Introspicere 8

**Introspicere – India by expatriate professor:**

**Within the Museums of green and clean city of Pune**

When you decide to visit eight (8) selected museums in Pune, India and then find out on the spot (because their WWW pages are not updated) that they either do not work on Saturdays or because of Covid-19 have shorter working hours and visit 3 (three) finding that you couldn’t visit more, even if they were open. Hungry, Balkan eyes, thoughts and desires. Nevertheless, the targeted planned cost of visiting the museum this Saturday within Indian spring time, Anno domini 2022 is yet to be paid by the editorial board, upon my return to Europe, but I do not regret a single Indian Rupee spent that Saturday from 09:00 to 18:00 in a tour of the museum treasure, here in India.

**And we, in the Balkans, you are saying, fight every 35 years?!**

Small spaces, small people, surrounded by “big” history, do not see beyond their own [“Pinocchio”[[1]](#footnote-1)](https://wepa.unima.org/en/pinocchio/) nose, believing that only their spaces are destined for suffering, destruction and wars. And then you come to India, to the [Southern Command Museum](https://www.museumsofindia.org/museum/545/southern-command-museum)[[2]](#footnote-2) in Pune to find out how the soldiers here and their commanders fought in the wars of the 20th century that happened almost every ten years. The last war was fought in 1999. (May-July between India and Pakistan, better known as the "Cargill War").

It was impressive, but at the same time a bit sad to see the imprinted names of the killed young soldiers and their commanders, on plaques in the courtyard of the museum, which is extraordinarily shaped in the exterior and interior of the city. I remembered our Museum of the Revolution in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is no more, in a city that has almost ceased to be a city, and our admiration, while as children, within history, we visited the memories of the glorious days of the national liberation struggle during the World War II, peoples and nationalities of our former common state of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

And it seems to me today that it was, in fact, a virtual museum, because in the real world of today's fascist chauvinism there are streets and schools named after the fascists of "their peoples", at a time where to be different anywhere in our poor state of Bosnia and Herzegovina is nothing but like suffering from the black plague. Even tolerability disappears, and not just that stupid word "tolerance" that has been abused so many times that even the basic meaning is lost. There is no more togetherness and exists only interest groups with interest goals. Own.

And museums? Here in India the military is at a significant place in the hierarchy of creating and maintaining democracy. That is why I am a little bit afraid that they will not penetrate too much into the fabric of understanding everyday life, so that they will not be abused like ours, the then JNA (Yugoslav people army) that I proudly served (those 10% who said they did not love JNA, lie, my dear brother, lie, again, out of interest) as a "blue man" (aviation) from September 1983 until August 1984 Of course, that JNA became a Serbian army in a silent way during the 1980s, degenerating into the ["Chetnik](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chetnik)"[[3]](#footnote-3) army of the 1990s, itno the army which their fathers and grandfathers fought against in World War II.

However, the museum I visited today is really impressively shaped (symbolic ticket price of 20 IR - about 0.26 US $ Dollars) with weapons ranging from small caliber ammunition to planes and tanks, while museum spaces have been divided into gallery pavilions since the war before independence in India and until the last involvement in the Indo-Chinese war, 1962 and Indo-Pakistani 1971, area coveredr by of ​ this Southern Command.

And most importantly, this is the only war monument in South Asia that has been shaped by the direct contribution of the citizens of Pune. The Café bar is also there, where I refreshed myself briefly, with homemade coffee, satisfied even with a small shop of military souvenirs nearby. Of course, I didn't buy anything because my army ceased to exist twice: The first time when the JNA turned into a dragon that killed others and differently and the second time, there in the middle of 1993 (Bosnian war 1992-1995) when the Army of BiH became more and more Muslim (with the introduction of imams as political commissars, but also a greeting Muslim word “selam” as an officially unofficial greeting in the Army) and less and less the army of citizens and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, I can only say that the cleanliness, maintenance and tranquility of the war environment in this museum that I visited today only reminded me even more, surrounded by sadness, on all the "cleanliness, maintenance and peace of the war environment" of our Museum of the Revolution. Which does not exist anymore.

**Inauguration (and, maybe, it is magic trick or spell?!)**

However, the next stop on Saturday's museum tour was the Museum of the Suburbs of Pune - Museum of Indian History [Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj](https://www.factmuseum.com/)[[4]](#footnote-4) (founded in 2012 by Frenchman (Parisian) [Francois Gautier](https://www.francoisgautier.com)[[5]](#footnote-5), a journalist who was a correspondent for "Figaro", one of the most important French newspapers). The founder of the museum himself said that India gave him so much (in addition to being married to an Indian woman) in spiritual, professional, emotional and sentimental way that he had to repay in an appropriate way. And yes, in addition to inaugurating the first phase, among others, by [Ravi Shankar](https://www.srisriravishankar.org/)[[6]](#footnote-6), a famous Guru from India, and the Dalai Lama opening of a Tibetan pavilion, in front of was opened a brutally honest view of history in a museum founded by a non-profit organization. Inside the nine buildings are many exhibits about time (photographs, images, facts, information), from the beginning of the mention of India (let's mention only the Hindu civilization, which dates back 4,500 BC) to the present day in time and space encompassing the Indian subcontinent.

But what saddened me, again, is the brutality of the sincerity of the presented photographs and works of art where headless figures of rulers are presented with their heads on a tray of brothers carried to their father by a brother who could not stand the honesty and gentleness of his own close being. All the way to the impalement of the people on picket, and from the first female ruler in India back then, in 1231, and Raziye Sultan, the real ruler of Maharahstra - a feminist (who also had a "female" army of 500 women in the early 16th century) , but also to this day. Considering that, although it was Saturday, this three-member delegation (my students were with me - they had already received grades from me, so there was no more conflict of interest - Ananya and Mitali who promised me to be a guide in Pune two months ago, when needed, so I invited them, enjoying their translation throughout the day, but also being informed from them about the history of India) was the only one at the Museum that day. At least during those two hours of our stay, so we attracted the attention first of the priest who prayed in the small temple at the entrance and all the way to the keeper of the Museum, but also the photographer there.

We toured the buildings and exhibits, and in a white-clad shirt and white trousers that would have suited the curator more to the guard followed us at a slow pace, and the gentleness of his face of Mr. Ravsaheb Kakade whom I thought was not the Museum's curator at the outset. Why? Because he approached one of my former students and asked that I might not be French, explaining that the founder of the Museum was French, so he assumed that I was a European, and after receiving information that I am professor from Europe (BiH) who was temporarily working in India. in Pune, at DYPIU University, became even more interested, continuing to unobtrusively socialize with us. At one point, I asked him why there was so much brutality on the scenes from ancient times to the present day, and he, so mildly, just said that is there to remind people that should not happen again and that it would remain a warning to generations.

Plain and simple. True. At the same time, the priest contacted my guests with a wish to get an imprint of their faith - BINDI point, which is considered the point where creation begins and can become unity, and is also known as "the sacred symbol of the cosmos / universe in its unmanifested condition." It was like that. With the words of his prayer and my devotion to the deed, I received a gift and a scarf, with a flower in the palm of my hand and a BINDI dot on my forehead that disappeared until evening, just when my daughter, seeing the photo I sent, replied: “Oh maybe it is some magic trick or spell? ” Let's not forget - the entrance to the museum is free.

[**What will Sheldon do, if any?**](https://bigbangtheory.fandom.com/wiki/Sheldon_Cooper)**[[7]](#footnote-7)**

And the least, but not the last museum where I was in a day surrounded by absorbing knowledge of the space of time in which this essay-reportage is created, the cultural, historical heritage of one of the world's greatest civilizations since its inception, was the Museum of Miniatures model railway ([Joshi's Museum](https://www.minirailways.com/)[[8]](#footnote-8)) in the city center, with the most expensive ticket today (120 IR which is about 1.57 US $ Dollatrs, and multiply by 30,000 visits per year), but which was worth every Rupee and confirmed that we must never stop being children in ourselves, like Sheldon was. Twenty-five minutes of the world of miniature, with the words of the actors in the background, the play of light and many trains, but also "small" worlds cars, trains, cable cars, circuses, people, swimming pools, yards, dogs, cats… with quiet music made me become, as well as a person who was returned from his 60s to his tenth year of life with the help of "Aladdin's magic lamp", as the actors played a relaxing reflected form of the hidden reality of fiction. For a moment I was again a boy eager for play and joy in and around the trains, remembering when my late father, sometime in 1988 brought my firstborn, son, a set of trains with tracks, wagons, and all on batteries… Of course, my son was then a year old and he was not yet ready to assemble (only a few years later he masterfully designed everything) railway, but my brother in law and myself are. Eo ipso, the game must never stop. Because life is a game, right? *Per se*.

p.s. *The War in Europe? Like it is on other planet. Just like when for us in Europe was their last war in India, back in 1999. Pity for the human civilization. Why? Because, we do not show empathy unless the problem is knocking on our door. Humanity has a genetic mistake within DNA code…*

1. <https://wepa.unima.org/en/pinocchio/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.museumsofindia.org/museum/545/southern-command-museum> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chetnik> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.factmuseum.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.francoisgautier.com> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.srisriravishankar.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://bigbangtheory.fandom.com/wiki/Sheldon_Cooper> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <https://www.minirailways.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)