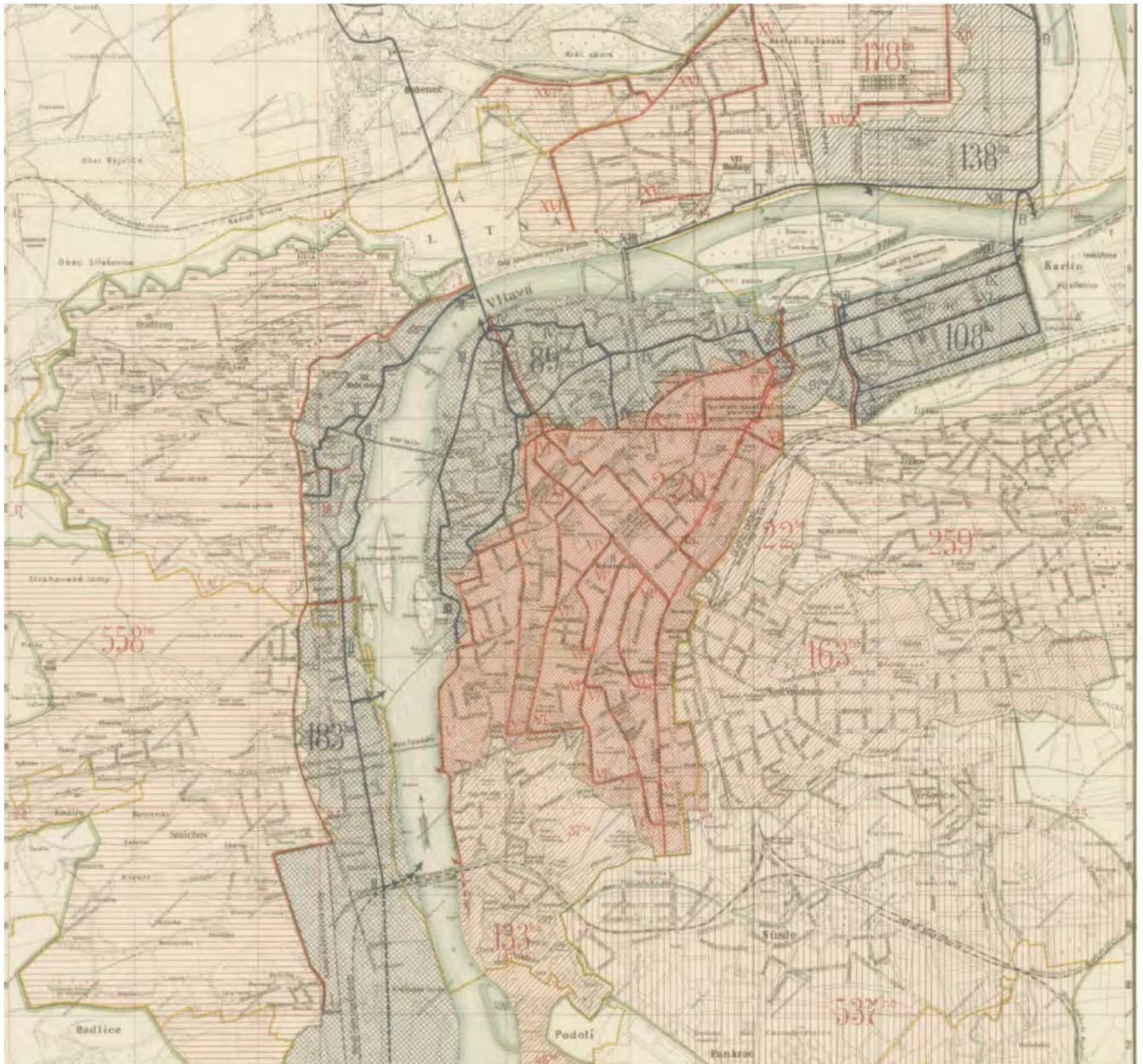
1.6 1890 -1900 Prague transformations in the Old Town

ering projects.

1940-45 - Construction halted as a result of the war. Prague's historical core, however, escaped from military destruction. Two air raids and the liberation struggle in the last days of the war caused only local damage.

1945 - Revival of Czechoslovakia and a resurgence of construction. The beginnings of large housing estates construction, such as Solidarita (1946).

1.6 Metropolis Prague 1948-1995

1948 - The communist government, which basically influenced the entire further political, social, economic and cultural development, was installed. Emphasis was now put on the quantity of extensive construction and industrialization of building technology through intense prefabrication. The investor of almost all construction was the state, or state-run institutions.

1949-53 – Construction of Letna tunnel.

The Fifties - Under the influence of Soviet architecture, a short period – from the viewpoint of the city's image -was that of "socialist ".

1957-90 – Construction of 33 new housing estates mainly on the city outskirts which went on in several different phases: in the Fifties smaller estates for up to 15,000 were built (Petiiny, Antala StaSka), in the Sixties these were larger sites for approximately 40,000 residents (Malesice, Spofilov) and, final-

ly, in the Seventies and Eighties panel-built towns for 100,000 and more inhabitants-Northern Town - Bohnice, Dablice and Prosek; Southern Town consisting of new areas the city acquired at first through the merger of 21 and later of 30 communities, enlarging the size of Prague in 1960 to not quite 300 square kilometres. In 1974 approximately an additional 200 sq.m. were added. Besides these housing estates several pretentiously- conceived structures were completed. A number of them, however, affected the city more in a negative manner.

1962-68 - Construction of a new airport in Ruzyné.

1967-73 - Nusle Bridge was built.

1967 - Work began on the Prague Metro (Underground). Basic communication system of highways crisscrossed the city.

It's difficult to say when first Jews reached Bohemia and when did they settle in Prague. However, the sixteen-century Czech chronicle Václav Hájek from Liboean proposed the story referred for the year 995, according to those Jews were supporting Christians in their war against pagans. As a reward, they were allowed to settle down in the Little Quarter of Prague, below the Convent of Virgin Mary under Chain. According to the same source around seven hundred Jews moved to Prague in 1067 and settled on Ujezd Lane, promising to city authorities to pay heavy taxes. Half of them were allowed to cross to the other bank of the river Vltava, close to the Church of the Holy Spirit and occupied the territory between present-day Dusni and Vezenska Streets

and a large area around Old-New Synagogue[5].

1.7 Prague city evolution through the Military survey maps[6]

Ist Military Survey
1764-1768 and 1780-1783 (rectification), scale 1:28 800
As the base of this survey the Müller's maps (transformed to the larger scale 1:28 800) were used. Officers of the Military Topographic Service were riding through the country on horseback and mapped it using the "a la vue" method, which means that they simply observed the terrain and anticipated the distances. An officer was able to map the area of 350 square km per summer. The survey was not based on any net of precisely defined triangular points due to the financial and time limits of the work. This was the reason why there was not possible to complete the map of whole Austrian Monarchy from the individual sheets, also the lesser preciseness of the survey results of this factor.

The great attention was paid to the communications (classified according to the trafficability - e.g.

5 The architecture of new Prague, Rostislav Svacha; translated by Alexandra Buchler; photographs by Jan Maly; forwarded by Kenneth Frampton; essay by Eric Dluhosh, Cambridge, Mass, MIT Press, 1995

6 See the article of Historical Military Mapping of the Czech Lands- Cartographic analysis by Ruzena Zimova, Jaroslav Pestak, Bohuslav Veverka

the so-called imperial roads), rivers, streams and artificial gullies, land use (arable fields, hayfields, pastures etc.) and various types of buildings - churches, mills etc, all of which being significant for military purposes. Thanks to the different colors representing the individual landscape components (the maps were colored ma- nually) they are easy to distinguish.

Together with the maps also military-topographical descriptions of the area were recorded, containing some information which were not the parts of the maps, such as width and depth of rivers, characters of roads and trails, settlement maintenance etc. The material collected during the survey consists of 19 manuscripts for Czechia alone. On the right side of each sheet you can find the list of settlements and columns prepared for filling the number of inhabitants, usable horses etc. On some sheets these columns are blanked, but the information can be found in the military-topographical descriptions mentioned above.

The importance of the Ist Military Survey lies not only in its preciousness (comparing to the previous surveys in Czech Lands), scale and detailed military-topographical descriptions, but also in period of its origin. It gives us the opportunity to view the area just before the beginning of the industrial revolution, in the period of the full bloom of cultural baroque landscape and its highest diversity.

IInd Military Survey
1836-1852, scale 1:28 800
Contrary to the Ist Military Survey the IInd one was

based on triangular net and also on the cadastral maps of Stabile Cadaster in the scale of 1: 2 880, therefore its precision is much higher.

Beside the larger scale maps (1: 28 800) also the so-called general (1: 288 000) and special (1: 144000) maps were produced.

The contents of the sheets are in fact identical with the previous work, with an addition of triangular point's altitudes, but the recorded situation is very different. The IInd Military Survey was carried on at the time when the industrial revolution was in progress and intensive forms of agriculture were being employed widely. The area of arable fields had increased of about 50% in 100 years and the forests of our country reached the lowest area in its history.

1.7 Ist Military Survey
1764-1768 and 1780-1783 (rectification)
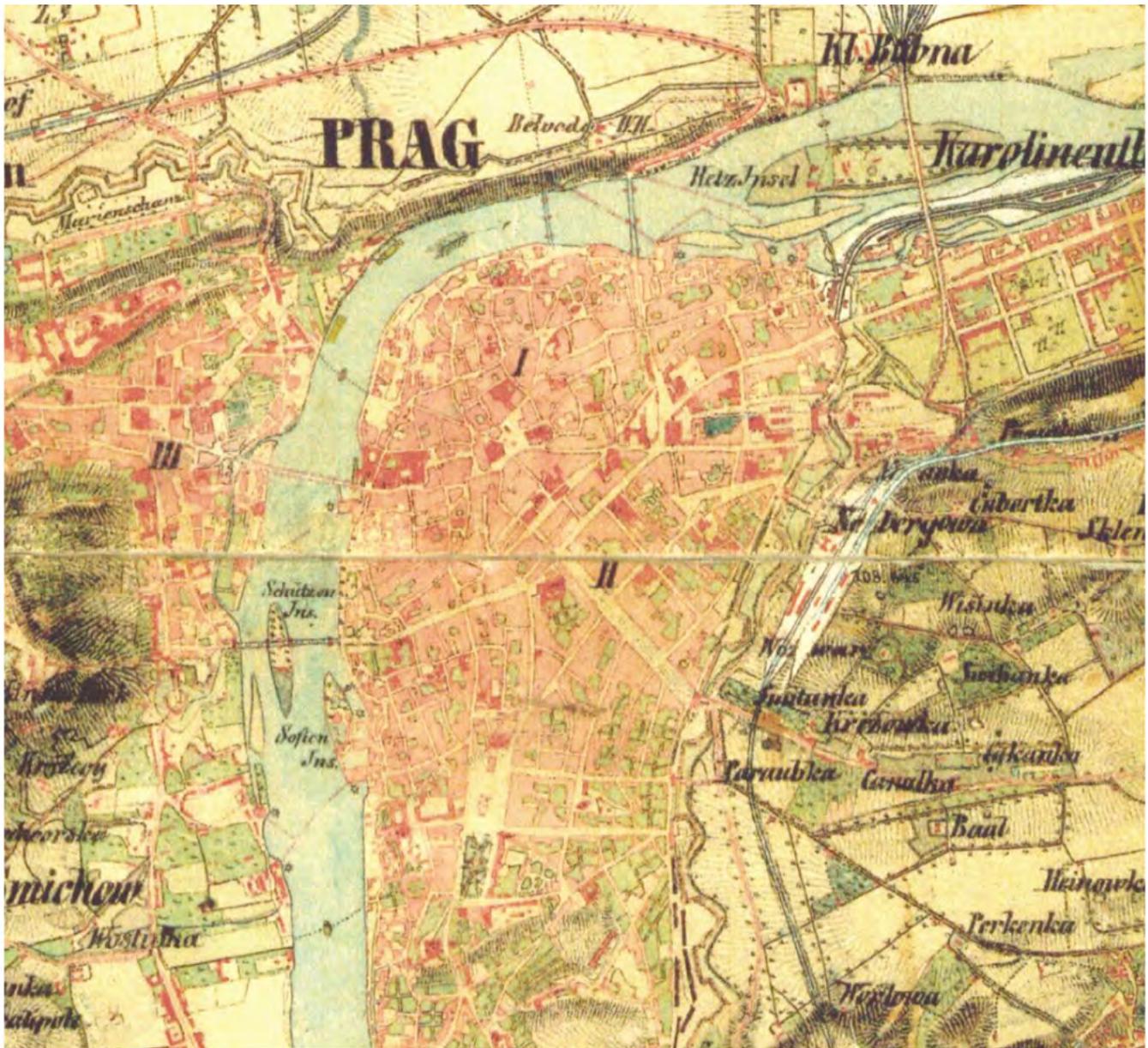
1.8 IInd Military Survey
1836-1852, scale 1: 28 800

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02

02 HISTORY OF THE GHETTO AND JEWISH APPROACH TOWARDS ARCHITECTURE

02 History of the Ghetto and Jewish approach towards architecture

2.1 Medieval Period

The information about early Jewish settlement and their housing in Prague around that time is fragmented. However, in Základy starého místopisu pražského (1437 - 1620), that provides materials for the initial topographic analysis of Prague, W.W. Tomek8 listed 143 individual Jewish houses in the ghetto area. Such number is significant, compared with settlements in other medieval towns. For instance, comparing with Frankfurt am Main, that thought to have comprised 20 houses for Jews in 1439, the Prague settlement was unusually significant. Of the 143 buildings listed by Tomek, up to the year 1435 when his record ends, only 33 were owned by Jews. That illustrated the instability of Jewish life. Basing on the location of this building can be made the hypothesis that the medieval Jewish settlement "was concentrated on the eastern side of the Holy Spirit Convent, probably along both sides of what was Pinkasova Street and Siroka which ran into it, and in the group of houses on both sides of Rabinska, except for its northern end." According to the data, provided by Tomek appears that this earlier settlement 'was already stagnating, probably having never expanded, while the later settlement centered around the Old-New Synagogue grew in all directions during the Middle Ages.

The entire area of the Jewish settlement was fenced and thus separated from its Christian surrounding. According to written records, there were six gates. "The first was situated at the western end of the principal Jewish thoroughfare, near the Church of St Valentine. The second gave access to the Golden Lane, while the third was at the corner of a little street behind what is now Maisel Synagogue. The forth was places at the end of the main street - Siroka - close behind the enclave of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit (this gate is still shown on the Juttner's plan of Prague in 1811-14).
The fifth gate stood more or less across the middle of Rabinska Street, while the six closed a byway going down to the river bank." Jews rarely succeeded in purchasing property outside the defined area, even though at the end of the fifteenth and in the early sixteen century there were several houses owned by Jews in the Little Quarter and other parts of the city.

The limits of the ghetto were more or less fixed. The Medieval Ghetto was an area with its configuration composed of its main streets and its side routes. Similar Jewish settlements are known in Spain, Portugal, and Italy of the same time.

8   Jewish Stories of Prague: Jewish Prague in History and Legend, V.V. Tomek, Mirek Katzl, Sharpless House, Inc. 2014

2.1   Jewish town at the beginning of 19 century

2.2   Baroque Period

At the end of the sixteen century, the uncertainty surrounded the life of the Jewish population in the ghetto that had a negative efect on building projects of those times. Through all times the Christian population of Prague was not particularly well inclined towards the Jews, were increasing complaints that Jews did not respect the conditions of the privilege granted to them, debase the currency by exporting the silver from the city. "The Old town authorities were particularly annoyed because of Jews coming from elsewhere and settling down in the ghetto without permission, and also because, despite the legal prohibition of such deals, Jews were buying Christian houses in the immediate vicinity of the ghetto and thus extending the ghetto not only close to specific churches, particularly the Church of the Holy Spirit but even almost to the Old Town Square. City authorities started the numerous attempts of forced evictions of Jews from Prague; however, none of those found its logical conclusion. As a result of all this factors houses owned by Jews were continuously bought and sold, often divided between a considerable number of owners, each of those had his own carefully marked out a part of the house and lived in it[9]. The hygienic conditions left much to be desired. In 1613 the Jews asked for permission to make changes in the planning of ghetto by implementing three new streets to be used in case of fire, later this routes gave the name to Tristudnicna (Three Wells) Street[10].

By the middle of the seventeen century, the population of the ghetto was miserable and in debts. We know how the ghetto looked like regarding the map of Matous Unger. There were 18 little gatherings of houses, of nonregular dimensions with both Christian and Jewish owners, separated by big yards or gardens. On the west side in front of the waterway, the ghetto finished with buildings outside the gate. On the east side, Jews occupied territory close to the Church of the Holy Spirit, while on the south brought their settlement very close to the Old Town Square. On the map, only Miesel synagogue and the one behind the Church of Holy Spirit are marked.

After conflagrations in 1561, 1567, 1603 and 1689 year, houses mostly made from timber were severely damaged. New buildings in the ghetto would cost much more than would the repair and renovation of the burned-out ones, considering they survived solid foundations and vaulted ground floors. Also, Jews did not want to move to the other part of the city far from their existing synagogues. City authorities made a list of demands on the way how the ghetto should look like now. Mainly stone and brick were to be used; streets should run in full straight lines. A rampart was to be built, dividing the ghetto off from the Christian houses. The number of maximum two-story houses was to be fixed without the possibility to grow in the future. The Jewish town had to be surveyed and in 1690 this without the possibility to grow in the future. The Jewish town had to be surveyed, and in 1690 this work was carried out by Andreas Bernard Klauser.

9   The Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 6 Publisher Funk and Wagnalls company, 1904, London
10   The Prague Ghetto, Milada Vilimkova Published by Alpine Fine Arts Collection (UK) (1993)
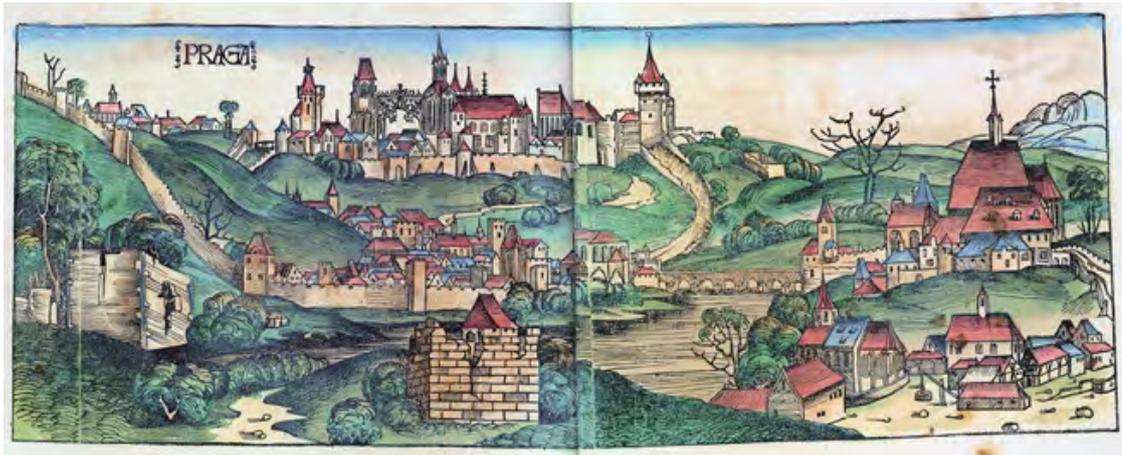
2.2　Prague. Woodcut from the Nuremberg Chronicle

Were provided to plans, both of those shoving the state of the ghetto at the time and the buildings that have survived for the proposed reconstruction. The ghetto had to be smaller than before. Several residential blocks had to be excluded because of their vicinity to the Church of Holy Spirit. The broad street had to divide the ghetto from the Christian neighborhood. Instead of the part that proposed to be taken from the ghetto had to be given the area by the river and the existing houses of Christian had to be purchased to Jews. Four synagogues had to be demolished in order to obtain more space for residential construction.

However, the proposal faced many dificulties, mostly due to the lack of financial aid. At the and particularly nothing remained of the proposal of Klauser. It was decided that in a short time, the Jews community had to implement the upper stories of their buildings in the way they were before. Also, the order to abolish of synagogues was set back after Jews agreed to brick up windows on those facing the Church of Holy Spirit.

After 1689 it was forbidden to build timber houses in Prague. Even though the proposal of Klauser was not implemented, the survey done by him gives us a clear image of that how was the ghetto at the time. The middle of the eighteen century was marked by radical measures towards the Jewish population in Prague. It is difficult to distinguish all reasons of upcoming in the 1745 year another expulsion of the Jewish population from Prague and the kingdom of Bohemia at all, but the effect of it on the further life in the ghetto was significant. For the first time, the decision meets the stability of the city authorities, so the first Jews illuminated from the town. The first 58 families returned to Prague just by the end of August 1748. The Jewish community was ruined. The owners had to suffer carrying out the essential repairs when in 1754 the ghetto again went up in flames. One hundred ninety wooden houses (that is about two-thirds of the general amount)were burned down. The only part of the ghetto that survived were buildings where stone and brick had been used, those around the Old Cemetery and by the river.

2.3   Neo-Classicism

During the rebuilding of Prague after the fire in 1754, the architecture entered the face of late Baroque and the early Neo-Classicism. Johann Fer- dinand Schor was in charge of the reconstruction of the ghetto. The plan shows the state of the ghetto after the fire in 1754. Principal streets were to be wider so could accommodate the four-story buildings[11]. While in the narrower, once houses could only have three stories. Stone and brick were chosen as the most superior and standard materials. his proposal was not consistently adhered too. This proposal was not consistently adhered too. How the city of Prague looked like after these changes can be seen from the cardboard model made by Antonin Langweil. The Jewish town did not become yet the poor slum that it became in the second half of the century.

At the end of 18 century was published decrees which define the Jewish population, initially considered inferior, to be equal with Christian citizens. Also elsewhere in Europe, the Jews could live where they wished, and the term "ghetto" giant exist anymore. So in Prague, the ghetto was no longer the strictly separated community. Rampart had to be destroyed, and in 1822 the last gate was done away. In 1849 the Jewish Town of Prague became one of the city quarters called Josefov. Usually in Prague rebuilding in the age of Neo-Classicism meant the lower quality of the construction.

The internal courtyards were filed up with newly built wings of the houses, that space was reduced, buildings became higher, and the light was rarely coming inside tiny quartiles. ".. the first half of the nineteen century shows us the worst possible solution - unless we are dealing with ambitious buildings where there was no need to save money. The homes now built were remarkable for the way they divided rooms again and again until space was exhausted, only to gain more apartments. This was the case for all Prague, and so we can assume that in the ghetto things were even more so."

Before the fenced zone of the ghetto provided an opportunity for the formation of a separate Jewish community that supported and covered the necessary needs of its inhabitants. The historical unity of Jews was indeed broken. After its collapse and equating the Jewish population to the rest of the inhabitants of Prague, there was no hope for any help. This gradually created conditions when changes were demanding.

The Neo-Classicist era was finished and in 1897 started clearance of the city that covered Jesefov quarter, and New Town and nothing could stand on its way. The Prague ghetto and its neighborhood were demolished and a new residential quarter was built.

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11   Eli Valley, The Great Jewish Cities of Central and Eastern Europe: A Travel Guide and resource book to Prague, Warsaw, Cracow, and Budapest, row- man & Littlefield publisher, inc, New York, 2005, p. 130

2.3   The Old-new Synagogue and environments, from. The south-east. In the background, the Old Jewish Cemetery. Langweil's model of Prague

2.4   Jewish Ghetto

The existence of separated Jewish quarters, usually surrounded by the wall, originated in the preferences of the Jews to live in a way to keep their laws and traditions and defend themselves if need be. The idea of a ghetto in its restricted sense resulted from the tendency implanted in Christianity to isolate the Jews. While Jewish quarters may have been a feature of the middle ages, the establishment of the first ghetto by name took place in the renaissance era.

The Ghetto's Jews did not refer to their enforced residence as a jail. Instead, it was a biblical 'camp of the Hebrews,' a place of Holiness on the way to the Promised Land[12]. "the space of the ghetto reinforced such beliefs about the Jewish body: behind the Ghetto's drawn bridges and closed windows, its life shut off from the sun and the water, crime, and idolatry were thought to fester[13]"

-Venice Ghetto

The Jewish community in Venice dates back to 1382 when the Venetian government first authorized Jews to live in the city. According to the dominant origin myth, the first modern ghetto was created by sixteenth-century Venice, which involuntarily segregated its Jewish population and locked it up at night in the neighborhood of a former iron foundry.[14] The first ghetto that was named as such was founded in the 16th century in Venice, but the practice of segregating Jews can be found as far back as the 11th century at least.

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12   Curiel, R., and Cooperman, B. D., 1990. The Ghetto of Venice. London, UK: Clare Books.
13   Sennett, R., 1994. Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization. New York: W.W. Norton
14   Davis, R. C., and B. Ravid (eds.), 2003. The Jews of Early Modern Venice. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University

2.3   The Old-new Synagogue and environments, from. The south-east. In the background, the Old Jewish Cemetery. Langweil's model of Prague

Established by decree of Doge Leonardo Loredan on March 29, 1516, the Venice ghetto was one of the first places where people were forcibly segregated and surveilled because of religious diference. The term itself originated here; the area had been used as a foundry ("get" in Venice dialect). For security reasons the compound was walled in, constrained within the narrow limits of an island, surrounded by water. When the sight became too small for the residential demands, the new edifices that were built on the perimeter of the island turned into an additional urban settlement for the integration of Jews from oriental countries.

While the Ghetto turned to the place where found the place different ethnical groups of Jewish from Germany,Italy, Portugal and Ottoman Empire [2] rental fees jumped out at once; buildings turned inwards instead of expanding outwards. Buildings became taller and apartments much smaller.

The reorganization of inner spaces was that much significant that two centuries after residents found themselves in a place where only the position of synagogue functioned as a reference point and where only one out of five residential buildings have had a formal facade.

2.5   Venice, city map 1886
2.6   Robert de Vaugondy's map of Paris 1760
2.7   Prague, city map, 1903

-Frankfurt Ghetto

Emperor Frederick III had repeatedly ordered that the Jews of Frankfurt be subject to dress regulations and other restrictions. In 1458, the city council began building houses outside the city wall and moat. In 1462 the Jews were forced to move into these houses. By 1464 the city had established eleven houses, one dance hall, two pubs, and a community center. After that, construction of the ghetto and the road to it was to be conducted by the Jews at their own expense, including paving of the road to the ghetto. Though the Jews paid for the construction, the houses were the property of the city, and the Jews paid rent to the city. The ghetto gradually expanded its territory into the former moat of the city between 1552 and 1579. To accommodate the expansion, the original houses were progressively subdivided, and then additional stories were built on the old ones.

-Prague Ghetto(Josefov)

The formation of a Jewish Town was preceded by the Jewish merchants making their homes near Prague Castle and along the Vyšehrady route. Since ancient times, the ford across the Vltava River below Prague Castle played an important role in city life, connecting the trade routes on both its banks. It was right here that a Jewish community sprang up, from the end of the 11th century, though its origins are obscured by the mists of time.[15]

Perhaps the fact that Jews came to Prague from different places helped the formation of two distinct centers of Jewish settlement. One around the Old School (today's Spanish Synagogue) and the other by the Old-New Synagogue. This was the real heart of the medieval Jewish ghetto.

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15 Prazske Ghetto / The Ghetto of Prague, Olympia (1991)

2.8   Ghetto of Venice, plan
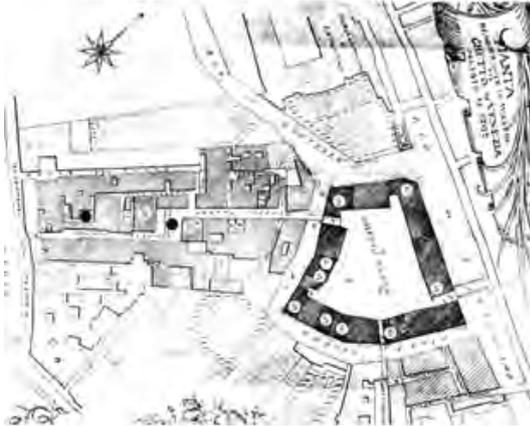
2.9 Ghetto of Frankfurt, illustration

The Prague Ghetto was a typical complex, and individual famous historical monuments remain to this day. In the Gothic period, the Ghetto was shut off from the outside world by fortified walls with gates (1230-1530). However, during the Renaissance (1530-1630), the Jewish community spread beyond the walls of the city. The building also continued within this area, and dwelling houses arose around the synagogues, schools, and cemeteries.

German was spoken widely among many members of the Prague Jewish community and continued to be taught despite the tensions with the Czech-Jewish nationalists. During the first decades of the 20th Century, German-speaking Jews in Prague produced a large body of internationally acclaimed literature. The most famous of these writers were Franz Kafka, Max Brod, and Franz Werfel.

For long centuries, the Jews had to live in the overcrowded territory, fenced by barbed wire. By the end of nineteenth century Peter Demetz in his book, Prague in Black and Gold: the history of a city, offers some somewhat startling facts about living conditions in the quarter which prompted this measure.

Firstly, it was cramped with 1822 people per hectare. In 1893 the sanation plan was being approved according to which 624 houses in the territory of the Old Town of Prague are to be demolished. More than 150 houses have disappeared as a result of the sanction.

Most of the quarter was demolished between 1893 and 1913 as part of an initiative to model the city in Paris. What was left were only six synagogues, the old cemetery, and the Old Jewish Town Hall. Currently, Josefov is overbuilt with buildings from the beginning of the 20th century, so it is diffcult to appreciate precisely what the old quarter was like when it was reputed to have over 18,000 inhabitants.

In the center of the Old Town in Prague and right on the boundary of what was formerly the ghetto, there sprawls the least ancient of the medieval Jewish cemeteries in Prague and only survived through the ages. During the more than three centuries in which it was in active use, the cemetery continually struggled with the lack of space. For this reason, there are places where as many as twelve layers now exist.

2.10   Jewish cemetery, Prague

Thanks to this solution, the older graves themselves remained intact. However, as new levels were added it was necessary either to lay over the gravestones associated with the older (and lower) graves to protect them or else to elevate the stones to the new, higher surface. This explains the dense forest of gravestones that one sees today; many of them commemorate an individual who is buried several layers further down. This also explains why the surface of the cemetery is raised several meters higher than the surrounding streets; retaining walls are necessary to hold the soil and the graves in place.

2.11   . The demolition of houses near the Church of the Holy Spirit and the Spanish Synagogue.

2.5   Shtetl

Apart from Ghetto (Jewish quarter), as a residential area for Jewish population in cities of western and central Europe, for and by Jews was composed another type of settlement, as a result of encounter between a traditional Jewish community and society itself in the eastern Europe, named Shtetl: town in which life is determined by its Jewish majority. The shtetl was mainly found in the areas that constituted the 19th century Pale of Settlement in the Russian Empire, the Congress Kingdom of Poland, Galicia (Ukraine) and Romania. In official parlance, the shtetl was referred to as "(Jewish) miasteczko." The territories belonged to the Polish- Lithuanian empire and the end of the 19th century was annexed[16]. Here there were hundreds of small towns, mostly isolated towns of Polish nobility in pre-partisan Poland. They were the shtetls (in Yiddish), or mestechki, in Russian.

At the end of the 18th century, as a result of the division of Rzeczpospolita, part of its territories, where Jews had lived for several centuries, joined the Russian Empire. The Jewish community of the empire according to the population census of 1897, reached the number of up to 5.200.000 people. In 1791 Catherine II defined the territory beyond which Jews were not allowed to live. It includes former Polish lands, southern Ukraine and the Crimea. It was the Pale of Settlement that largely predetermined the formation of shtetls.

Shtetl was known as a place where Jews created a rich and distinctive world that contributed to the broad development of the Yiddish culture phenomenon, provided a strong sense of community due to Jews carrying faith in God. The shtetl "at its heart, it was a community of faith built upon a deeply rooted religious culture." Besides, shtetls offered communal institutions such as temples (synagogues), ritual baths, and ritual butchers.

The concept of Jewish culture is not synonymous with the concept of shtetl culture; however, the shtetl considered to be the place of Jewish folklore and ethnography and embodied for Jews the same role as for other did village.

The principal place of the town was the market square.

2.12. Zhvil in Early Twentieth Century

16 I. de Madariaga, Russia in the age of Catherine the Great (London: Weidenfeld and
Nicolson, 1981): 427-454; E. C.Thaden, Russia's Western Borderlands, 1710-1870 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984): 32-81; 121-168.

Sometimes it had the shape of a rectangle, but very often it was a continuation of the main path passing through the shtetl. The perimeter of the square was built up with residential buildings, shops, visiting yard, tavern, various workshops. Thus, by the beginning of the 19th century, such planning structure was commonly called "shtetl."

The character of urban development of shtetl was determined by the land alignment system that existed in the 18th century in Poland. Arear were narrow and located across the main street, so the facade of the house often occupied the entire width of the allotment. Because of this, the building of the street was very dense; the lanes between the houses were no more than a meter wide. On such a building density, besides the economic one, the religious factor also had the significant influence it facilitated the construction of the eruv. One of the distinctive features of Jewish houses was a gallery that emphasized the difference between public and private areas. Such an individual gallery had a somewhat symbolic separation of the internal personal space of the house from the public, because, unlike non-Jewish suburbs, the houses did not have any fences directly on The street. Galleries could be very different, both on the second floor of the house, and only at ground level. Nevertheless, despite this "separation" purpose, the continuous front of the galleries contributed to the visual unification of the street and the surrounding buildings, creating that amazing and sharply contrasting with the suburb architectural look of the Jewish town.

Moreover, such buildings were characterized by the presence of different entrances and exits; also, the main one from the side of the central faced. Such specialties were considered as an ethical, fitting to a Jewish lifestyle.

2.6 The Jewish Approach to Architectural Forms

Placed in a wider context of religious history, the architectural features of wall-bimot finally suggest a fundamental principle of the Jewish attitude towards form.
The characteristics of a wall-bimah as to position, function, and effect recall the spatial situation and the events at Mount Sinai. Here, too, Israel is separated from God by a fence and prevented climbing the mountain in order not to be able to see God. Communication between God and Isra- el is established by Moses, who is either high up, speaking with God, or down below, speaking with Israel. In both cases, the word of God - conveyed by Moses or present in the Torah"[17] links Israel with God[18]. If this reference were intentional, it would be a thought formulated in picture language.

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17   Deuteronomy 33:4

Concerning the different ways of transcending God explained above, we can say this though, formulated visually, would be symbolic in common sense, as a reminder to a past situation refers to it and at the same time contains its characteristics. However, what is said about God indirectly in this language retains the character of a sign, for even in this recollection of the Sinai situation the abstract God did not become a material, concrete (and visible) part of the world. In picture language - if this recoil intentional - the transcending of an abstract and universal God would not be revoked, would not become symbolic.
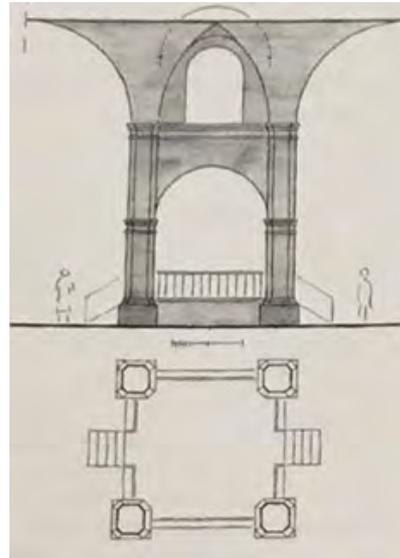
2.13 . bimot, isolated case(Tykochin)

2.14 . Frankfurt main synagogue

18   According to the Zohar, the bimah emblemizes Mount Sinai (II. 206 and III, 164b), cf. Leopold Löw, "Die Almemorfrage," (1864) in Gesammelte Schriften von Leopold Löw, ed. Immanuel Löw, vol. 4 (Szeged, 1898) pp. 93– 107, especially: p. 101. It would be interesting to research whether there is an Ashkenazi equivalent to this passage in the Sephardi culture. – Another reminder was given by David Davidovitch when he assumed the variant in fig. Three as a sukkah, cf. David Davidovitch, "Synagogen in Polen und ihre Zerstörung," unpublished translation by Hannelore Künzl (1986, Hochschule für Jüdische Studien in Heidel- berg, Nachlaß Hannelore Künzl, C-2002). This thought would only overlap the thought of Mount Sinai, as on the one hand, one recalls by Sukkot the presence of God in exile, and on the other hand, the climax of this feast - Simhat To- rah - places the word of God and the Torah respectively in the center.

2.15 . Halberstadt synagogue

The difference between the Jewish and the Christian attitude towards architecture is evident in the copies of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, were also built in the early modern age. Here, too, the visually formulated thought is symbolic in common sense as this reproduction

of a past situation refers to something existing beyond it - the original which exists in it as well. Also, here we have to distinguish between two directions: the empty tomb refers in the first place to something which no

er exists in it, so it has the character of a sign. However, as it once held the body of Christ, it refers to the physical existence of Jesus or of God, respectively, thus transcending God symbolically. It refers to something beyond it, which was once in it as well[19].

The different ways of transcending God have consequently resulted in different attitudes to architecture: basically, Jewish has the character of a sign, Christian that of a symbol.

Although it seems that the idea of an abstract and universal God cannot be formulated and communicated in a picture-related, but only in a text-related language, this does not mean that because of the first two commandments of the Decalogue, ideas as to visual form and its effects are not allowed. (These are central aspects, but not the only ones). A final remark concerning the historical context should be added: against the background of the unusually favorable living conditions for Jews in the Polish Nobles' Republic, synagogue-buildings in the early modern age already developed essential innovations in its first one hundred years and reached an impressive climax. The rich and extensive architectural material still offers a significant number of possibilities for developing questions and answering them with the help of contemporary material gained from the history of religion.

19 It should be emphasized that Alberti, who is often regarded above all as a secular, pantheistic, neo-platonic artist, also created such a copy of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, namely the Cappella Ruccelai in Florence. A similar copy was built in Miechów near Krakow, cf. Jerzy Z. Łoziński, "Miechowskie sepulcrum domain," Biuletyn Historii Sztuki, no. 2 (1969), pp. 151-66

2.7 Is there any Jewish architecture?

It can be argued, instead, there is such a thing as Jewish space or for that matter anything that can be called Christian space or any other ethnic space that remains constant or essential despite changes in time, place, and religious or ethnic practice. It is impossible to pin down ethnic space even at one time in one location and to explain why shall address both synagogue architecture and the Jewish Museum in Berlin.

Certainly, spatial configurations assist various kinds of prayer. In traditional synagogues of the Ashkenazi (German) rice, the bimah platform for the reader of the Torah is situated in the center of the congregation. The u-shaped configuration of seats around the bimah enables all the participants to see and hear the reader, and it allows chem eye-contact with each other to reinforce the sense of community and mutual participation. However, the arrangement of sears in many Sephardi synagogues is equally helpful. A typical interior arrangement aliens the seats on the long walls so that the congregation can look in one direction to see the ark or repository for the Torah scrolls, and in the opposite direction to see the bimah platform from which the scrolls are read.   In this arrangement, too, the congregation members can see each other and feel bound together as a group. The Ashkenazi space is centralized; the Sephardi space is bi-focal. Which is Jewish? Perhaps both. However, neither is exclusively Jewish: Roman Catholics since 1965 have often worshipped in centralized spaces, like those of Ashkenazi Jews.

Cathedral choir arrangements and the form of university chapels are virtually the same as those of Sephardi synagogues; in major churches, the configuration assists choral responses and in chapels, it perhaps coincidentally enforces discipline since everyone is visible and therefore cannot doze off during services.

What is more, there are other synagogue configurations. Most common today in the USA and Western Europe is an axial arrangement in which the bimah is placed close to the ark at one end of the synagogue, a configuration much like that of many churches and probably influenced by Protestant church interiors. Is this not Jewish, considering that even though for almost two hundred years, this has been a spatial configuration that has suited a majority of the American faithful? Only the extreme Orthodox would claim that Reform and Conservative Judaism are not Jewish.

The surroundings for these spatial configurations varied greatly, so that it is hard to claim any physical form as the standard for Jewish worship, or as Jewish space, or any sort of word space that refers to something tangible.

03 DESIGN APPROACH TO THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

03 Design approach to the urban environment

In contrast with other European cities, the historical core of Prague remained untouched by the late nineteenth century, aside from the redevelopment of city walls (the medieval fortifications were destroyed in 1874 to make space for the development of the city) and parts of Josefov ghetto, a quarter that was devastated somewhere inbetween of 1893 and 1913 as a component of an initiative that evokes, in some receipts, the Haussmann's project for Paris. The medieval streets and houses of Josefov district, the Jewish quarter, were changed due to the superimposition of a new urban settlement more suitable for the social and economical needs required by the society in the beginning of the XX century.

The whole area of the Old Town was shaped by trade routes from Prague Castle across the marketplace, especially the Trstenice Trail, which for a long time acted as the main trade route. These trade routes have laid the foundation for today's streets and retain their original position in small variations. Dlouhá, Široká, Dušní, Vezenská, and Kozí Street, linking Dlouhá Street with Kozí Square, came from the medieval street network. In the 18th century, according to the plans of Prague by J. D. Hubera, it is possible to recognize very well the appearance and character of the district, including the street network and its dominant features.

On October 1, 1886, a public tender was announced for a regulatory plan for areas affected by de-

20. Kohout, J.; Vanèura, J. (1986), Praha 19. a 21.století, technické promeny, SNTL, Prague

commissioning with the deadline of 15 January 1887. An expert committee was set up that same year as the winning proposal selected the regulatory plan Finis Ghetto of the urban geometry Alfréd Hurtig, architect Matej Strunec and the municipal engineer Jan Hejda.

This winning design was the basis for the preparation of the decontamination plan, which governed the reconstruction of Josefov district and the Old Town. The changes compared to the winning design in the area we solved only reflected in the breaking of the new street V. Kolkovne.

A sanction was launched in 1893 with the adoption of decontamination laws that would remain valid for 10 years. The cutting itself began on the Old Town Square by breaking through today's Parížská Street in 1896. The first decade of destruction was then positively evaluated and the laws were gradually extended until 1943.

In between 1897-1917 only five synagogues, a town hall and a cemetery have remained. A problematic demolition, carried out in the twenty years, has almost completely removed a part of Prague that has been proven to belong to the metropolis since the ninth century.[22]

The newly planned street network of the decontamination plan has preserved two basic axes of the solved area. These are today's Široká

22 LÍBAL, Dobroslav. MUK, Jan. Staré mesto pražské: architektonický a urbanistický vývoj. Nakladatel- ství Lido- vé noviny, 1996.

3.1   Development Map of Prague at Geographical Scale (Before 15th Centrury; 16th Centrury; 17th Centrury; 18th Centrury; 19th Centrury; 20th Centrury)
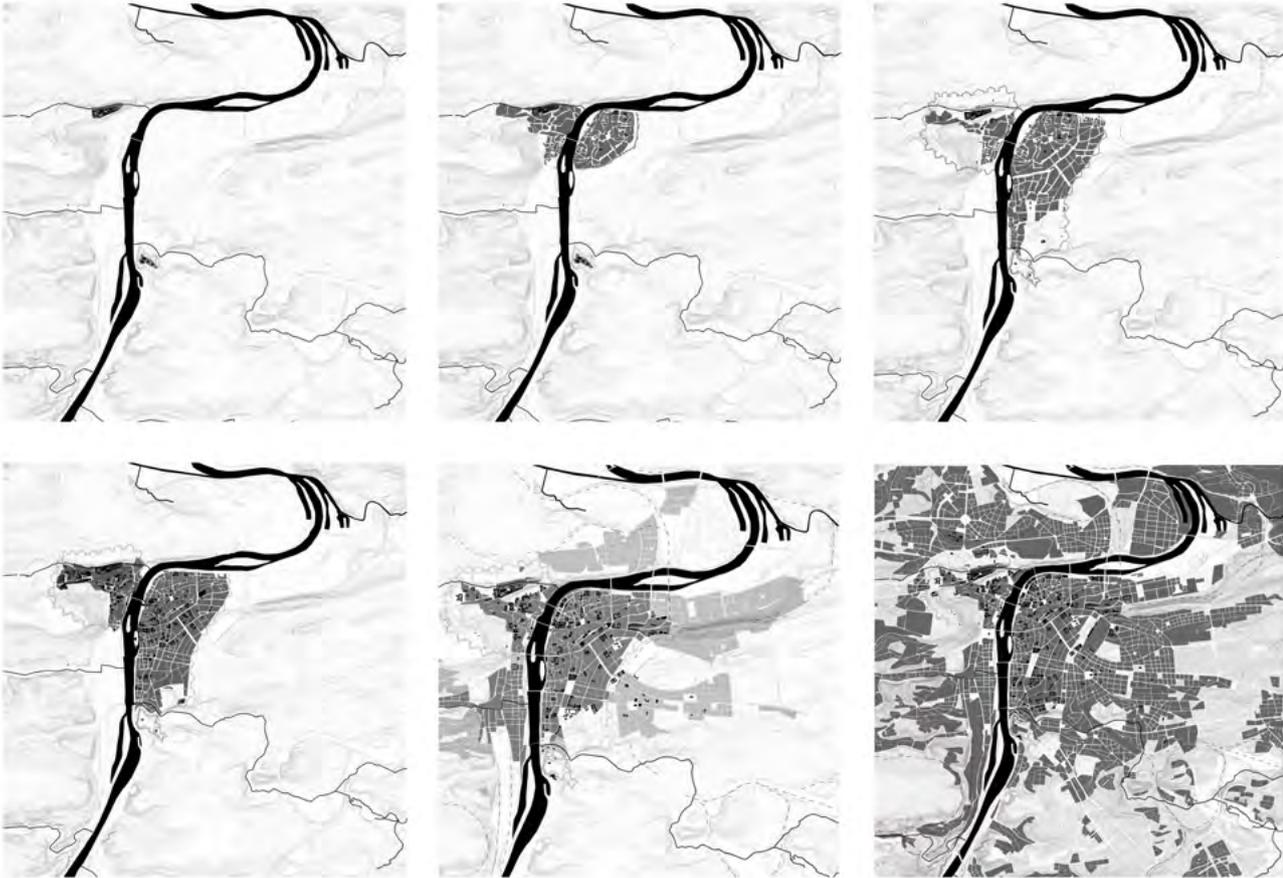
3.2 Development Map of Prague at Urban Scale (Before 15th Centrury; 16th Centrury; 17th Centrury; 18th Centrury; 19th Centrury; 20th Centrury)
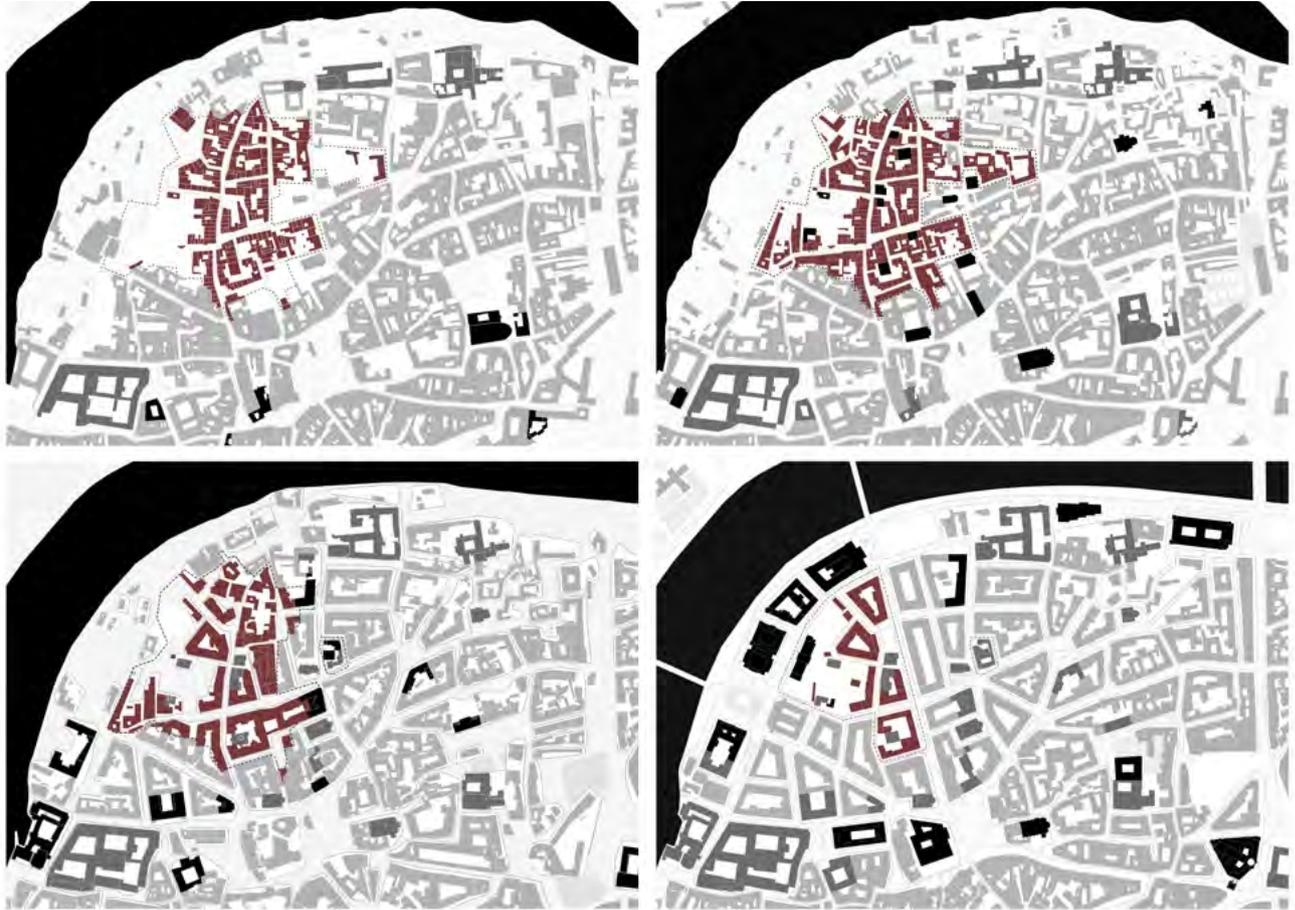
**3.3 Old Town Development Map of Prague Neighborhood Scale (Before17th Cen-
trury; 18th Centrury; 19th Centrury; 20th Centrury)**

and Vezeeská streets, which form an axis from east to west and lie in the trail of the Trstenice Trail, which was an important road in the early Middle Ages. In the north-south direction, Dušní Street was preserved not only as a compositional axis but probably due to the preservation of the sacral buildings that lie on it.

It was planned to preserve the Janské Square, which would be the building of the Czech University and the municipal school, which was already standing there before the renovation and was original to be preserved. The decontamination in this area went smoothly and without major changes from its intention. But it stopped in front of Dvorak's embankment. Only the Faculty of Law at the planned German University was built from the planned lane of important public buildings along the Vltava River embankment.

Further development of the rebuilding of the strip along the embankment was no longer carried out according to the decontamination plan and the marked blocks and buildings were never implemented except for the before mentioned law school.23
The renovation of the solved part of Josefov practically ceased in 1931 by the completion of the Faculty of Law, designed by architect Jan Kotera. Building development then stopped for good and continued in the 1960s.

The whole area was given a new character, only a few sacral buildings and a school were preserved from the original development: Elementary school, Church of Sts. Simon and Juda, U Milosrdných Hospital, Spanish Synagogue, Church of Sts. Spirit, Church of Sts. Salvator and house no. 930/7.

23 VOLAVKOVÁ, Hana. Zmizelá Praha 3., Židov- ském-esto Pražské. Paseka, 2002

24 BOROVICKA, Blahomír. HRUZA, Jirí. Praha: 1000 let stavby mesta. Panorama, 1983.
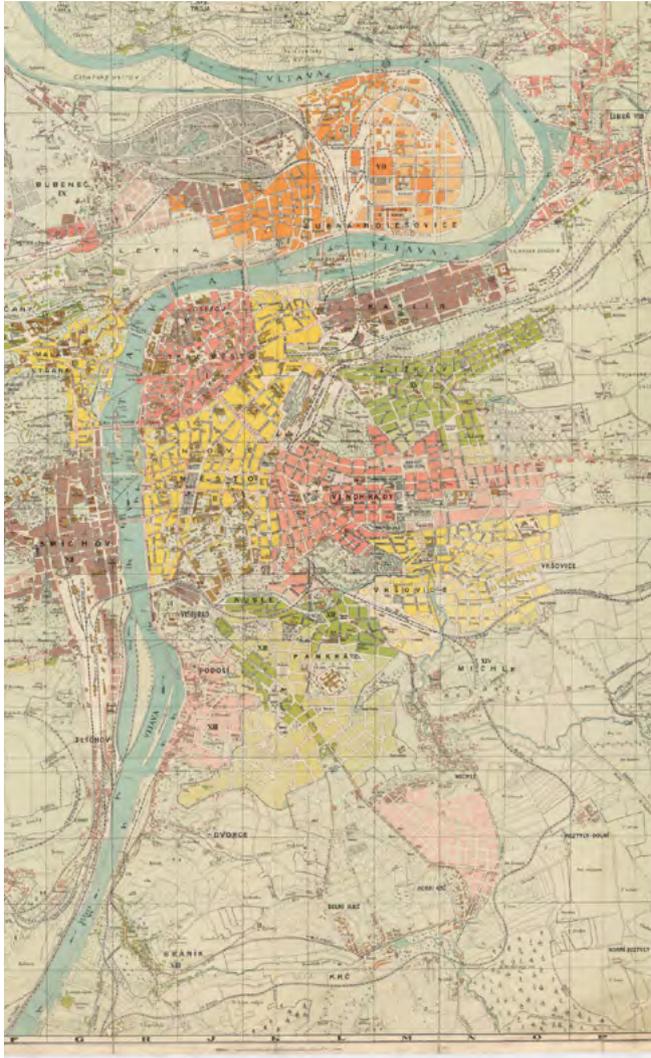
3.4 Map showing the different quarters of the city and the complex stratification of the road grid

3.5 Position of the plot in the urban context

3.1 Relationship between the plot and the city

When analyzing the project site on which the design should be developed it was critical to find what topological relationship it had to the city.

When defining a design concept in the heart of the old town the main focus was to generate guiding rules coming from the morphology of the city itself. However, the complex evolutionary stratification of the city grid, presenting strong variations in the topological patterns from the different historical expansions and the presence of so many different focal points would have led to a complexity that defied the purpose of an intervention that would respect the surrounding old town.

In is well recognized how the Jewish quarter of Josefov, where is located the project area, is the result of transformations mainly due to the demolitions of the old settlement between 1893 and 1913. However, Josefov district still represents a well-defined urban fact, recognizable within the fabric of the historic city. As seen in the previous chapters, over the centuries, it has influenced the shape of the city, becoming one of the most important and characteristic elements through its structure and spaces, its geography and its architecture.23

Josefov district can be identified as an area surrounded by different physical elements in which every part differs from the others.

This concept of "insularity" and diversity of the area strongly affected our consideration and proposal. Different characteristics affected strategic choices that allow identifying elements suitable to emphasize this identity.

Emphasizing the strength of the area meant considering within its heterogeneous important key elements: on one hand, architectural character, that belongs to the historic urban fabric of the neighborhood and most of all to St. Agnes Church; on the other hand, the geographical presence with the of Moldava River and the morphological relationship with this waterfront.

For this series of reasons, the urban matrix was deemed too complex to be introduced into the project.

The convent of St. Agnes of Bohemia was built on the outskirts of the old town as an isolated structure in the XI century and as such it never finds a proper topological alignment with the rest of the city. The convent is considered as an integral part of the area and considering the historical importance of its architecture both historically and geographically within the city it was the most appropriate element

of the city to guide the proportions of a new composition which had a direct relation with it.

3.2 Connecting the waterfront

The "Moldava" River, crossing Prague, represents the static element of the historical events that now build an apparently unified urban structure and divides the first two fortified citadels that give rise to the urban history of the capital.

A series of notable public buildings are present along the riverbanks.

Building activity on Dvorákovo Nábreží happened after world war I and did not follow the original demolition plan. The U Milosrdných hospital complex was not rebuilt, but it was extended by another wing, which was built in 1923-27 according to the design of the architects Vilém Kvasnic ka and J. Mayer.

The Rudolfinum is designed in the neo-renaissance style and is situated on Jan Palach Square on the bank of the river Vltava. Since its opening in 1885 it has been associated with music and art. Currently the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and Galerie Rudolfinum are based in the building. Its largest music auditorium, Dvorák Hall, is one of the main venues of the Prague Spring International Music Festival and is noted for its excellent acoustics.

The houses on Jánské Námestí were demolished, including the municipal school, which was to remain under the original demolition plan. The building of the Association of Engineers and Architects (SIA), designed by František Krásný, closed the eastern side of Jánský Square in 1928. The competition for two university buildings in the bridgehead of Cech Bridge was won by Jan Kotera in 1907.

However, after the establishment of Czechoslovakia, the building of the German university was lost in importance, and so only the Western building, today the Faculty of Law, was realized. In contrast to the competition design, the entrance to the building was situated to the east and gave rise to an open space in front of the university at Cechuv Bridge. The building site on the unrealized university was left. With the advent of St. Agnes. However, all efforts to complete the Janské Square fell silent in the Second World War, and only in the 1960s did they continue to develop quite surprisingly.

In 1945 marked with the harsh fighting in the Old Town Square and in Parížská Street off the German army with the Czech resistance. Nazi troops were headquartered at the Faculty of Law. When the German troops cleared their positions and withdrew from Prague, the rebels fired incendiary grenades. This bombardment led to the fires of apartment buildings by Janská Street. Spent houses have never been repaired and finally, the whole block and several houses of the neighboring block are being cut down due to the construction of the InterContinental Hotel. Instead of half a century reserved for the university building, the InterContinental Hotel is dedicated. The hotel roughly enters the area, breaking not only the street structure but also
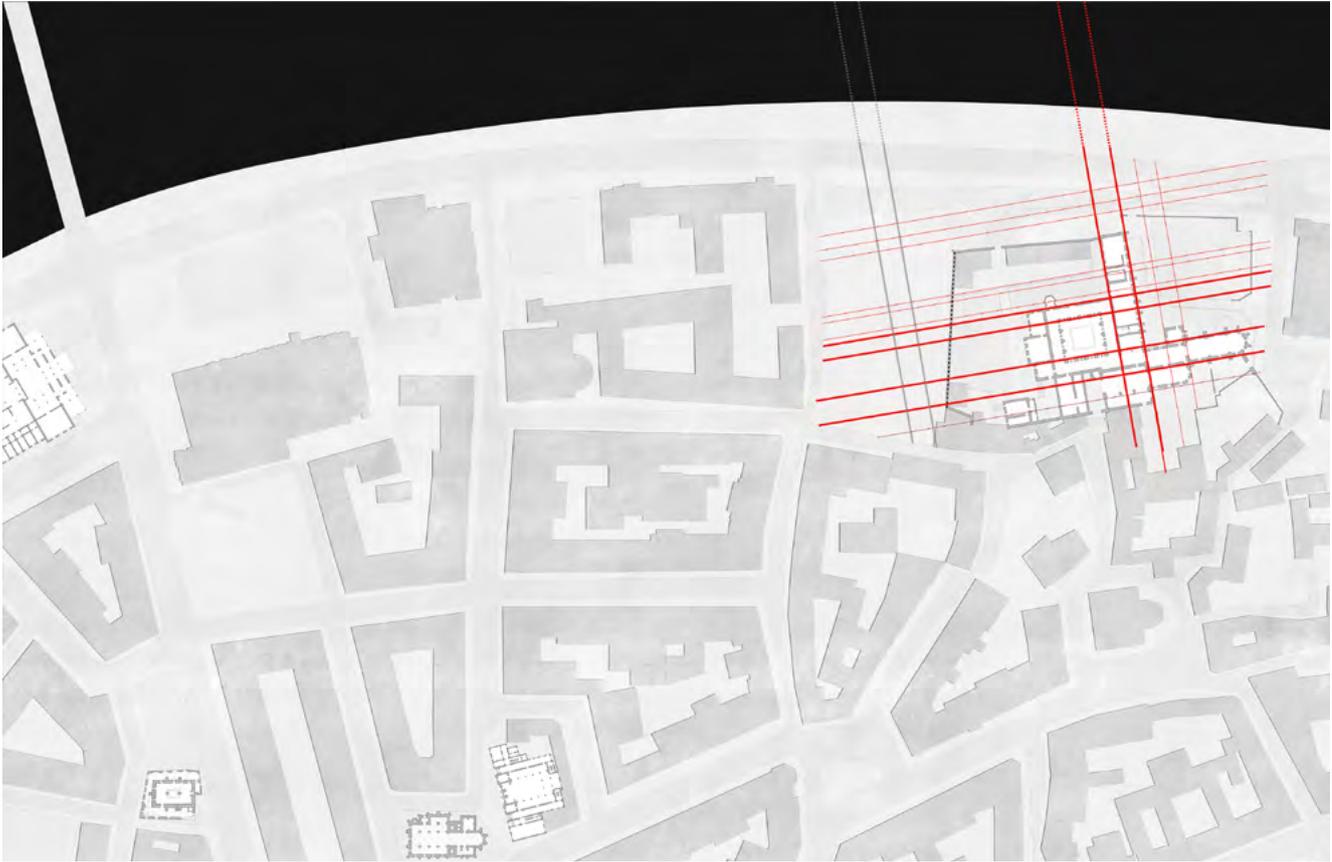
3.6 St. Agnes main axis projection

3.7 Waterfront accessibility and permeability within the urban fabric

breaking the blocks of houses. The hotel retreats from the original street line by the river, because it is also overcome by the Law Faculty, which holds the street trail of Dvorák Square. However, the hotel is usurped by the drowned space, the open space in front of the building and the construction of the swimming pool, which lies below the Dvorák Embankment. In the southern façade, an empty space that resembles a square arises in place of a slashed block, but it does not work that way.

It is interesting that the Intercontinental Hotel was the first Western investment after the year 1948 in former Czecho-slovakia. The designers of the InterContinental Hotel are Karel Filsak, Karel Bubenícek, Jatoslav Švec and Václav Hacman.

In the 1970s, the Hotel Budovatel, nowadays the President Hotel, was founded on Dvorák Square. The building was connected to the already existing SIA building by František Krásný. Compared to the original building, which with its entrance turned to Jánský Square, the hotel entrance and views from it are oriented only on the river. To the original Janské Square, today the Curie Square, the hotel turns sideways. Hotel President literally devoured the SIA building. The authors of the hotel's proposal were Karel Filsak and Václav Hacman. The hotel was completed in 1978 and closed the development.

A very noticeable difference is found in the approach to water on the two different banks especially in the area of the city center. For reasons related to flooding and water flux management the part of the city on the north-west side of the river has a much softer and direct access to the river, while the south-east part, where the project and St. Agnes are located, have a much more stiff river bank which provides a river level walkway accessible only from certain points but is otherwise detached from the city by a wall.

This happed through the natural evolution of the city and its protection against floods: on this river bank the level of the terrain was artificially raised to prevent flooding, thus separating the built part from water. For this reason, while effectively being placed on the city waterfront, St Agnes is no longer related to water. With our intervention the goal was to generate a new connection which has not only the potential to reinstate a pre-existing status to the area but also to generate a walking connection to all the aforementioned buildings close to the waterfront with possible further iterations of the project.

One possibility is, for example, a direct walking connection between our intervention and the Jewish cemetery present close by, a landmark of Josefov district and Prague itself and a place of great cultural resonance.

3.8 Connection hypothesis between project site and Jewish cemetery

3.9 Faculty of Law of the Charles University

3.10 Hotel InterContinental Praha

3.11 President Hotel Prague

3.12 Hospital Na Františku Prague

3.13 Convent of St. Agnes
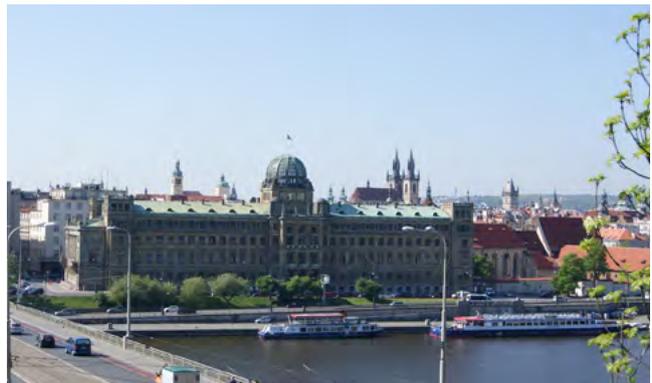
3.14 Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic

3.3 A new centrality for Josefov

Josefov district represents a fundamental social fact for the city of Prague as it is organized around a very strong and historically rooted cultural identity.

The aim of the research was to preserve and recognize that cultural identity, using a strategic vision that starts from the reconstruction of pieces of this cultural testimony.

Since St. Agnes church and the River are considered as key elements to approach the area, this latter becomes a significant centrality of Prague culture.

Space is perceived as a sensitive experience, able to stimulate the meaning and the essence of various architectural experiences and atmospheres. And for this very reason it was important that our intervention could generate ample public space that could have impact at the urban scale and not be limited to the architectural scale.

In the project proposal the underground level is used in order to give back a space to the city on the surface. By intersecting architectural and landscape elements it was possible to obtain a subtle intervention that is completely accessible to the public. Inspirational elements by Carlo Scarpa, Alvaro Siza and Mansilla Tuñon Arquitectos amongst others helped defining the perimeter of the project

and its connections.

Public space is strictly related also to the base concept of the project which is that of a cultural and exhibition hub and museum, which can use these elements to foster collectivity.

Thinking about a polarizing public space in a specific area and with specific elements meant dealing with a significant responsibility. Part of this process is made of the analysis of worldwide public architectures related to pre-existence and water that not only influence spaces and contexts within the city but at the same time are themselves influenced by historical, cultural, social and, not least, architectural experiences that have characterized the place in which it is found

3.4 Prague's tourist analysis.

The proposed design strategy evolved out of a profound consideration towards the urban morphology of the city of Prague attained from the different set of urban analysis and a result of all the indications extracted from various historical maps.
From the first urban map, focusing on the Prague Urban Spatial Structure and Land Use, it is possible to understand the diversity of the city structure in terms of functional distribution and spatial configuration. The internal spatial structure of Prague has developed in a relatively regular pattern. The city structure extended through radial additions in five zones. These include following areas: (1) the historic city core; (2) the inner city of blocks of apartment houses; (3) the area of residential villa neighborhoods and garden towns; (4) the ring of communist housing estates of prefabricated high rise buildings; and (5) the zone of the rural landscape with small towns and villages. The separation between the distinct zones is precise while the dispersion of the functions is concentrated as one for each zone. This accumulation of one land use for each area is also visible in the historic city core of Prague which performs the role of the city center with focal nodes of commercial and government functions. Commercialization has been driven especially by the development of offices and multipurpose commercial centers and tourist-oriented facilities including hotels, restaurants, and retail.[26]

26 SYKORA, Ludek, Changes in the internal spatial structure of post-communist Prague, 1999.

3.15 Urban Spatial Structure and Landuse

This demarcation became one of the main problems to address in the urban strategy process. The clear distinction between different areas in the urban morphology needed to be redefined with a set of new architectural interventions leading towards a unified architectural identity.

Additionally, besides outlining the functional division, the urban map of Natural Cultural Heritage Zones demonstrates and identifies the main national cultural monuments and natural protective zones of the city. Leading us to understand the distribution of the main national heritage areas of the city and the rather complex, dispersed and disconnected cultural and tourist system.
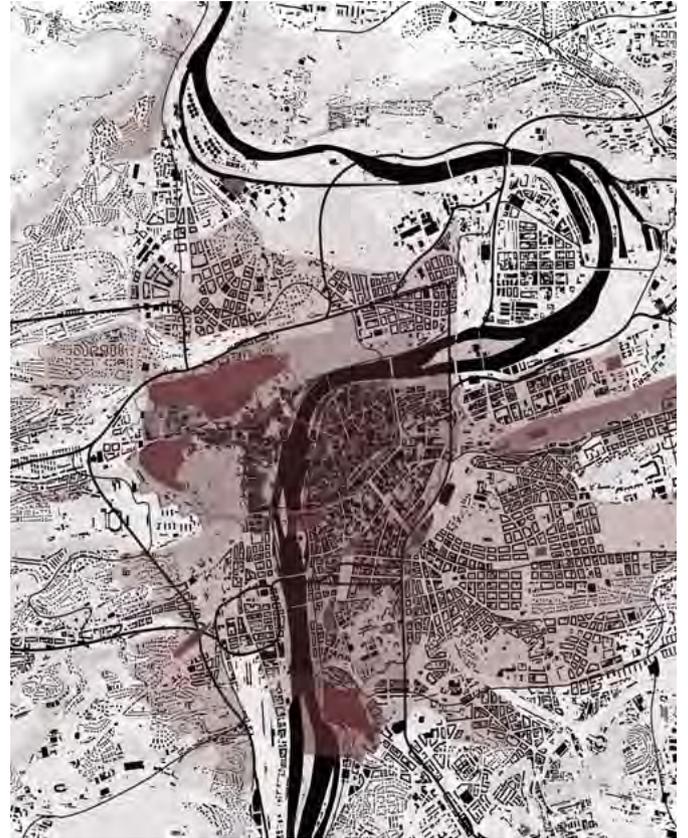
3.16 Natural and Cultural Heritage Zones
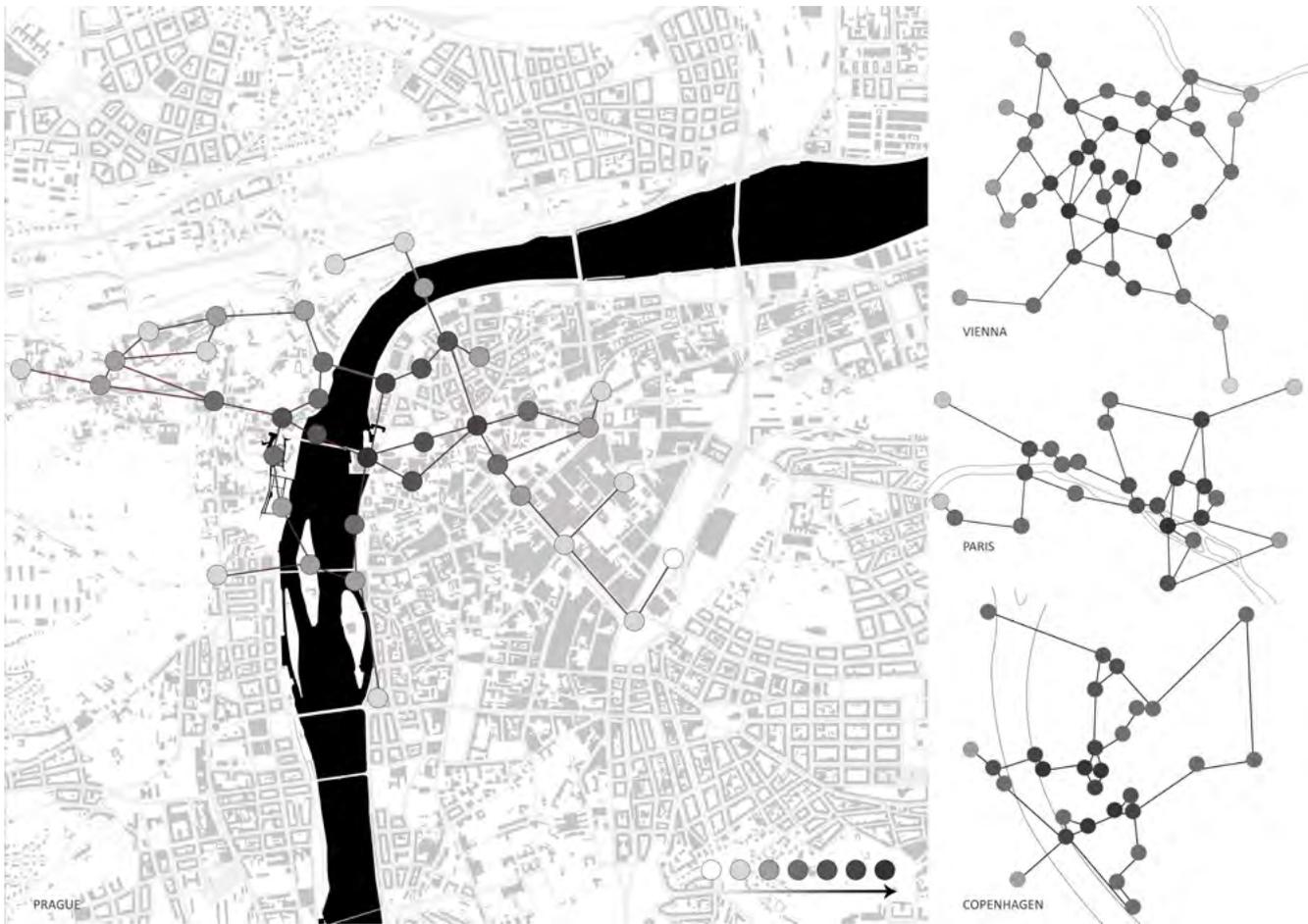
3.17 Pedestrian tourists space system of Prague

Old Town Square

Old New Synagogue

Powder Tower

Charles Bridge

Mustek
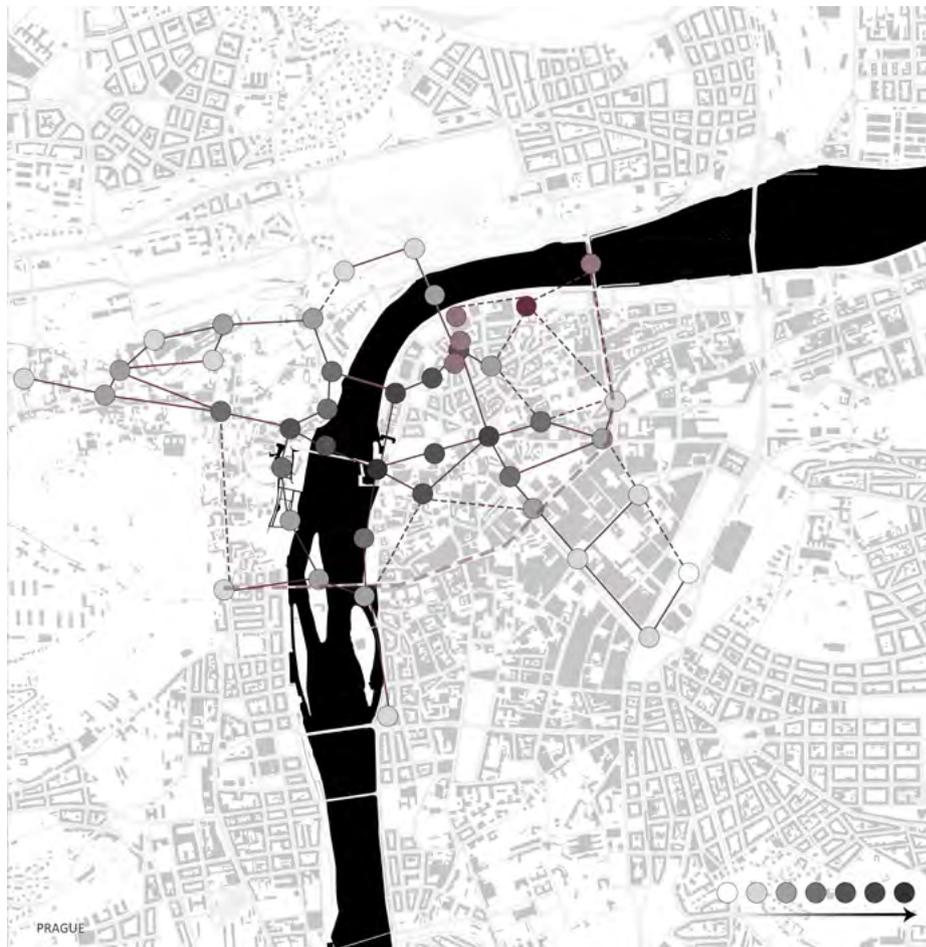
PRAGUE

3.18 New Connection Proposal

As an in-depth analysis of the urban morphology, the following map is focusing on the historical core of the city and its correlation to the existing pedestrian tourist-cultural system of Prague. This urban map and diagram aim to present a better understanding of the predicted spatial pattern of the tourists by comparing it with the other main European capitals as Vienna, Paris, and Copenhagen. In the case of Vienna, an effective system was further improved over the past decades. The balanced tourist system has firstly morphological foundations. The historical center of Vienna is a compact urban form on the right bank of the Danube canal, defined by medieval city walls demolished and replaced by the urban composition of the Ring in the years 1860-80. This ring-road organized all mayor institutions of both civic and monarchical origin, while it created a long-awaited connecting element between the old town and the dense urban areas developing around it. While Prague is smaller in size and in population than its regional rivals, the medieval core consisting of originally four towns exceeds them in size. The city is divided into two by the Vltava river, with only a limited number of bridges. The castle district on the hilltop - Hradčany - and Mala Strana, the Lesser Quartier is on the western side of the river, where the street patterns, the points of access to the castle are much determined by the uneven topography, not allowing complex spatial connections. Staré Město Old Town and Josefov the Jewish Quarter have a plain topography, but also a conserved labyrinthic medieval street pattern, limited by the eastern banks of Vltava and by a semi-ring road, conceived in 1871 replacing the original baroque town walls.

This ring is not comparable to the one in Vienna since it is not an important node and a place of interest. Only three nodes in the urban structure are of relevance for the tourist and cultural system: The National Theatre, the beginning of Wenceslas square, the composition of the Powder Tower and the Municipal House. [27]

These nodes portray the cultural system that is connecting and composing the tourist network not by the circular road, but by the three main axes of the expected tourist movement inside the historical city structure.

Taking into consideration all those outcomes coming from the analysis of the existing pattern, the following map denotes the proposed new urban strategy along with the architectural proposals. The proposed urban strategy aims to reconnect the main attractions which are described as dots (cultural and architectural nodes) in the concept and redefining circular and continuous promenades for the tourists. The new cultural system leads to the dispersion of the promenade and a decreased focus and crowdedness in a specific part of the city, which is caused by the one-way linear and disconnected movement pattern. While creating the matrix of connections between the significant historic and new cultural facilities the configuration of the old town wall and the remains from this axis are design vise integrated. For the purpose of marking the intersection between the old city wall and entrance to the riverbank, a new landmark is created to lead the movement through the project sites.

27 DUMBROCSKA Veronika, FIALOVA Dana, Tourist Intensity in Capital Cities in Central Europe: Comparative Analysis of Tourism in Prague, Vienna and Budapest, 2014.
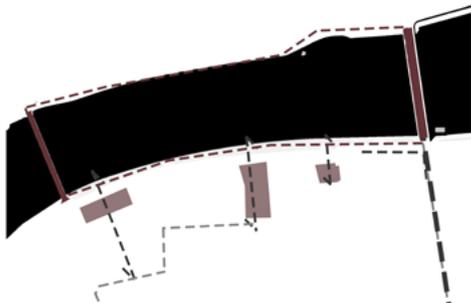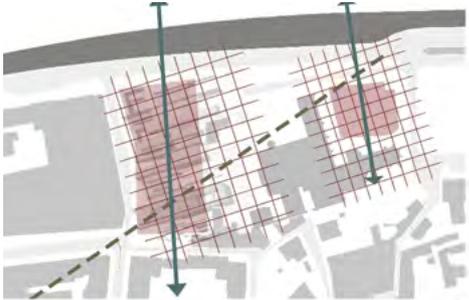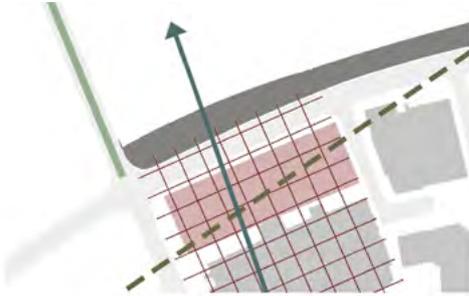
3.19 Directions and Connections

3.5 Urban conceptual approach

The proposed urban conceptual approach firstly outlines the existing routes to project sites and establishes different types of new and extended connections; as the hop-on / hop-off and aquatic tour. The new proposal also aims to provide the interaction between these different architectural experiences by using the proposed empty sites. Additional intervention is the movement of the heavy traffic from Štefanik Bridge to Hlávka's Bridge to reduce the density of the urban infrastructure and creating an additional pedestrian ring along the opposite side of the river. Thus, enabling the connection from the core of the city to the north riverbank by passing from the project sites.

For each lot main architectural and historical precedents as well as layers and grids are introduced. The compositional grid based on the urban pattern and its orientation, the direction of the site towards the river, and lastly the main significant monuments as Saint Agnes and Old New Synagogue. This led to a unified architectural language and a diversity of the structural identity in the correlation between different projects. Simultaneously, with the design intention of maintaining the uniqueness of each site since all lots have its own specific architectural and urban qualities.

3.20 Montage and City Grids

3.21 Urban Conceptual Approach Diagram
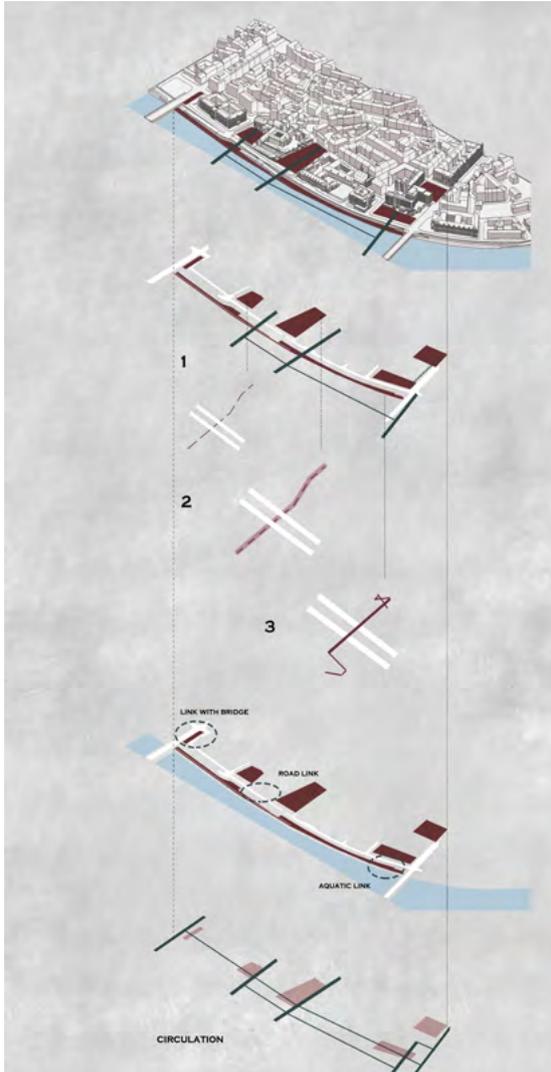
The exploded diagram portrays the location of the project areas and the different links of the sites with the existing bridge, infrastructure, and aquatic tour.

04 ARCHITECTURAL AND SPATIAL CONCEPTUAL COMPOSITION

04 Architectural and spatial conceptual composition

4.1 Montage for School
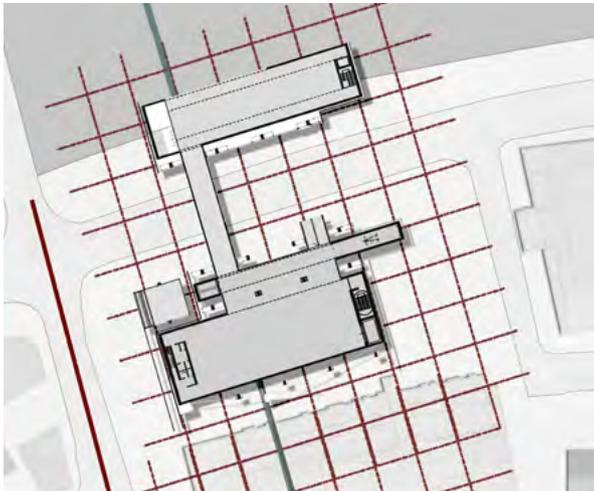
4.2 Montage for Hotel Side

4.1 Architectural Design Composition

The first stage of the spatial conceptualization of the design started with creating different montages, experimenting with various scales, and architectural forms to find the adequate design strategy for our building plan.

The initial design phase considered a series of montages with different projects form Alvaro Siza and RCR architects. Implementing a specific architectural precedent that was the most appropriate for the individual lots and inherited some conceptual features which could address the problems and advantages of the project site. The plan of Soulages Museum by RCR Architects [28] Rodez, France (fig 4.3) for the museum project in conjunction with the plan of Wall House designed by Nicolas Dorval-Bory and Raphaël Bétillon. [29]

The architectural precedents were adapted to follow the alignments or the urban fabric surrounding the lot, as well as enhance the alignment and direction of the existing architectural structure of the Saint Agnes Convent. The spatial configuration in the montage was transformed as to create a spatial composition that is required for each building program.

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28 RCR Arcquitects, Soulages Museum, Rodez France, 2014.2014.

29 Nicolas Dorval-Bory, Raphaël Bétillon, Wall House, Girac, France 20132014.

4.3 Museum Proposed Montage

The museum project montage is divided into a layout of small rectangular spaces distributed in the same direction and connected with two long rectangular shapes in the opposite direction. This plan addressed the substantial problems since the underlying intention of the architectural concept was to create different exhibition spaces, with distinct identities, all along one direction leading to the river. Additionally, the second direction as a long element that represents the Datum of the project, the main circulation, connection all those different spaces, and directing the flow of movement towards the river on different floor levels.

4.2 Architectural design approach.

The design of the museum was based on one main rule that was applied in all the buildings following the urban morphology of the surrounding areas.
The architectural plan is the result of overlapping three different layers:
Firstly, the grid following the lines of Saint Agnes convent, which is a perpendicular regular grid, and from this grid, we set the most important reference lines to follow from the plan of the convent.

Secondly the river direction. This main axis which represented our Datum was the main circulation of the project on all levels. Our aim was to connect the two sides of the street to link the city to the river.

Thirdly, the direction of the old Jewish cemetery of Prague. We tried to redirect the highest point of the project and to open the spatial and visual scenery towards this main focal points in the city of Prague.

As a result of overlapping those three distinct layers, the plan started to form a clear spatial division and direction. the result as shown in fig. 4.5 follows the rules on the grids we were following.

The second design criterion was the minimum impact of the buildings on the skyline on the city and the urban identity from the riverside. Thus, the division on the project to three levels in each plan, following the existing topography on the project area. This solution helped us in developing more spaces in the underground and take advantage of the small footprint of the project sites.

The proposed architectural solution was more elaborated and defined while working on the conceptual sections of the project. Our design for the circulation was to split the levels of each plan to 3 different ones with a difference of 1.5m in each. we maintained this language in the underground floor as well with a circulation moving upwards from -7 to -4 in order to reach the riverside level at the end of it. The complexity of the cultural promenade was further emphasized in the individual architectural interventions.

4.4 Planar and Volumetric Composition

2. DIRECTION OF THE RIVER   3. DIRECTION OF OLD JEWISH CEMETERY   COMBINATION OF 3 GRIDS
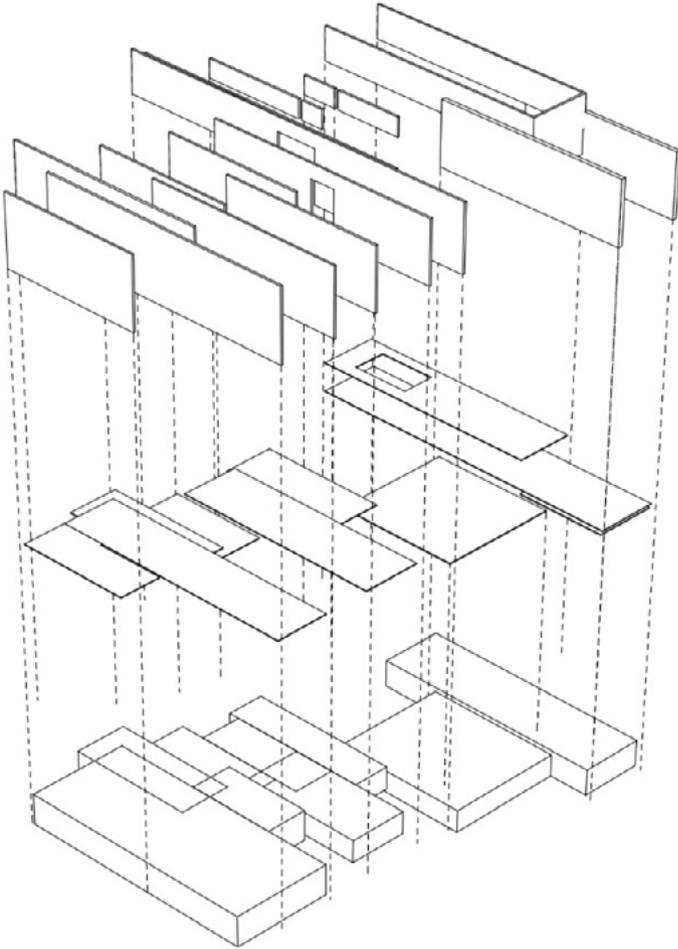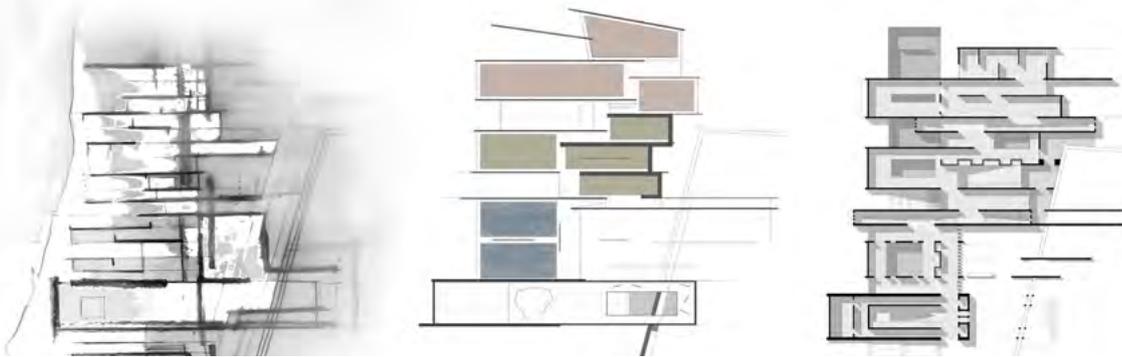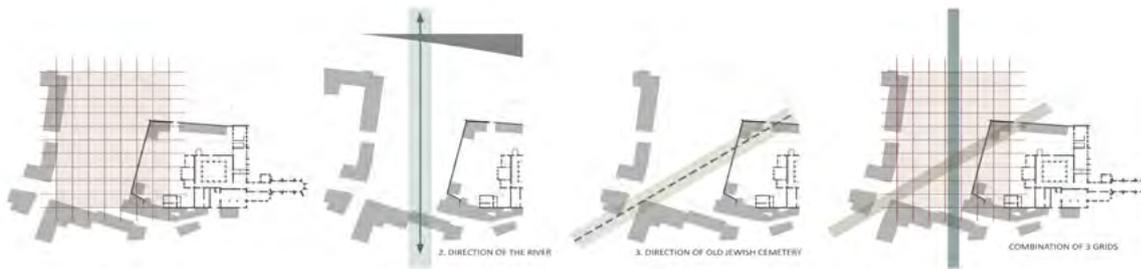
4.5 Architectural Plan Conceptual Diagrams

4.6 Architectural Sections Conceptual Diagrams
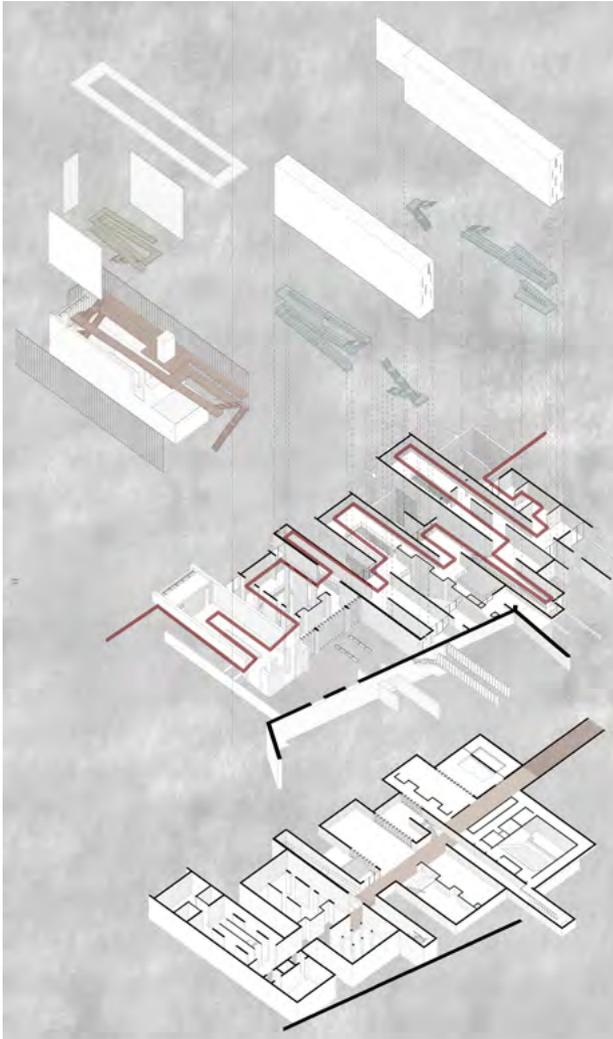
4.7 Diagram of Exploded Parts of the Project

The exploded view of the project summarizes the main parts of it as well as the different experiences available inside of it.

The museum presents three different experiences ranging from open, semi-open to public promenades. The aim behind presents those different types of circulation was first to give the choice to the visitors to determine different itineraries and architectural experiences. Secondly, to let the project work as a connector between the city and river and allow the permeability of the flow of citizens and visitors.
:
The main volume has the temporary exposition areas, it is a semi-open volume that is connected and integrated with the inside of the convent side in both volume and circulation.

The underground part presents a closed vertical and horizontal circulation experience and connects with the underground amphitheater as well as the underground link to the river.

The third part demonstrates the ground floor different exhibition areas with a labyrinth closed circulation.

The flexibility and richness of the architectural itinerary which enables different scenarios of the user's path exist due to the two vertical circulation volumes with stairs and ramps that are connecting the project at different points.

As for the final treatment of the vertical planes, the materials chosen for the new extension of Saint Agnes, we were inspired by the local surrounded buildings.

4.8 First Physical Model Picture

4.3 Architectural Design Concept

The underlying design concept of the first Museum building is applied as well is the case of the Art school and the extension of the hotel side project.

The same composition of diverse scales of elementary rectangular architectural forms presenting the different parts of the project is connected through a perpendicular, long, and narrow element (Datum). It establishes a connection in the opposite direction and links the project to the river underneath the street level.

The hotel side project is a connection between a hub, hosting public and semipublic activities, linking three different levels the main street and the side streets to both the hotel and the river.

The school project is acting as well as a connector between the convent, the river, the main infrastructure, and the side street. The underground public square inside the project replicates the same proportions of the Saint Agnes courtyard and follows the static rhythm of its columns.

As for its function, the school works as a complementary part of the museum, holding different small functions as an art laboratory, a small stage, and a library that can be used by both visitors, tourists, and locals.
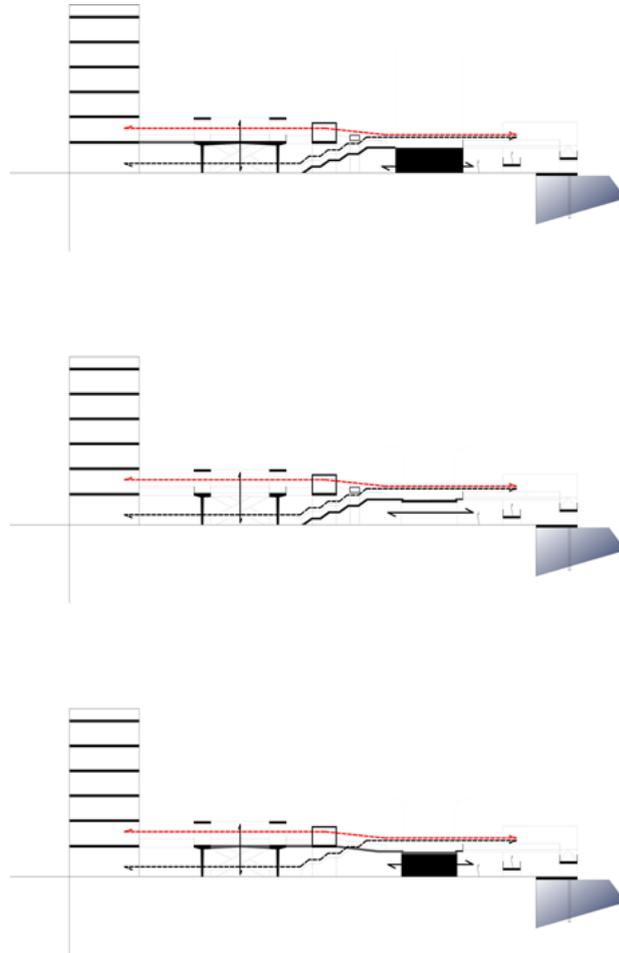
4.9 Hotel Side Schematic Sections
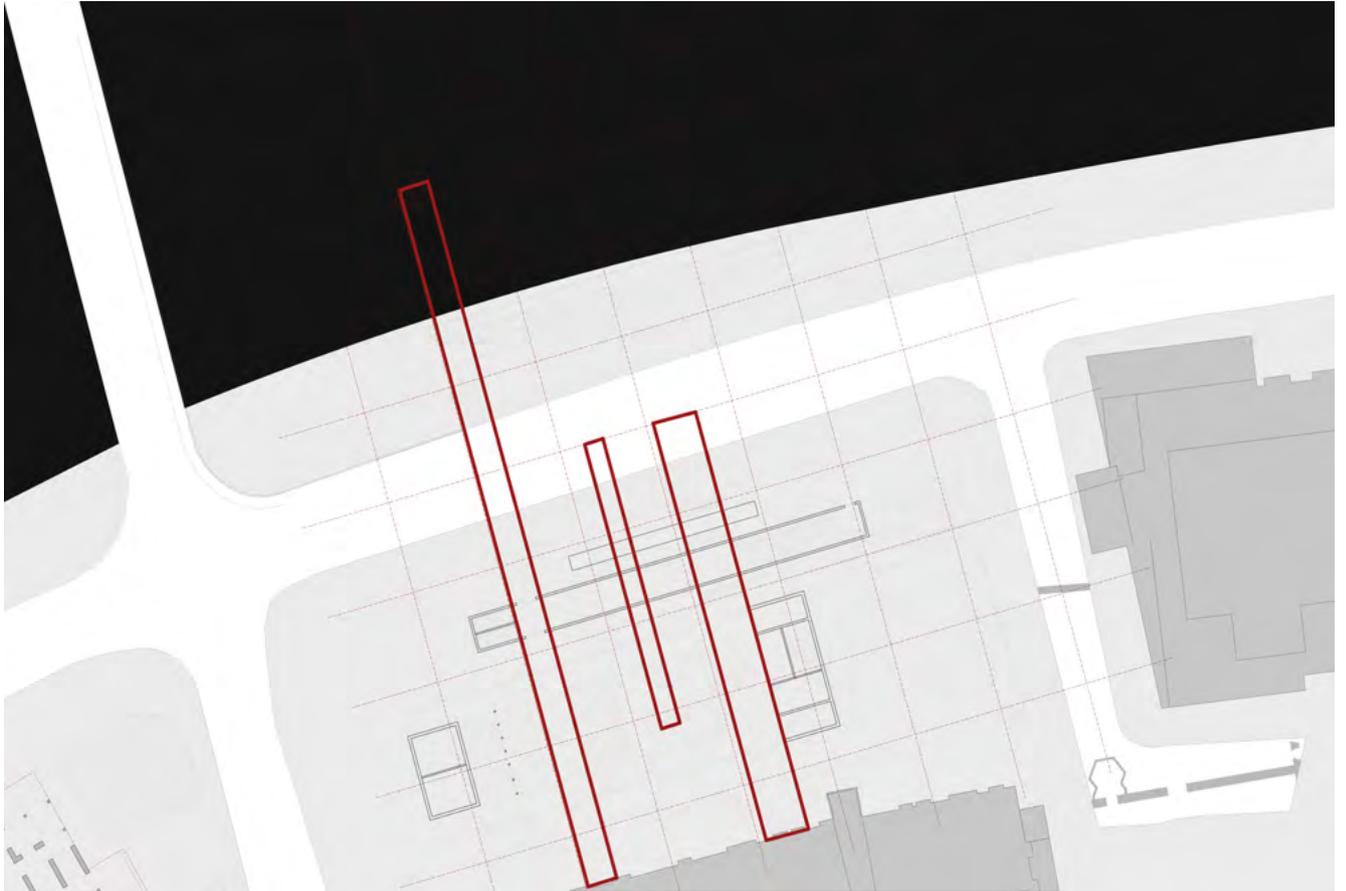
4.10 Plan Main Architectural Elements (Hotel Side)
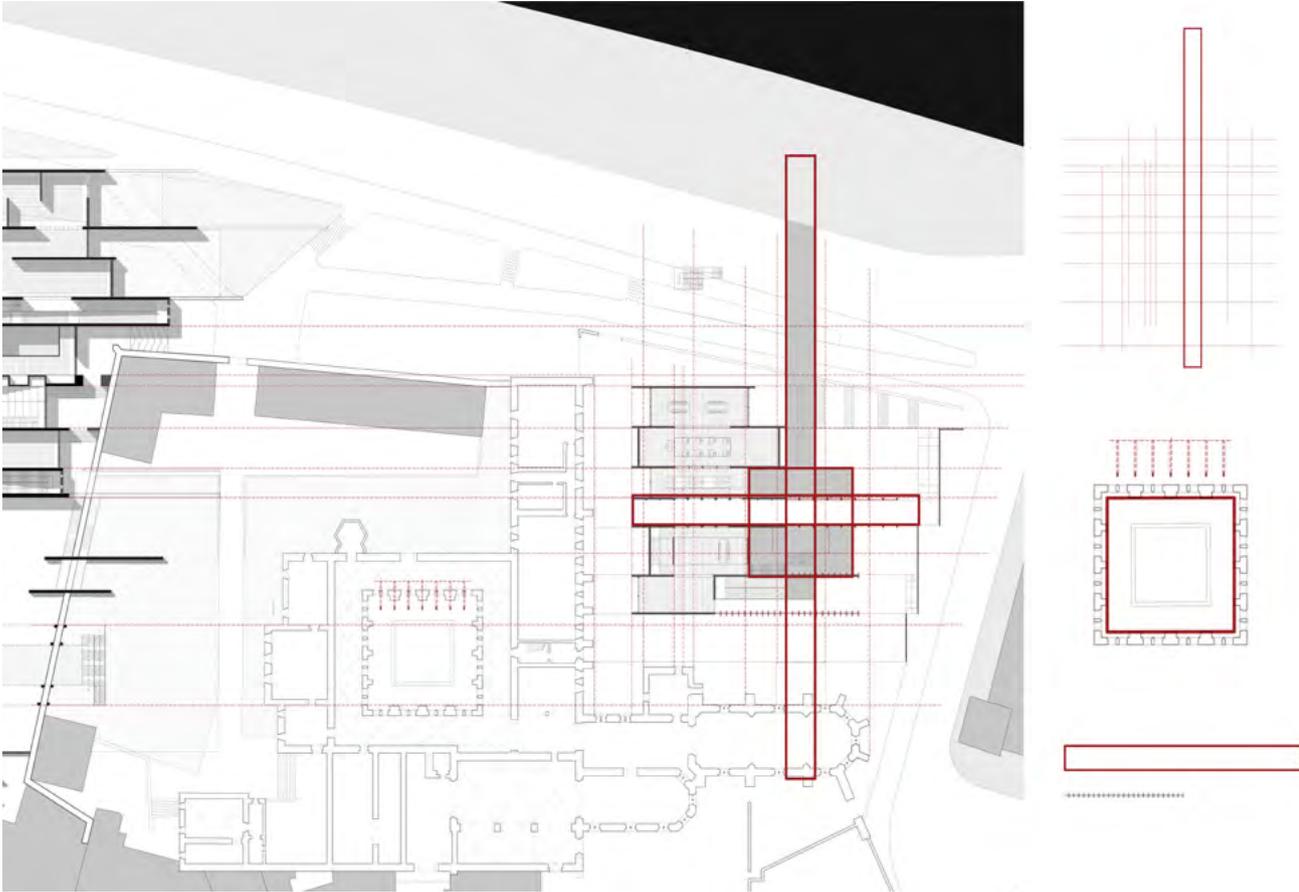
4.11 Plan Main Architectural Elements (School)

4.12 Final Physical Model Picture
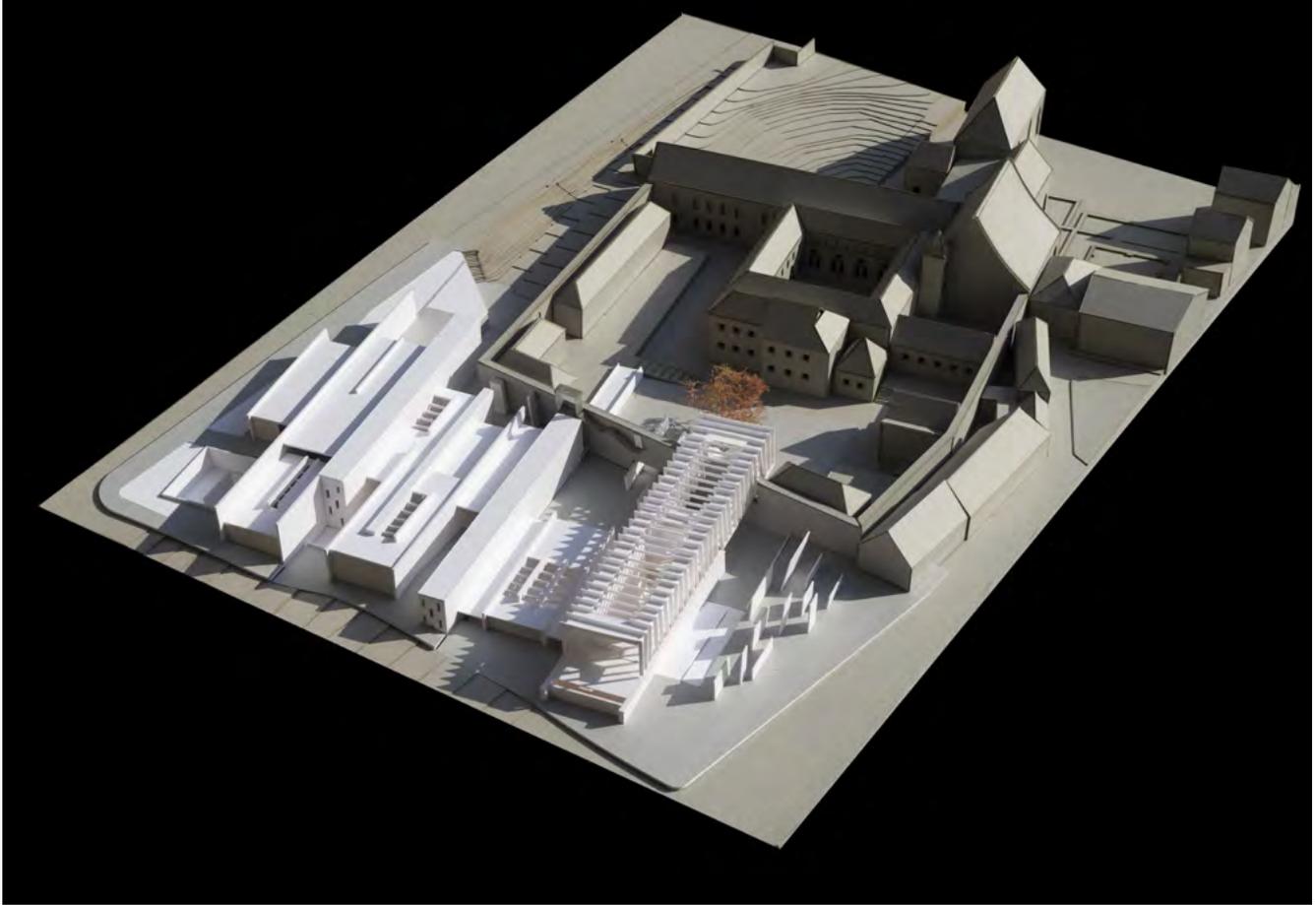
4.13 Final Physical Model Picture
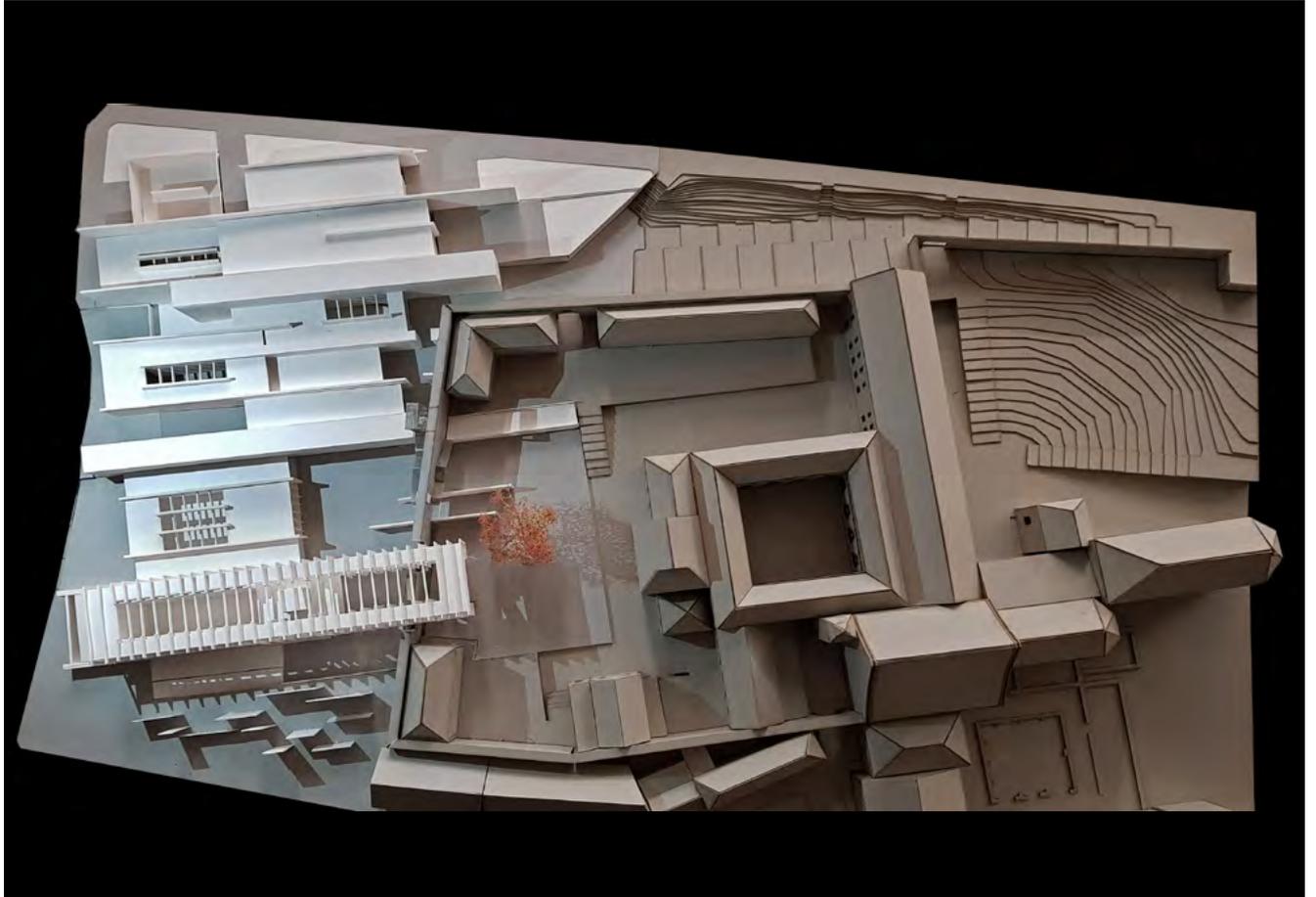
4.14 Final Physical Model Picture

05 FINAL DESIGN PROPOSAL

5.1 Masterplan 1:1000
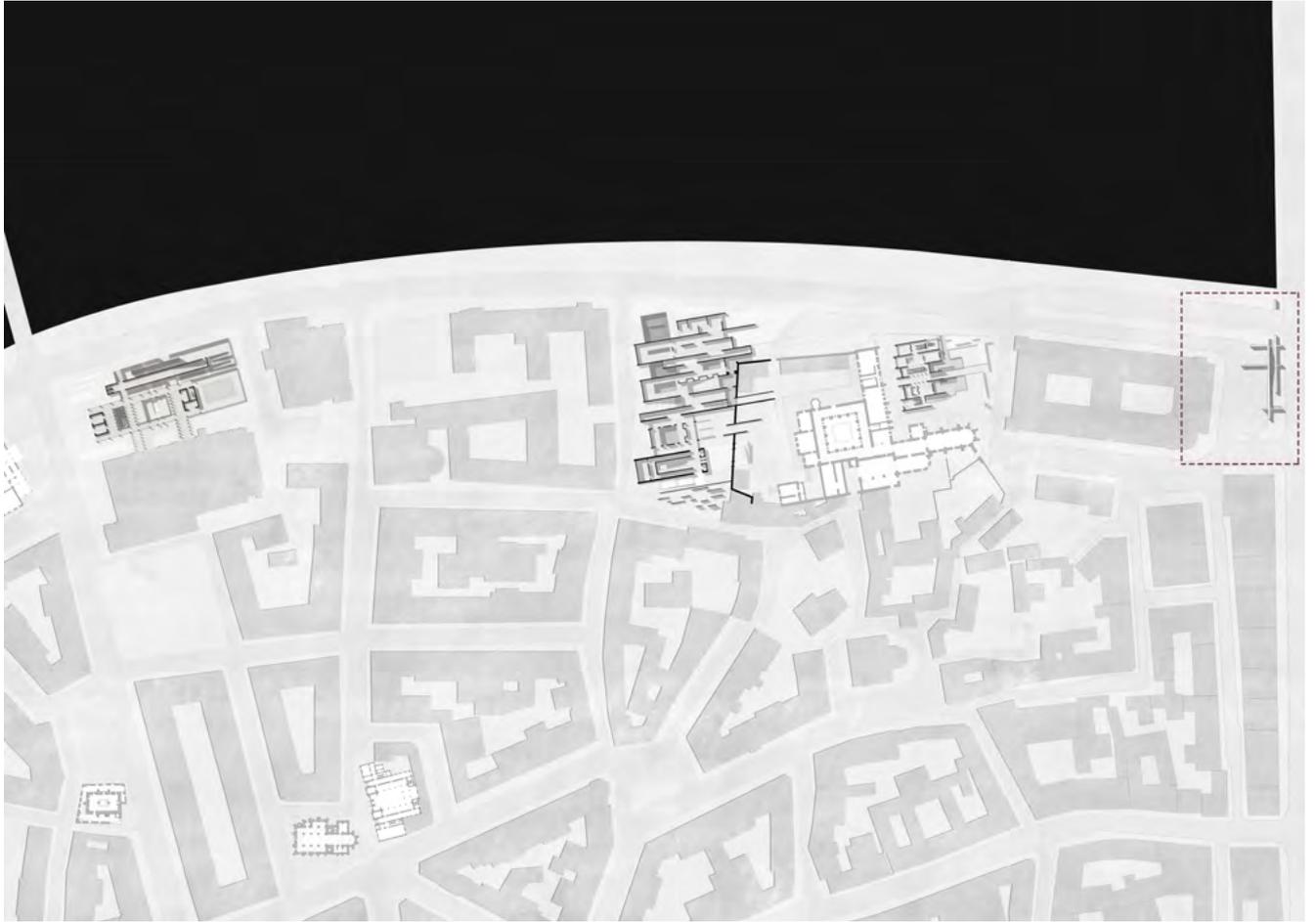
5.2 Ground Floor Plan 1:500

5.3 Memorial Roof Plan
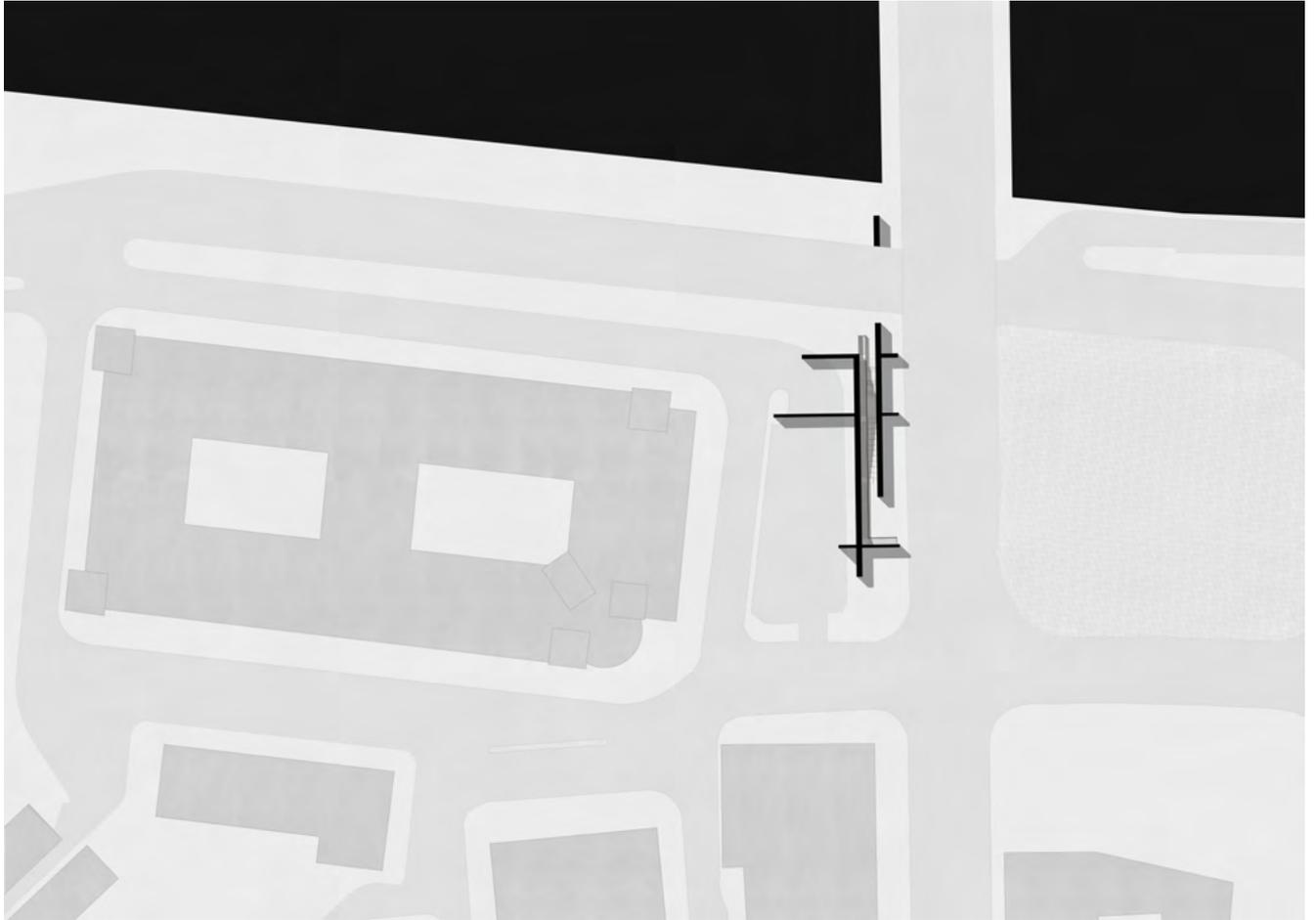
5.4 Memorial Ground Floor Plan
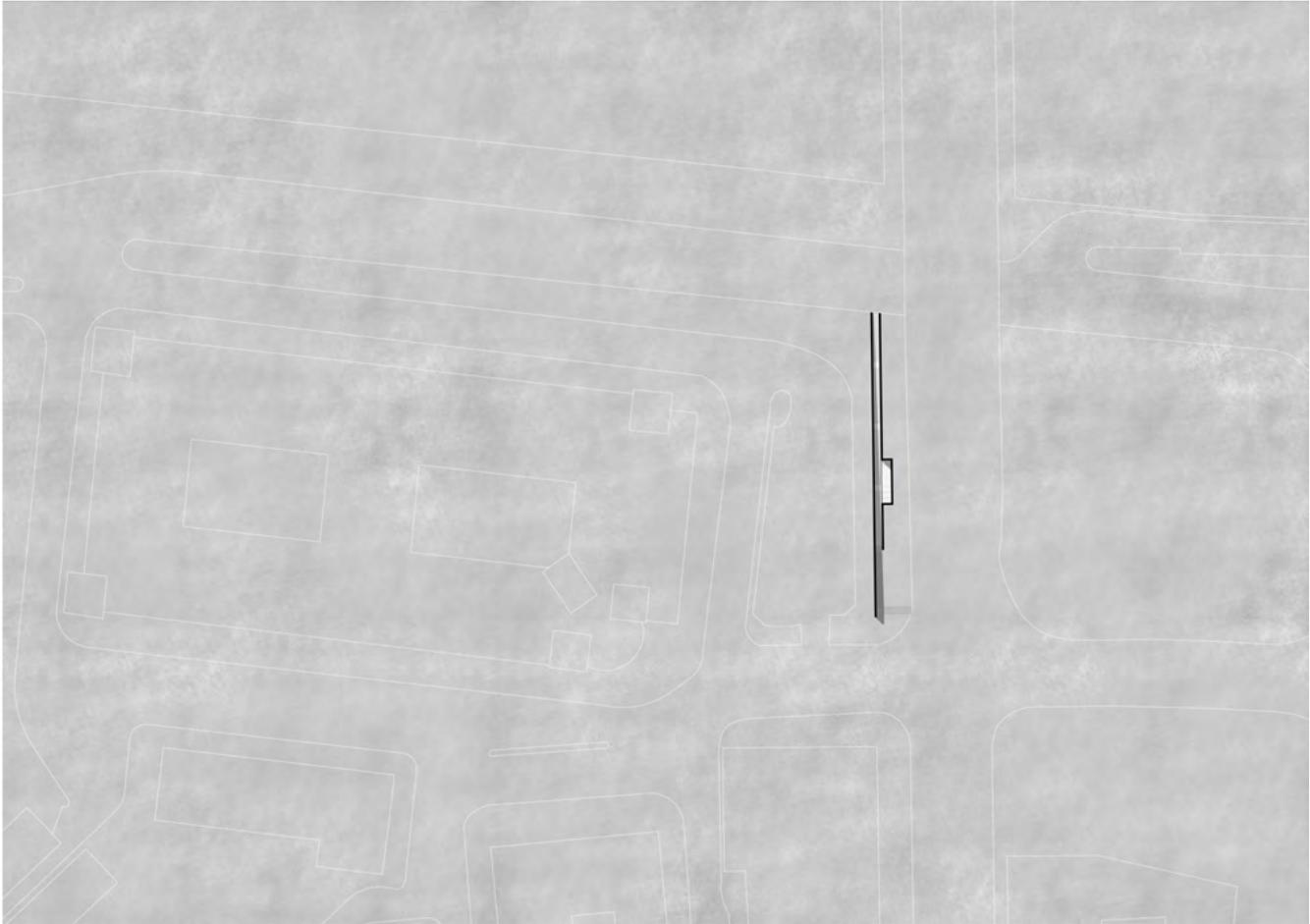
5.5 Memorial Underground Plan
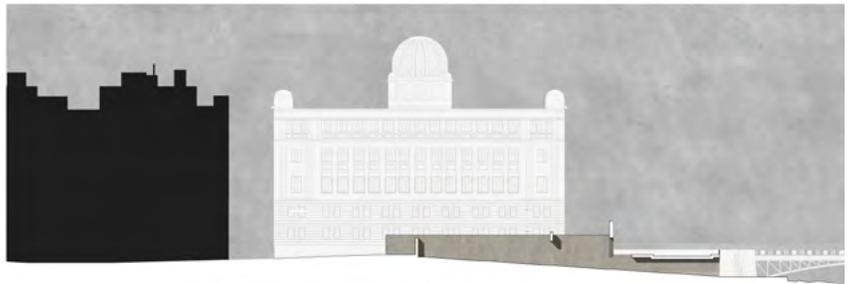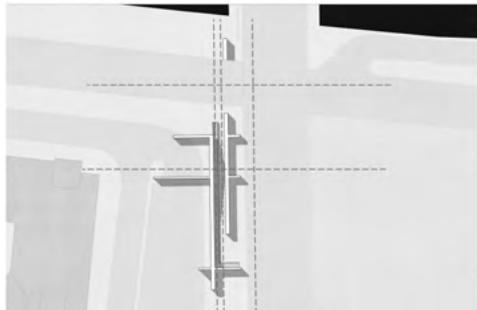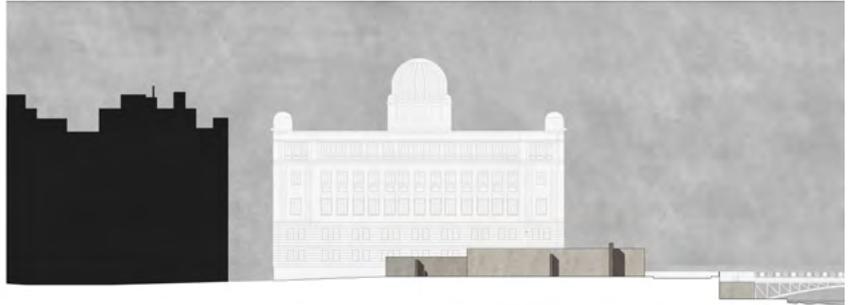
5.6 Memorial Sections and Elevations
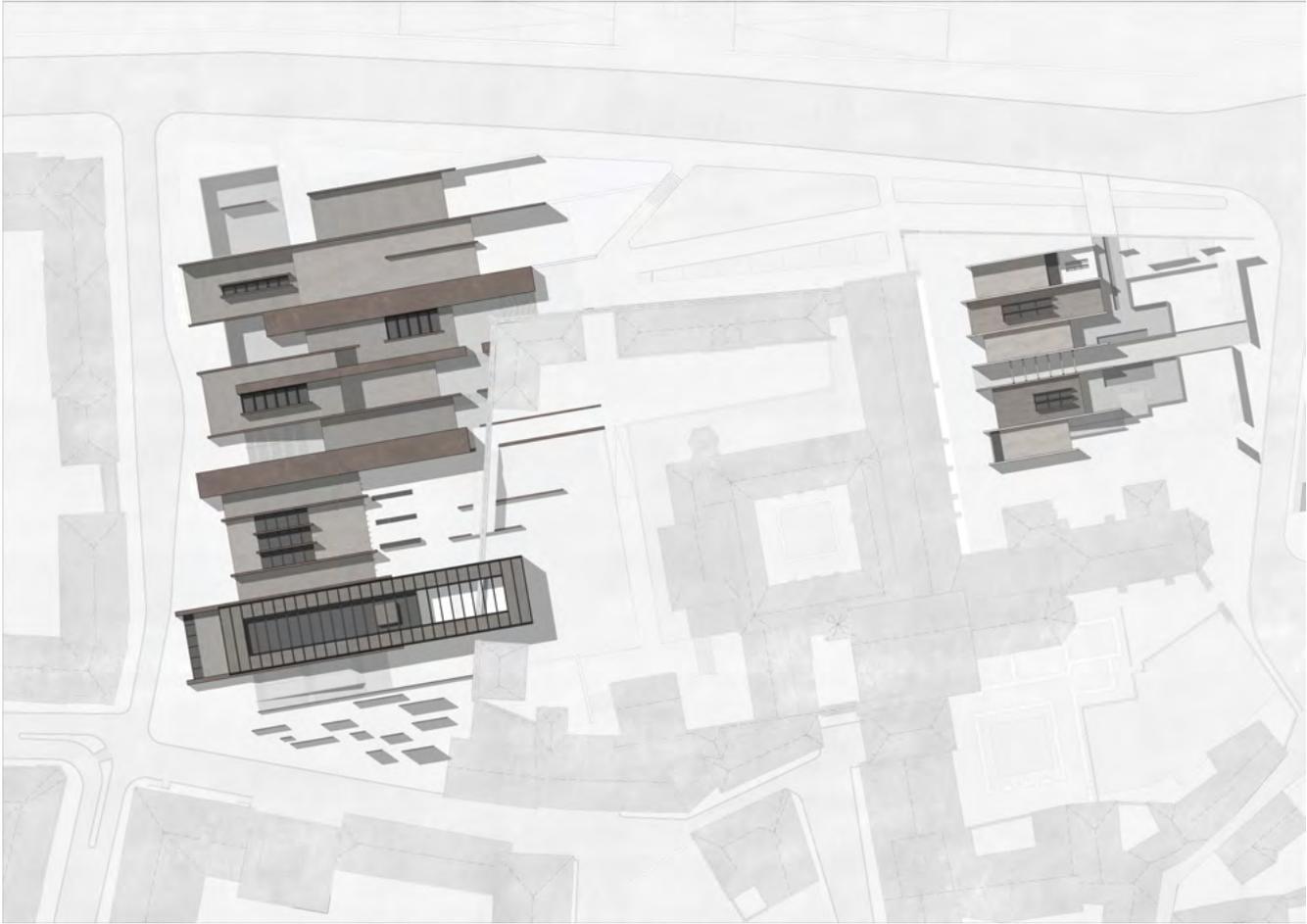
5.7 Museum/School Roof Plan
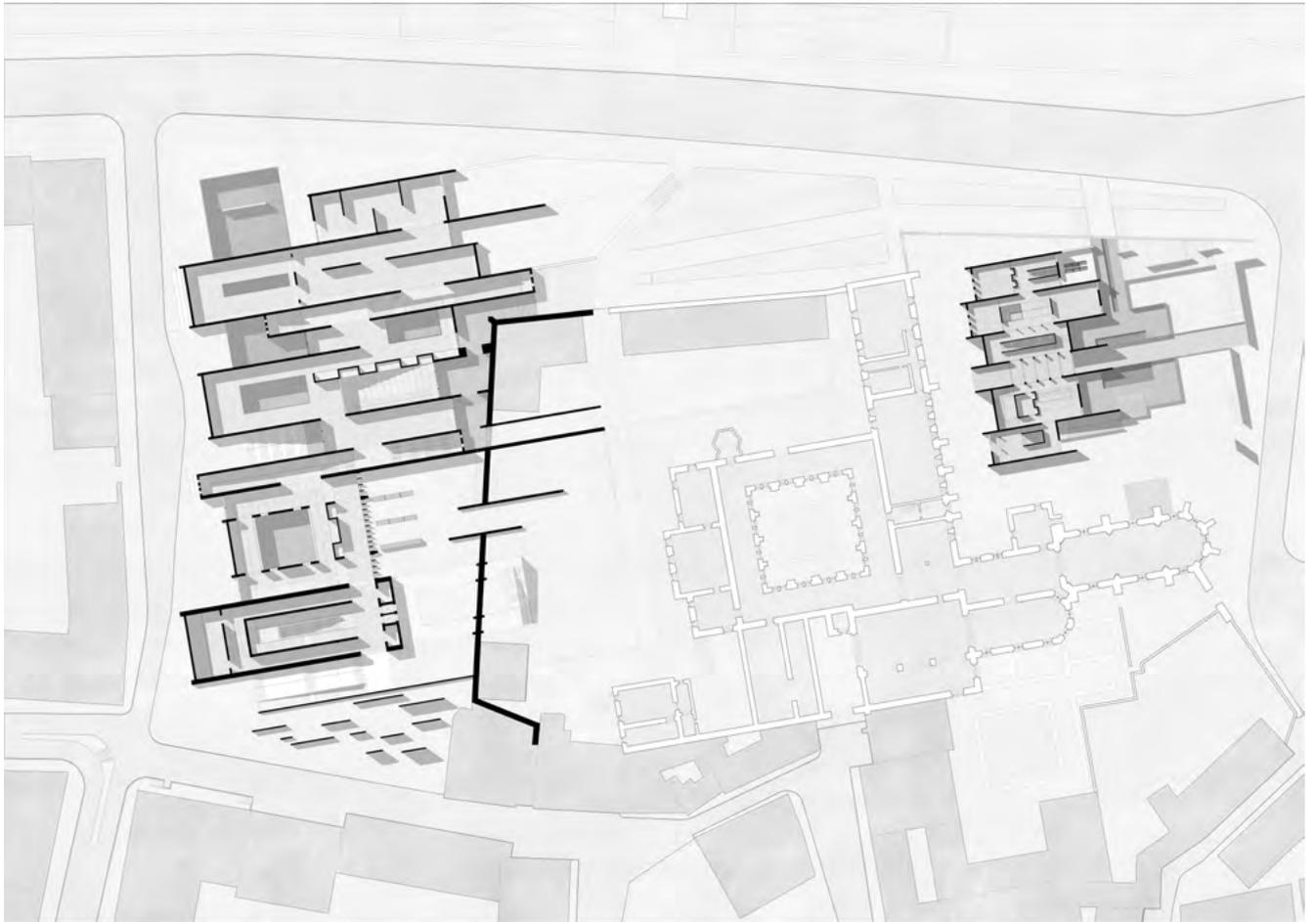
5.8 Museum/School Ground Floor Plan
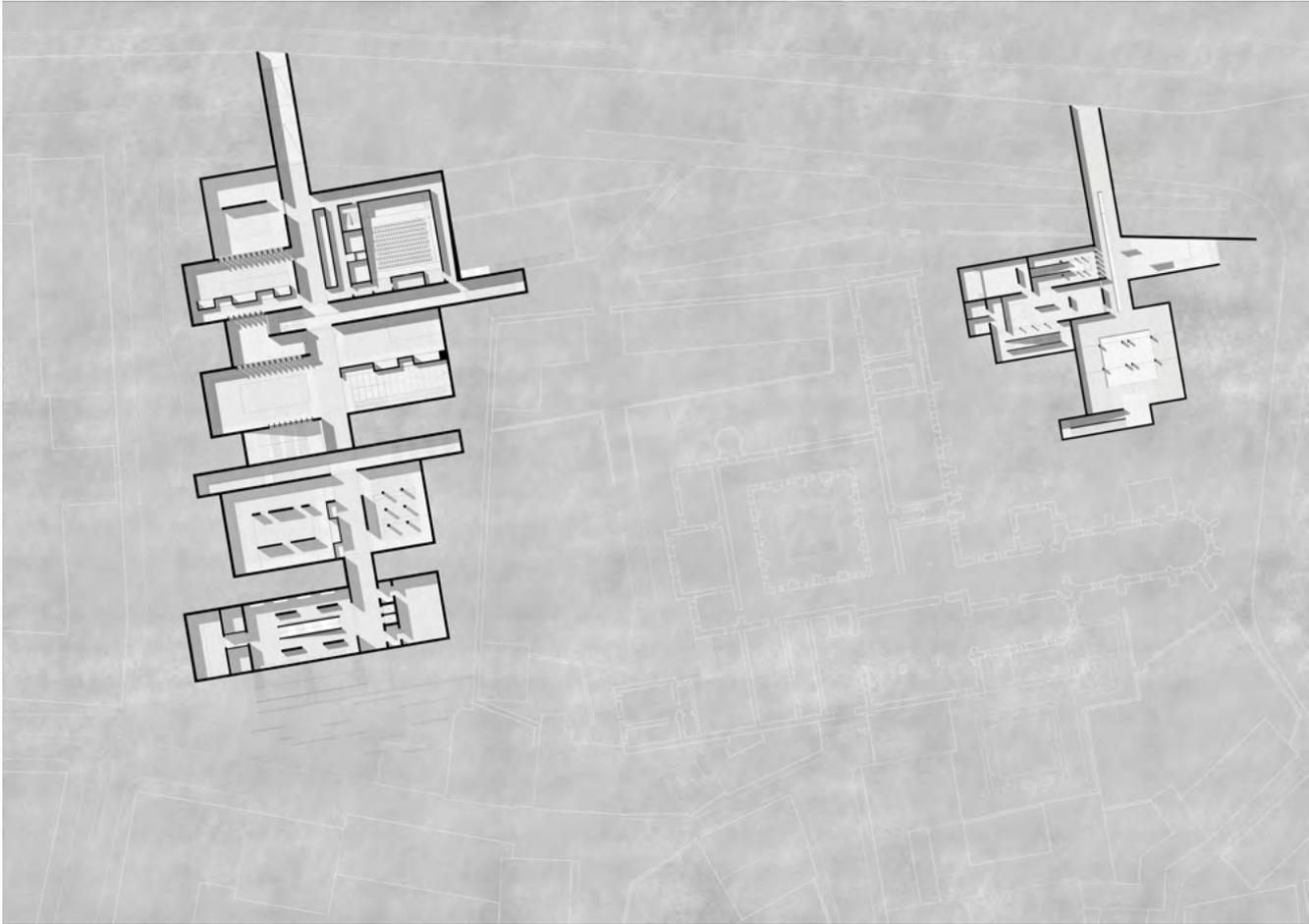
5.9 Museum/School Underground Floor Plan

5.10 Museum/School Cross Sections 1
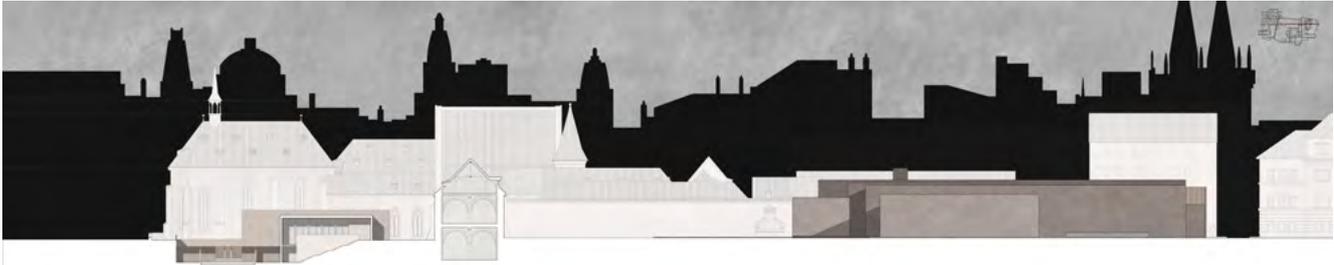
5.11 Museum/School Cross Sections 2

5.12 Museum/School Cross Sections 3
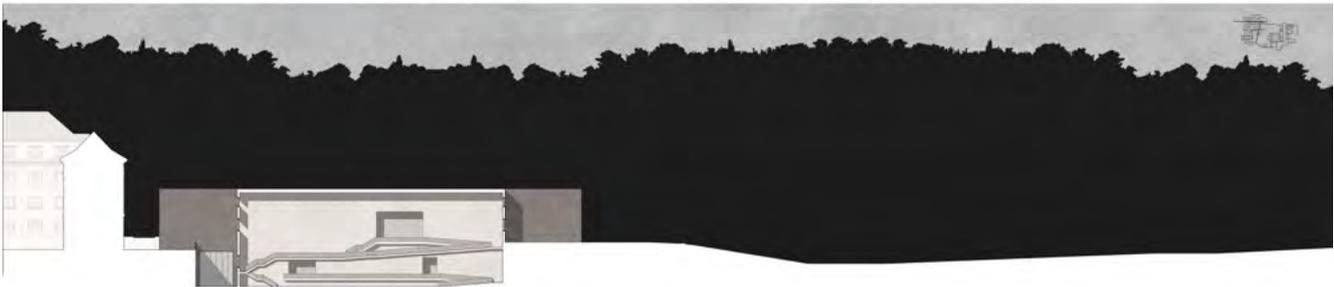
5.13 Museum/School Cross Sections 4

5.14 Museum/School Longitudinal Sections 1
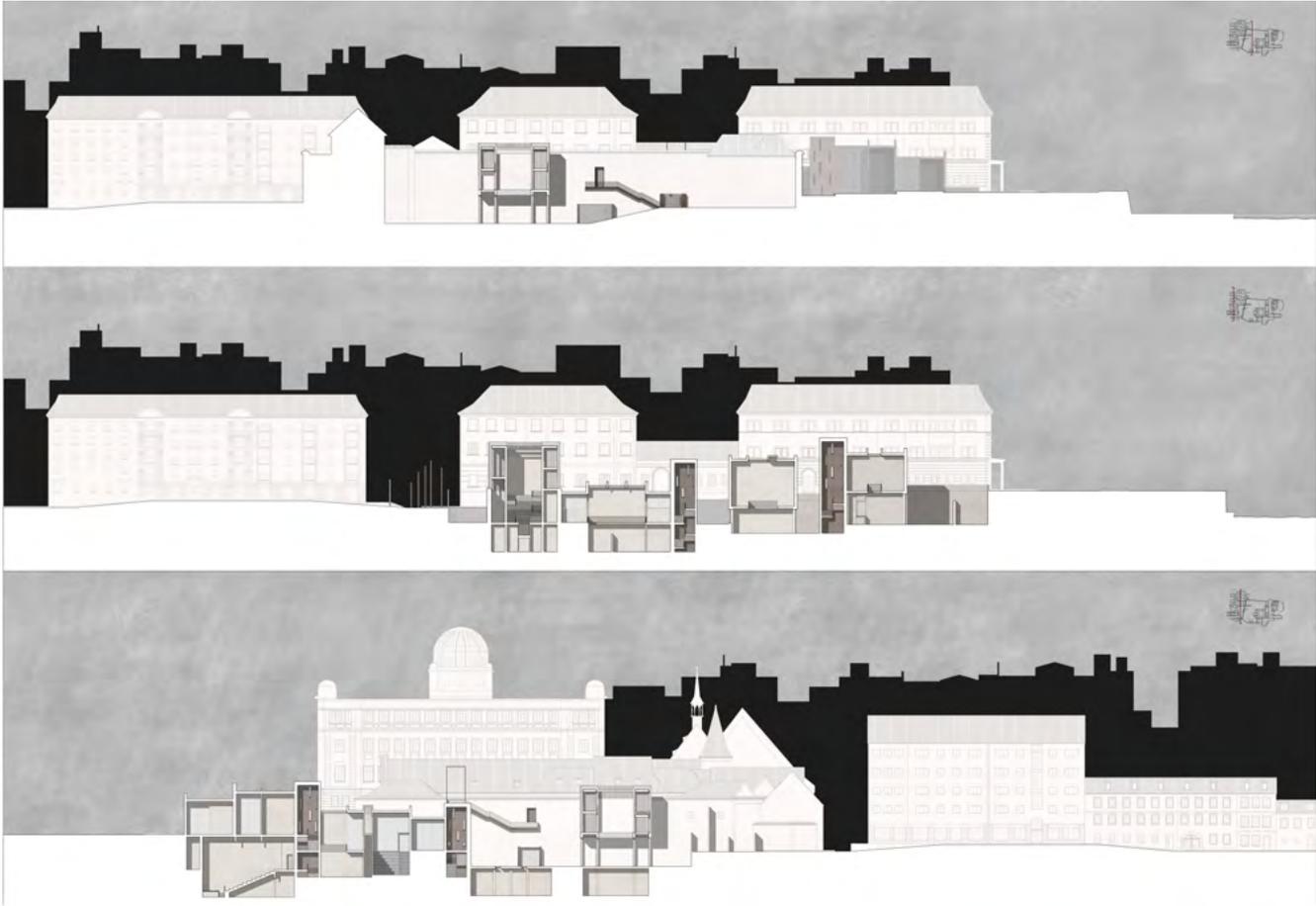
5.15 Museum/School Longitudinal Sections 2
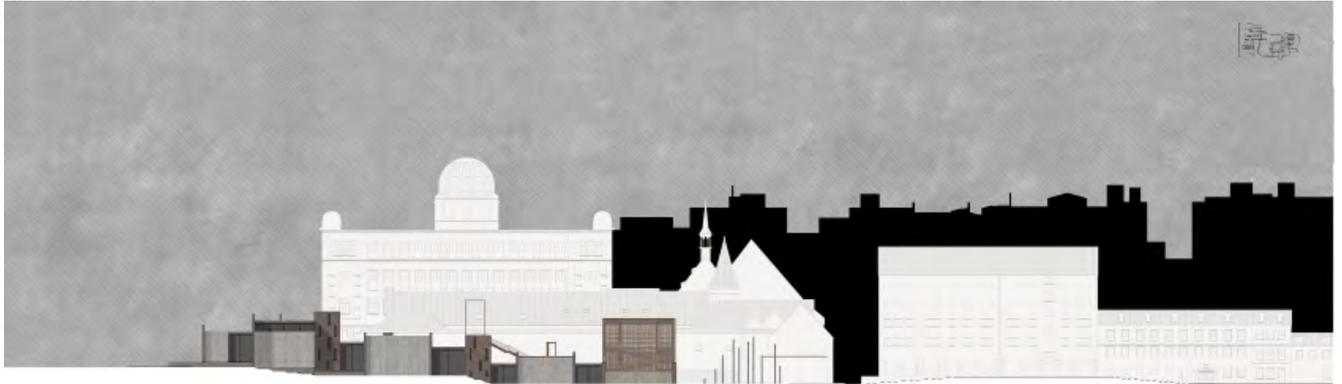
5.16 Museum/School Elevations 1

5.17 Museum/School Elevations 2
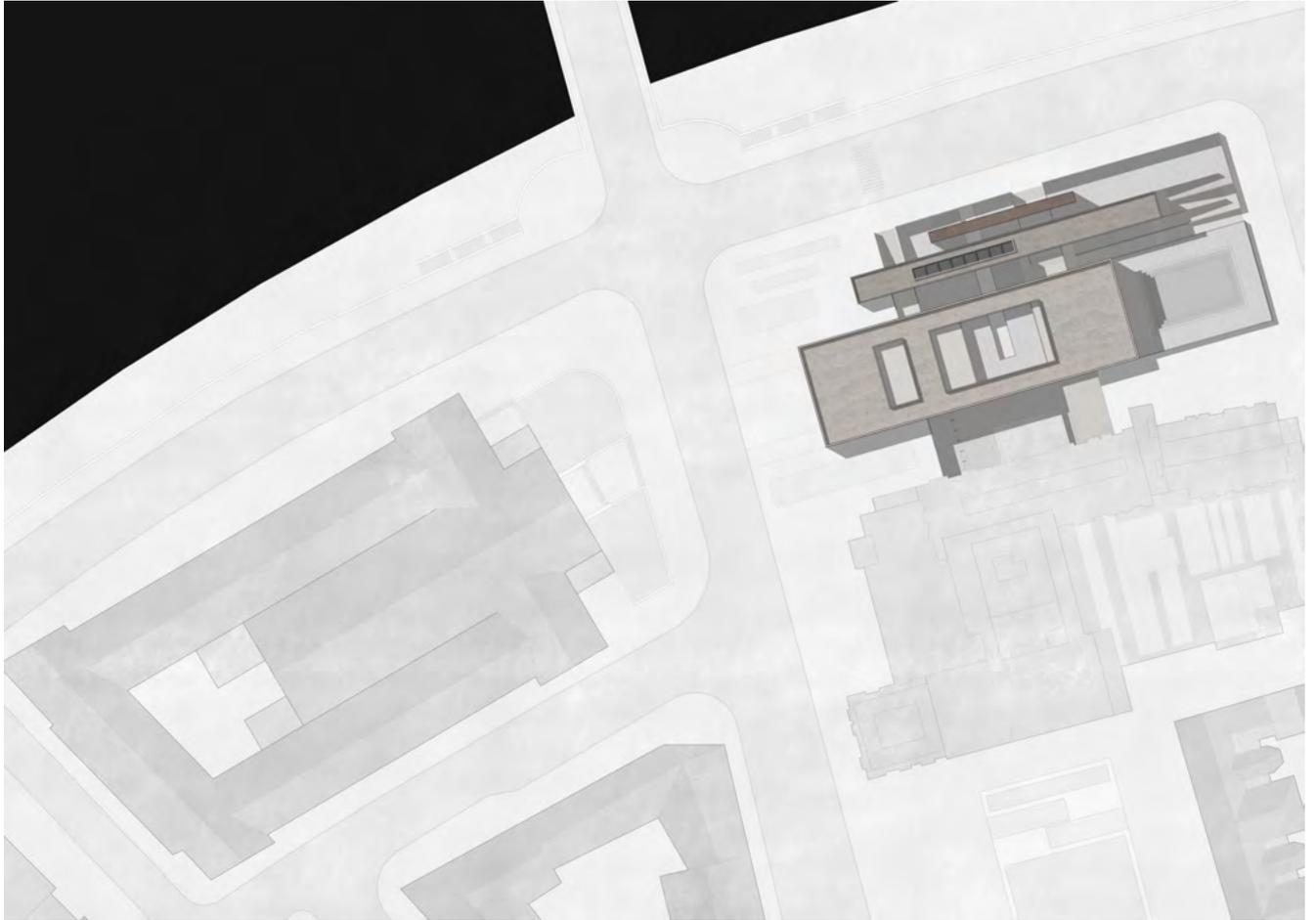
5.18 Hotel Side Roof Plan
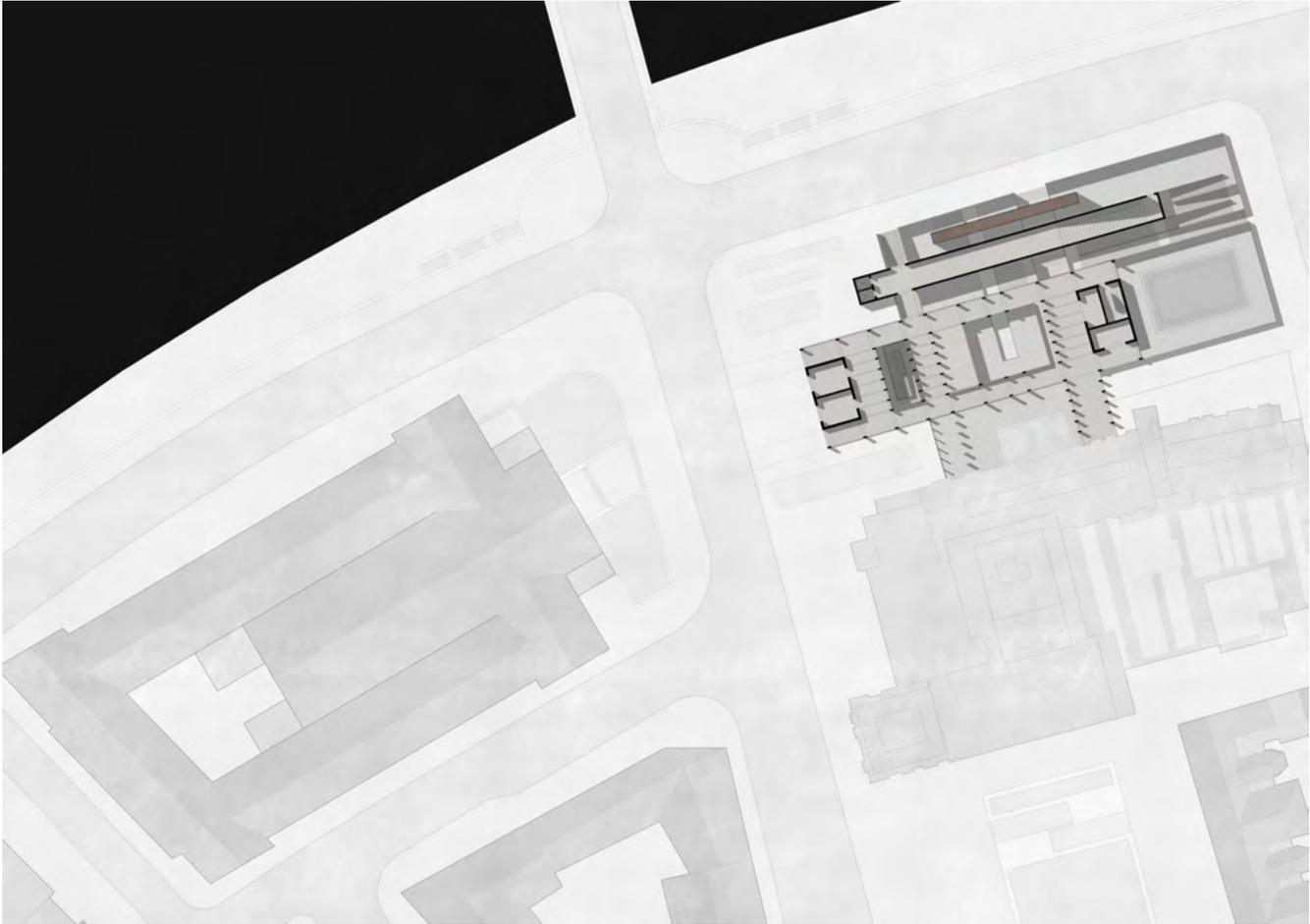
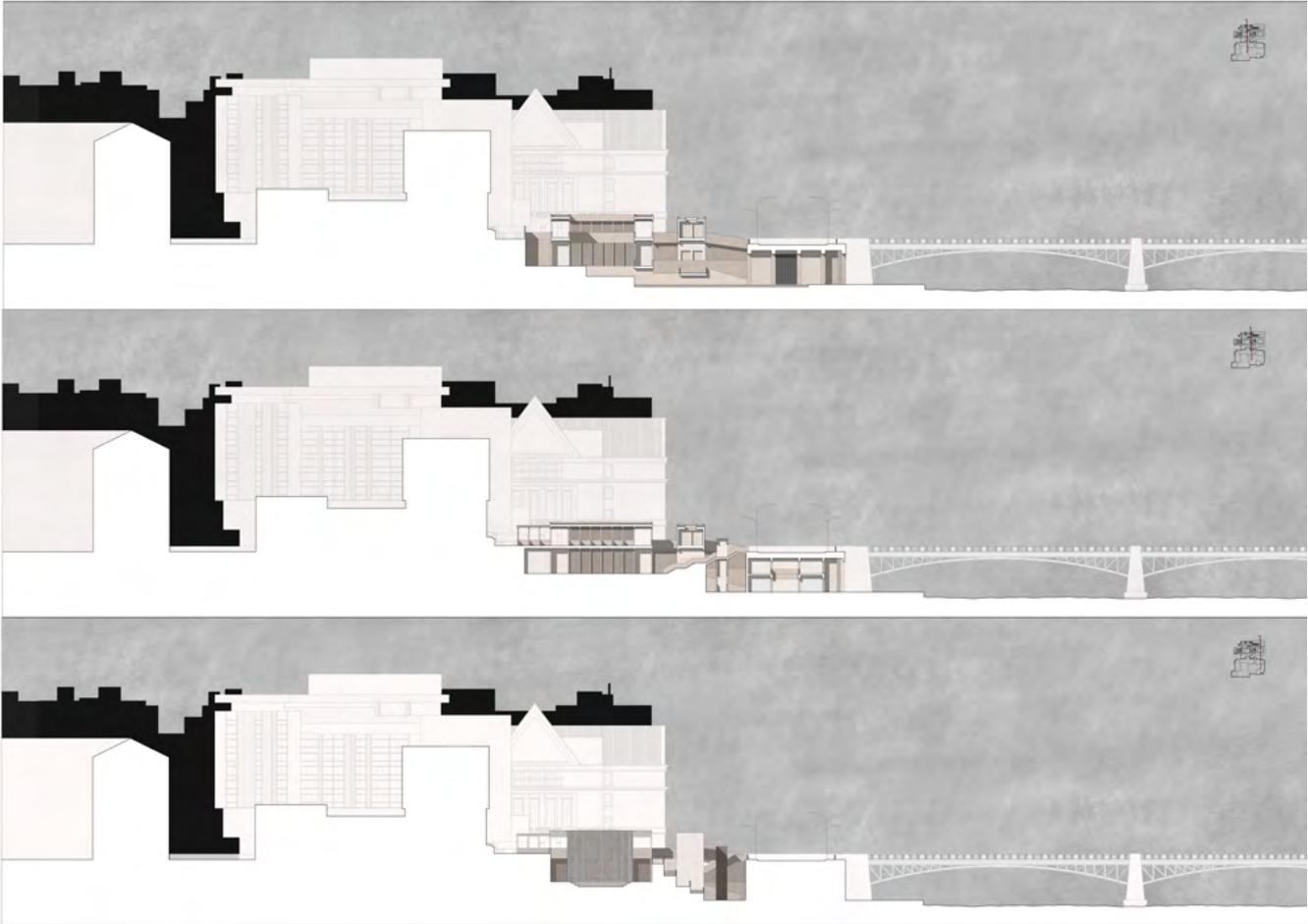**5.19 Hotel Side Ground Floor Plan**
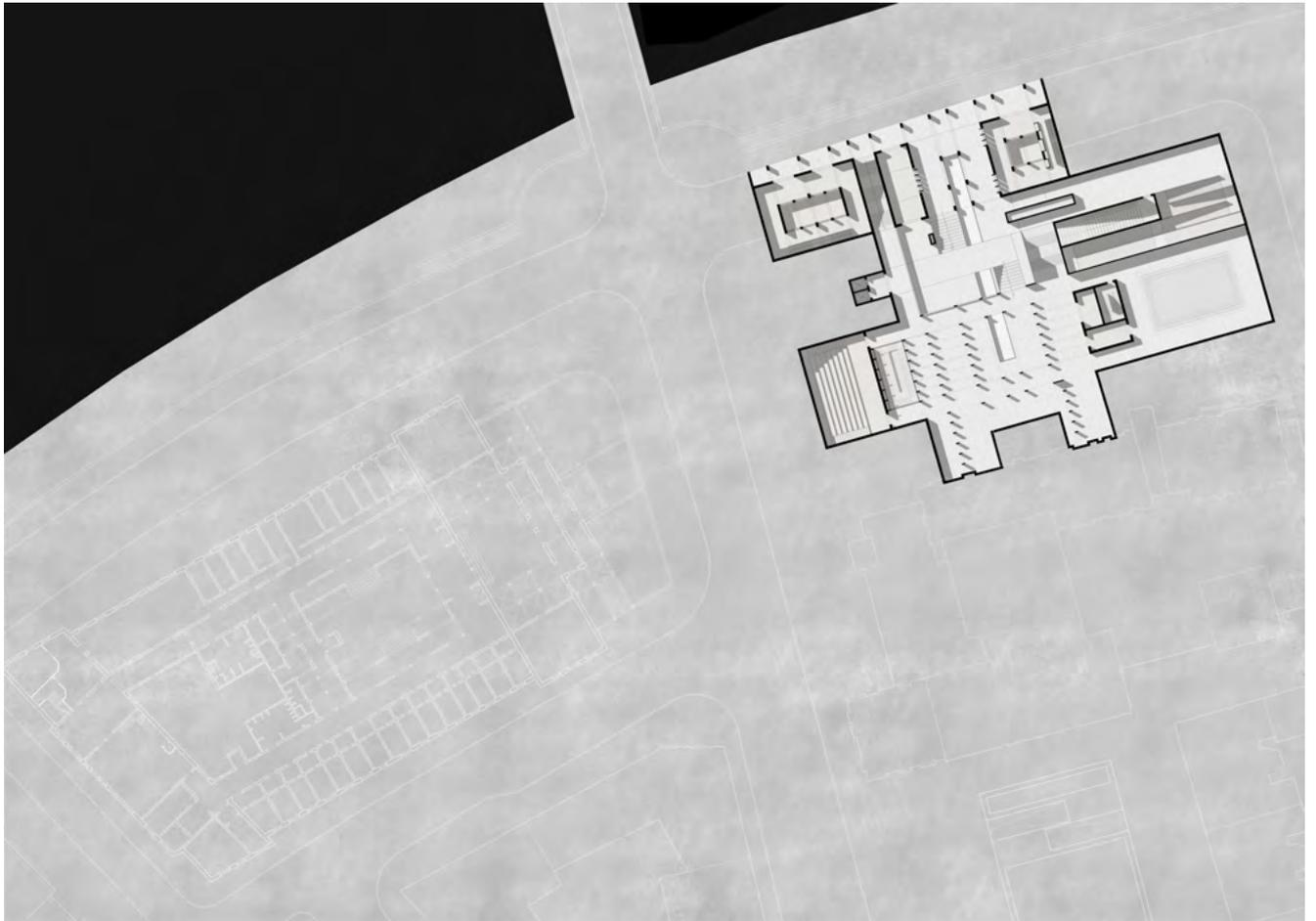
5.20 Hotel Side First Underground Plan
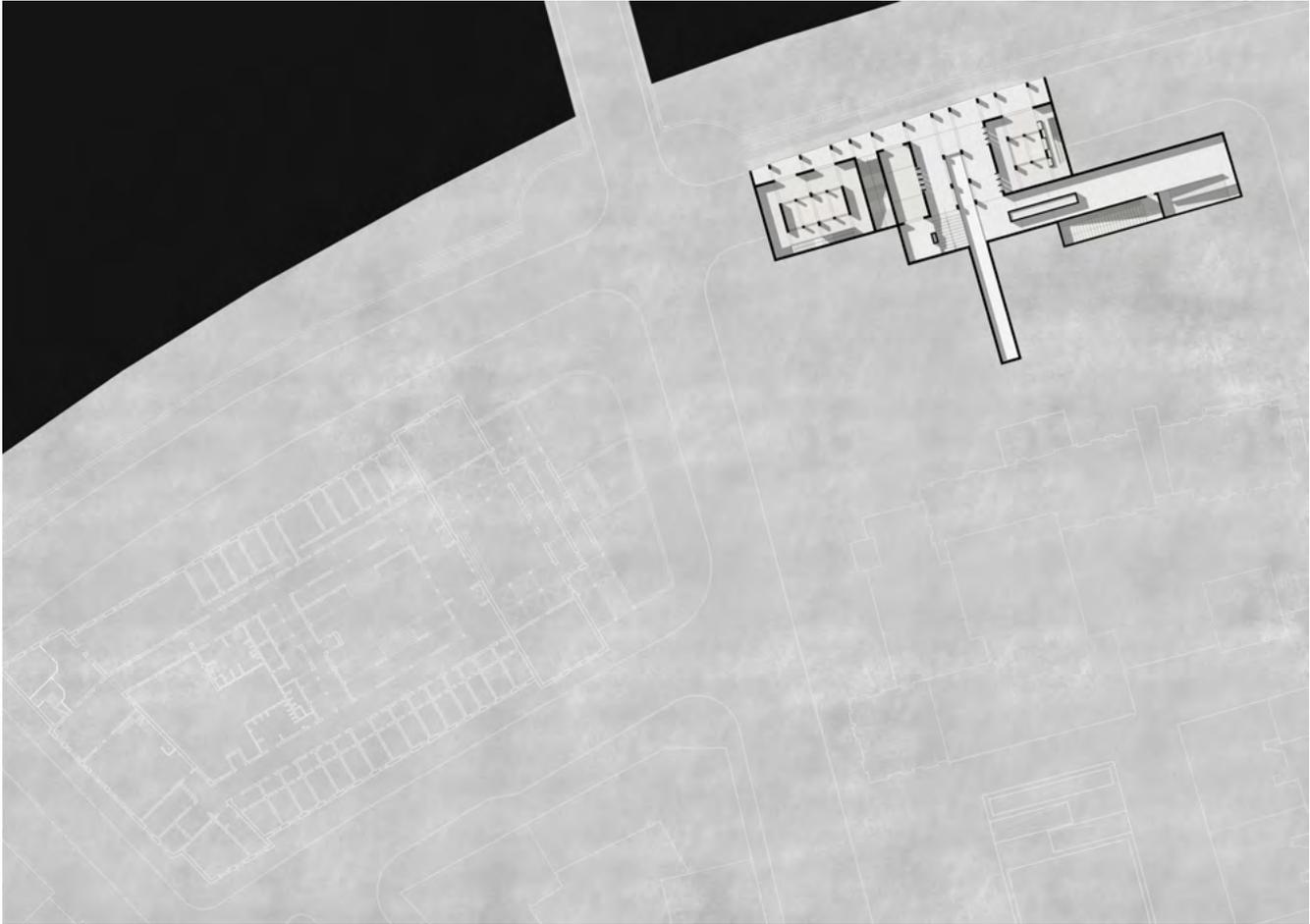
5.21 Hotel Side Second Underground Plan
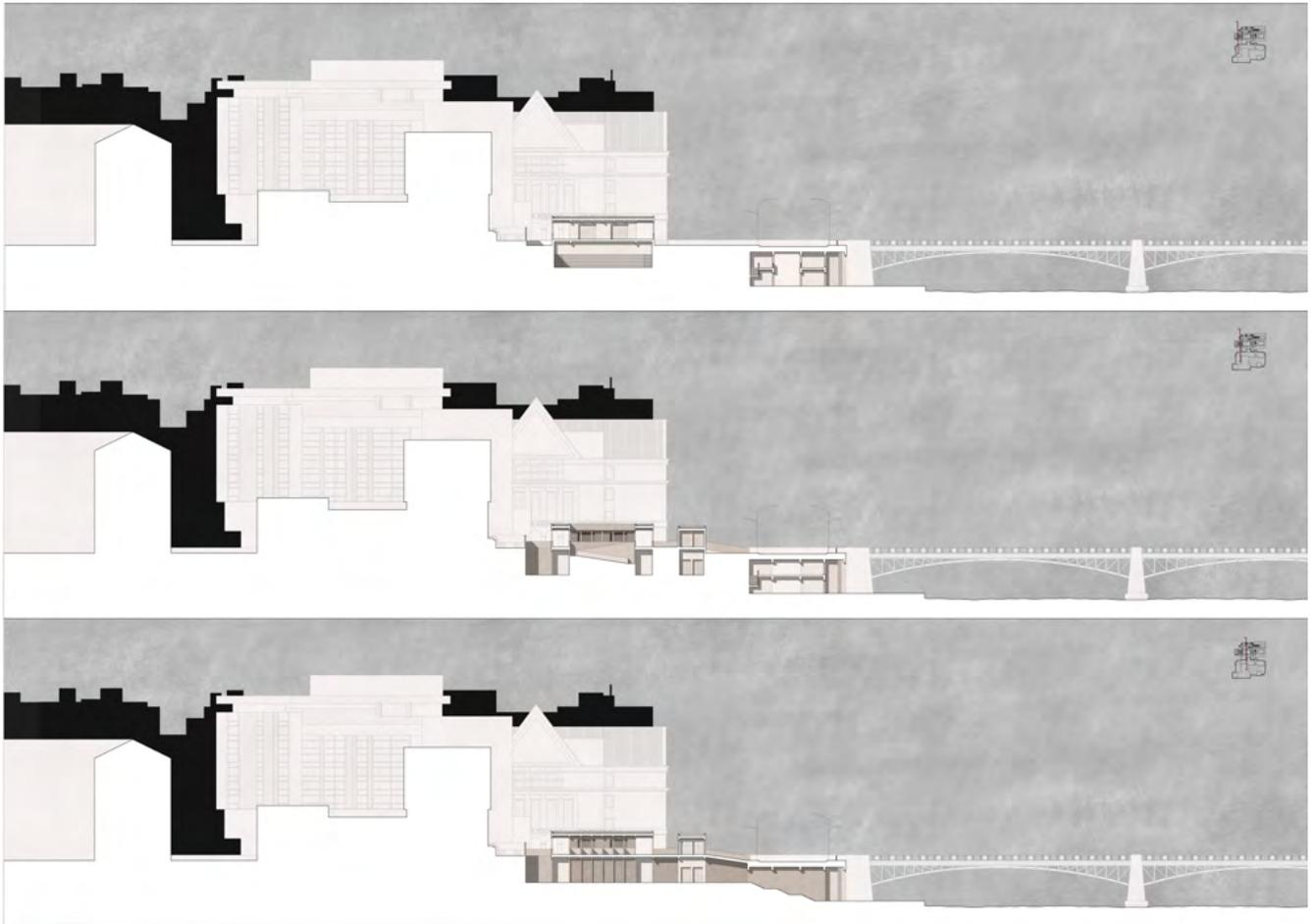
5.22 Hotel Side Cross Sections 1

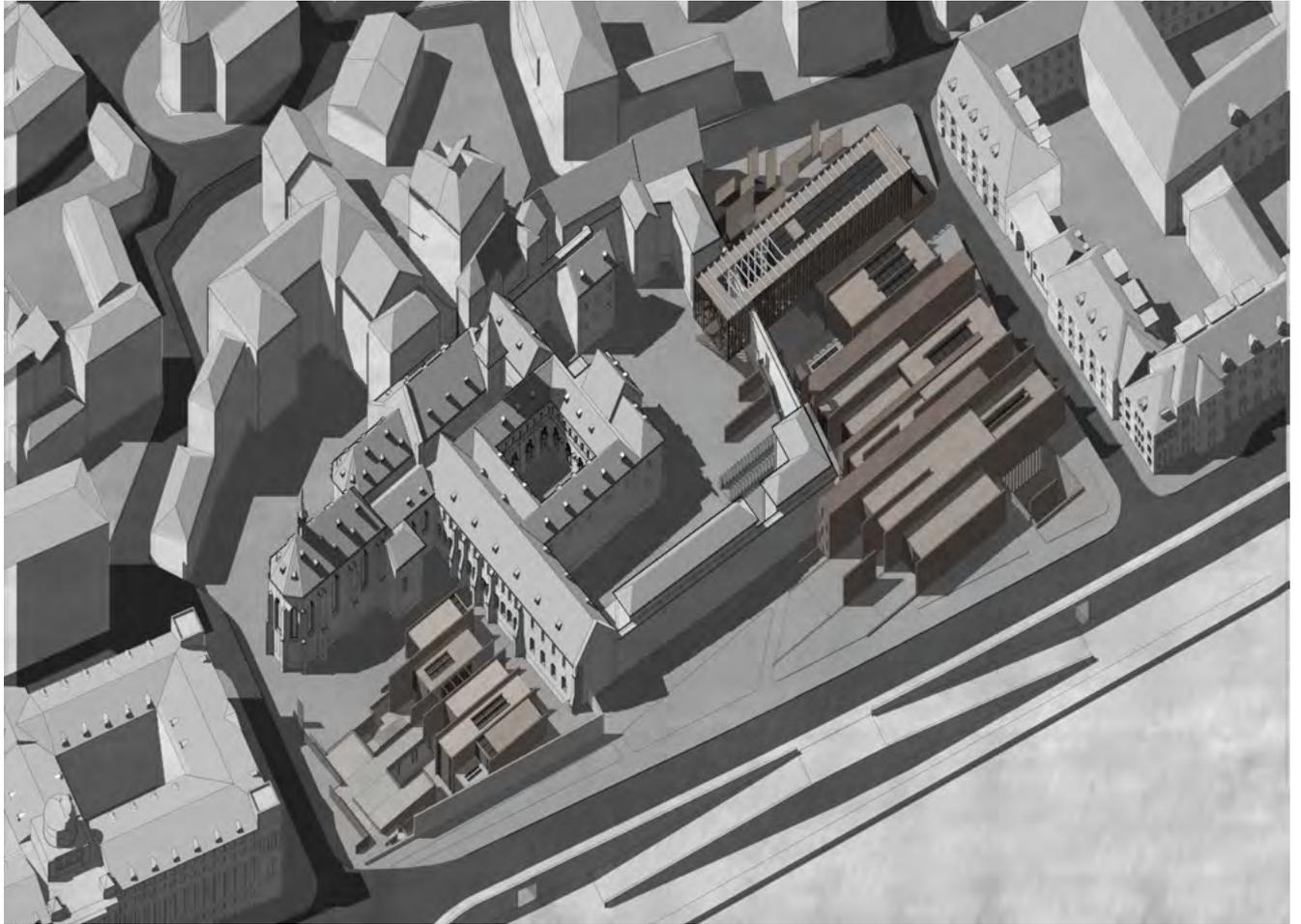**5.23 Hotel Side Cross Sections 2**

5.24 Hotel side Longitudinal Sections

5.25 Hotel side Elevations

5.26 General Axonometric View 1:1000
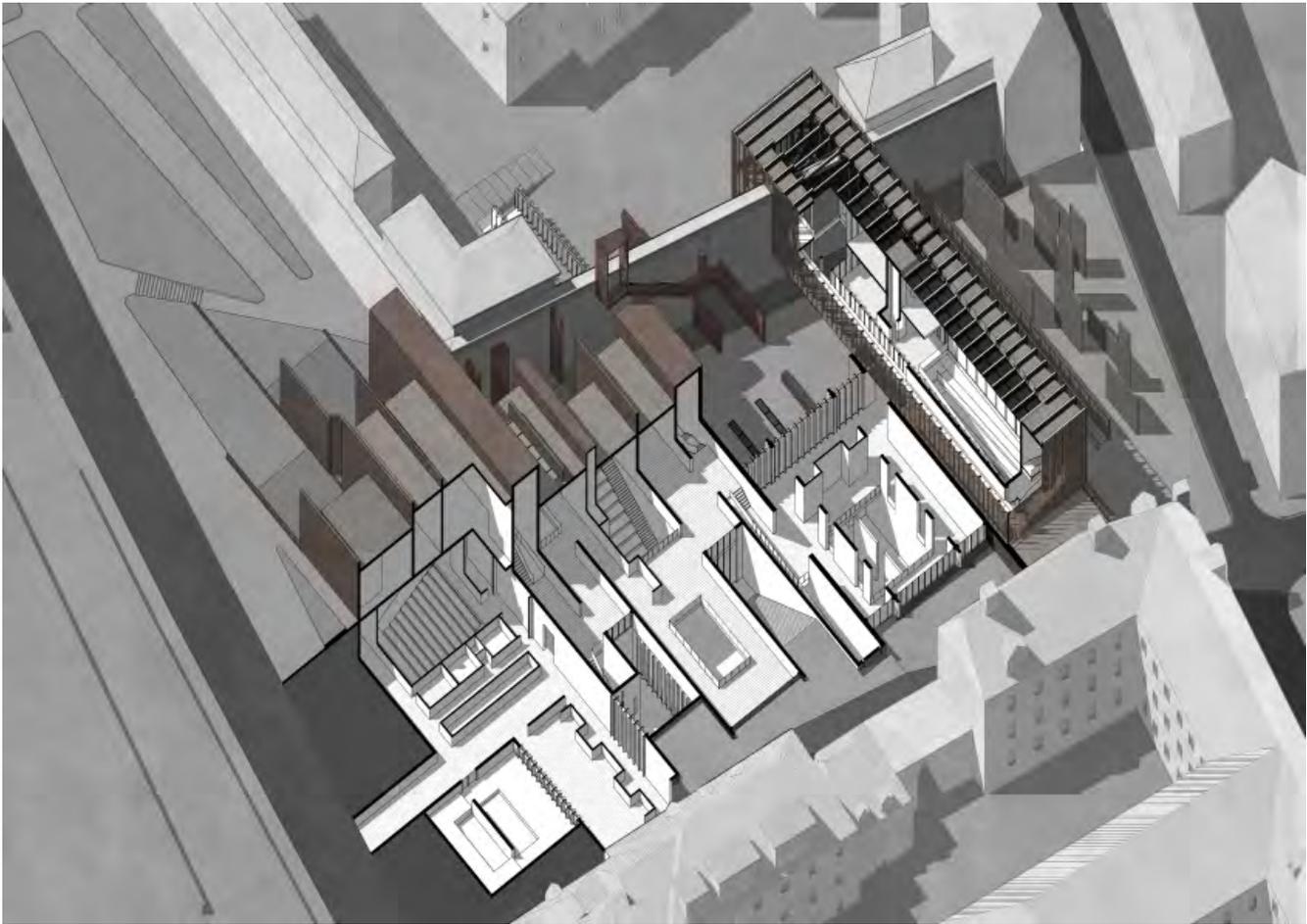
5.27 Axonometric View Memorial
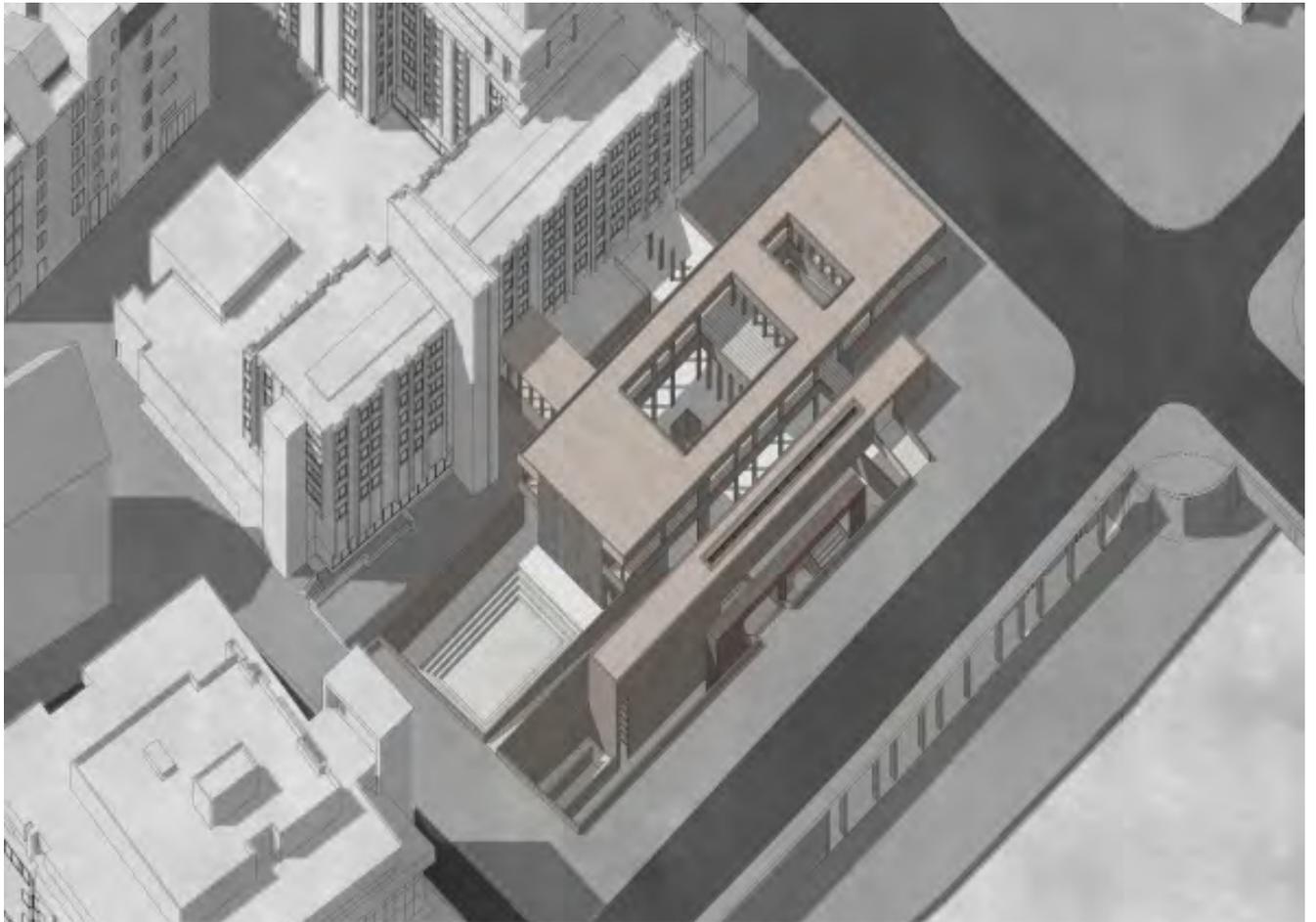
5.28 Axonometric View Museum/School

5.29 Axonometric View Cut Museum/School

5.30 Axonometric View Museum

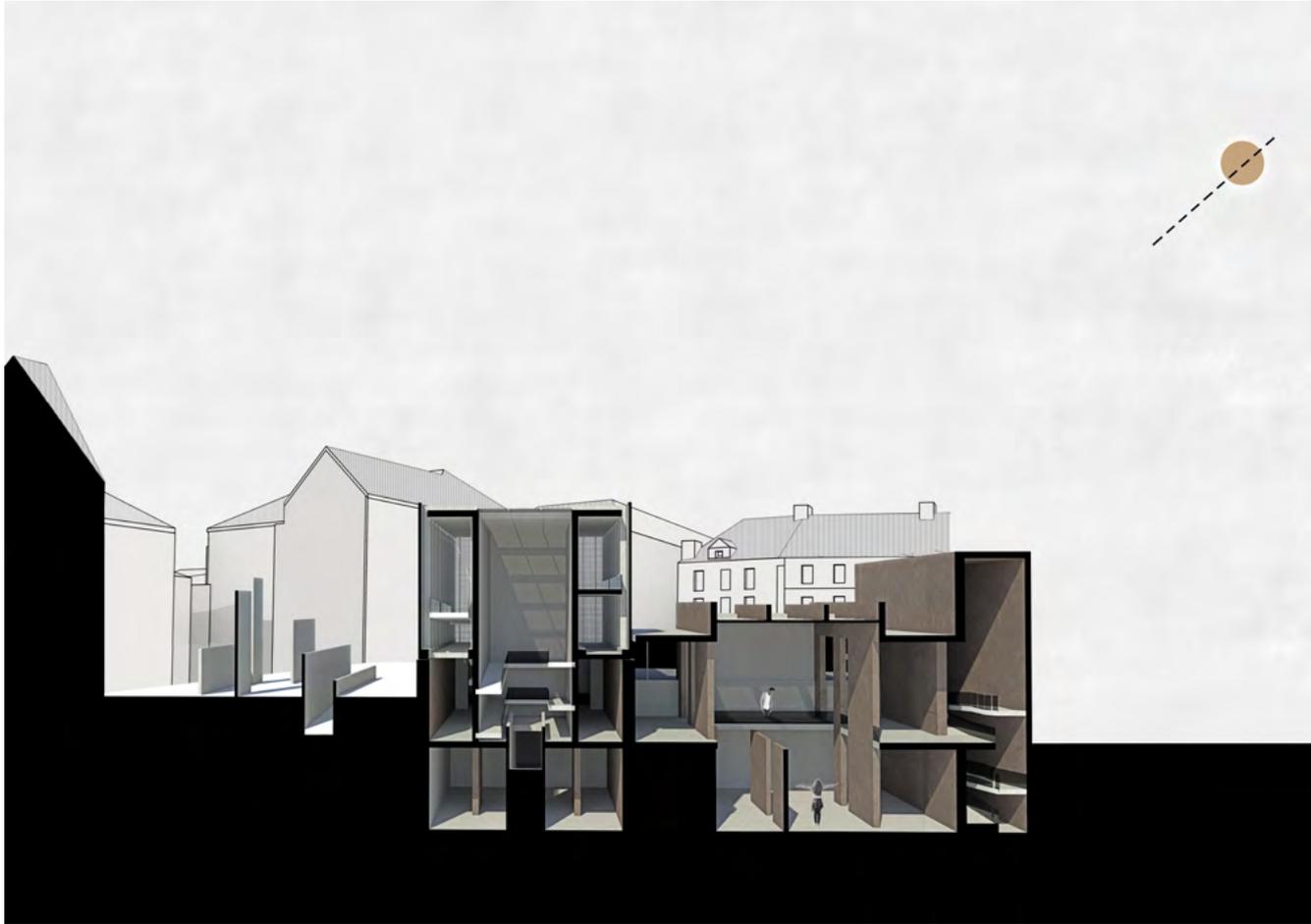**5.31 Axonometric View Cut Museum**

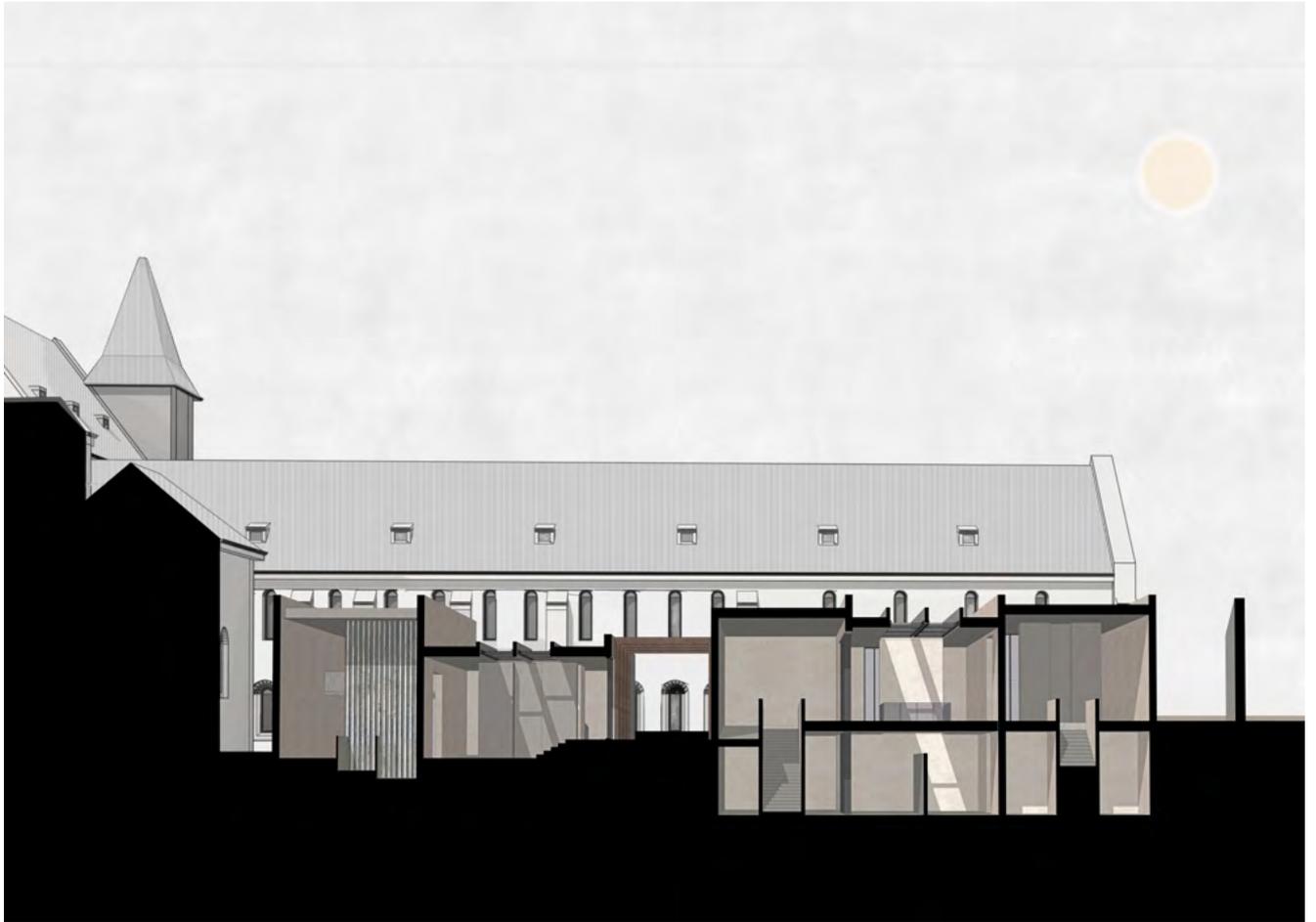**5.32 Axonometric View Hotel Side**

5.33 Axonometric View Cut Hotel Side

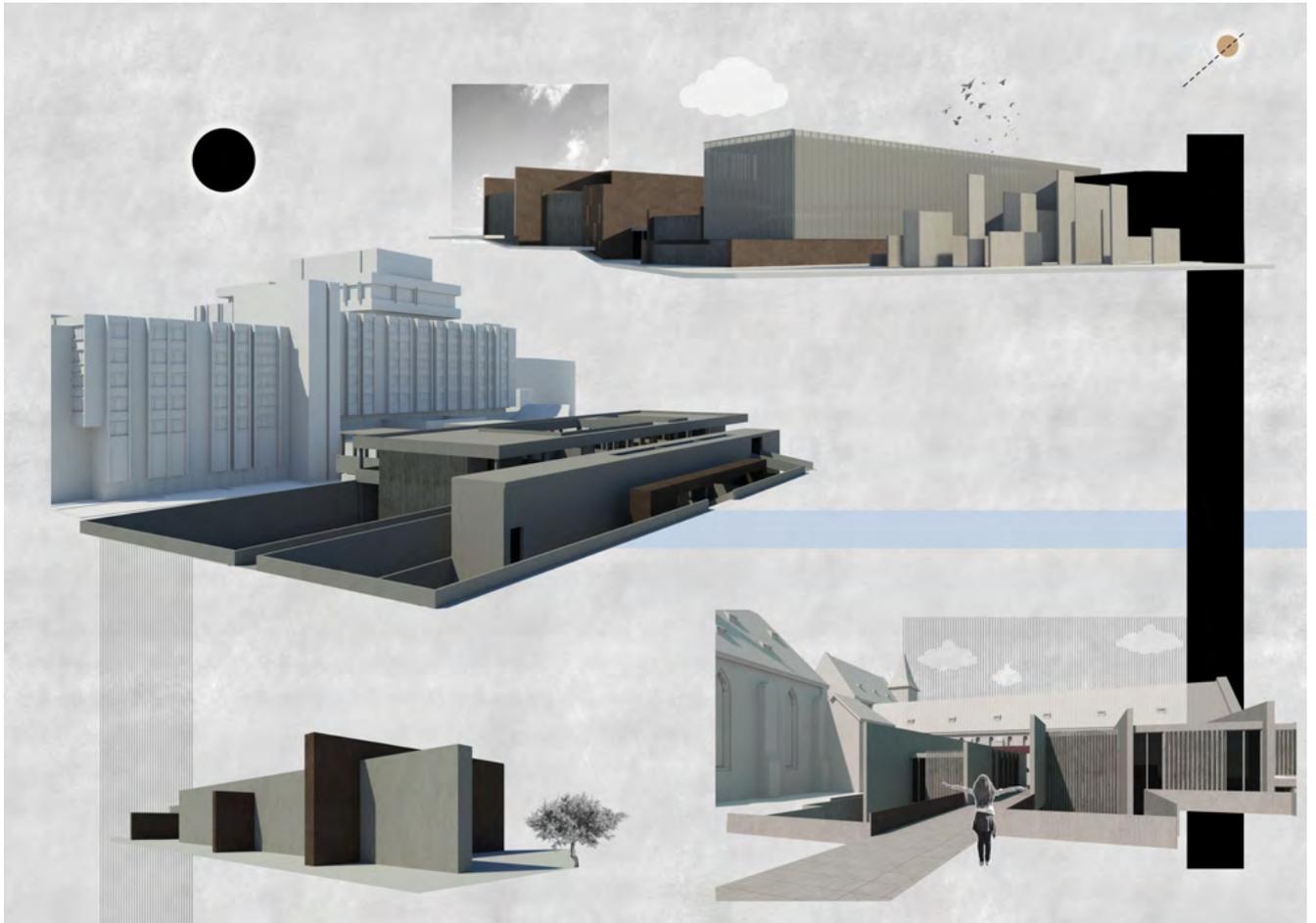**5.34 3D Perspective Section Museum**

5.35 3D Perspective Section Museum

5.36 3D Perspective Section School

5.37 3D Perspective Section Hotel Side

5.38 3D Perspectives General Views

5.39 3D Perspectives

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Fig. 1.1 Snimek Stenc archive; Umelecke pamatky Prahy. Stare Mesto, Josefov. Published in 2000, Academia

Fig. 1.2 Karta, Föremålsbild, Flodlandskap: retrived from: http://chartae-antiquae.cz

Fig. 1.3 retrived from: https://www.oldmapsonline.org

Fig. 1.4 retrived from: https://www.oldmapsonline.org

Fig. 1.5 retrived from: https://www.oldmapsonline.org

Fig. 1.6 retrived from: http://chartae-antiquae.cz

Fig. 1.7 retrived from: http://oldmaps.geolab.cz

Fig. 1.8 retrived from: http://oldmaps.geolab.cz

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Fig. 2.11 retrived from: http://www.old-prague.com

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Fig. 3.5 - 3.8 Drawn by the authors
Fig. 3.9 retrived from: https://es.123rf.com/photo_79290421_praga-rep%C3%9Ablica-che- ca-28-de-mayo-de-2017-panorama-de-praga- por-la-ma%C3%B1ana-el-r%C3%ADo-de-vltava- los-puentes-y-la.html
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