

TO WHAT EFFECT? SARAJEVO AND THE ART OF UNCERTAINTY

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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January 2012

ABSTRACT

Since the rise and fall of the Communist political program and the Socialist economic programs in East Europe and Russia many regional cities have undergone dramatic changes, from densification to decline, as well as destruction and ruination as the result of armed conflict. Renewal and restoration projects are common to area cities as they attempt to move past historical circumstances with new development strategies. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina was badly damaged and partially destroyed over the course of the four-year Siege of Sarajevo (1992-1996) during the Balkan Wars of the 1990's. While the destruction has provided fertile ground for the study of spatial trends in urban warfare, very little about the response of Sarajevo's public, particularly its art community, has been studied for its spatial contribution to the city. This essay considers the set of practices that emerged during the Siege that have driven the development of a new art museum project, Ars Aevi –The Sarajevo Center for Contemporary Art, and articulates the questions the project raises around the role of the arts community and working artists in shaping the post-conflict city.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Edith Fikes studies the implications of strategies for development in light of historical circumstances in East European cities, most specifically Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. With her research, she inquires about the way that people with different backgrounds or interests interpret, affect, influence and spatially intervene in cities to create new uses and meanings, and to create a sense of place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Einaudi Center for International Studies and the Center for European Studies at Cornell University for their generous funds and support through the Foreign Language Area Study award and travel grants. And also the A. Henry Detweiler Fund for travel support as administered by the History of Architecture and Urban Development program in the department of Architecture, Art and Planning.

Additionally, I would like to thank Boris Cindrić for his generous contribution of both his time and material from his personal collection.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(B-H) Bosnia and Herzegovina

(SFRY) Socialist Federation of the Republic of Yugoslavia

(USSR) Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

(JNA) Yugoslav National Army

(SAA-S) Student Association of Architects-Sarajevo

(UNHCR) United Nations High Commission on Refugees

(UNESCO) United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

(RPBW) Renzo Piano Building Workshop

INTRODUCTION

In the past two weeks, the *New York Times* has run three articles that focus on the role of art and culture East European cities. While their authors have not explicitly analyzed the significance of a relationship between art, artists, and the public use of urban space or image of the city in Eastern Europe, each alludes to it. What is clear, however, is that art is mobile and flexible –and deployable. As many cities in this part of the world work to face persistent issues in urban development that stem from historical circumstances and then look to the future, arts communities and working artists are central to the plans.

According to the articles, art and culture has been particularly effective in the initiation of public reoccupation of old buildings and public places in cities that have suffered varying degrees of decay, decline or destruction as a result of transition and upheaval common to Eastern Europe since the rise and fall of socialism.ⁱ¹ Perm, Siberia, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B-H) and Ljubljana, Slovenia are the focus of the broad and consistently featured topic of the role of art and culture in the re-development of cities in Eastern European cities. This study, in taking cues from current trends in development and urban historical circumstances, will look closely at *why* and *how* urban decay, decline and specifically, destruction backdrops a relationship between art communities, architects and city authorities that appear to partner in the restoration, renewal, or even the process of rebranding these cities.

¹ The rise can be traced to the early part of the twentieth century in the Russia/USSR. Socialism then spread through parts of East and Central Europe throughout the middle of the century and declined in the late eighties and early 1990's.

As the cities undergo the intentional changes with intentional planning development strategies, given the globalized world, comparisons with other such projects emerge. For instance, the first article, on Perm, is entitled: “*A Bilbao on Siberia’s Edge?*”² The article reports and speculates on the effect of a 50-year master plan for rebranding the image of the city via the promotion of contemporary art and cultural institutions, hence the title’s reference to the world famous renewal of Bilbao in Spain’s Basque after the opening of the Guggenheim Museum there in 1997. According to the article, the city of Perm will devote the equivalent of 53 Million USD to urban cultural development. The funds currently support the local Perm Museum of Modern Art and otherwise fund the development the city’s cultural life to secure and attract young people by making it “an attractive place to live.”³ The underlying theme of *city-as-project* via museums, art and culture is similar to that which has driven critical analysis of the Guggenheim Bilbao and its effect on the city of Bilbao, Spain.

Perm’s development program will be ongoing for fifty years and will include: a David Chipperfield refurbishment of the Opera and Ballet Theater, an extension of a public esplanade where urban festivals are held, and a dramatic extension of the State Gallery. One report that speculates that the Guggenheim’s ability to redefine Bilbao’s image and attract tourists (and their money) as the direct cause for increased vibrancy of the art scene in Bilbao. And according to a critic cited in the article on Perm, tourism statistics suggest that Perm has already beaten out both Moscow and St. Petersburg

² Finn-Olaf Jones. “*A Bilbao on Siberia’s Edge?*” *New York Times*, July 24, 2011. Accessed August 1, 2011. <http://travel.nytimes.com/2011/07/24/travel/perm-russias-emerging-cultural-hotspot.html?pagewanted=all>.

³ Finn-Olaf Jones. “*A Bilbao on Siberia’s Edge?*”

for the title of Cultural Capitol of Russia, an impressive feat given that the author refers to the city as the former “last stop to nowhere, the transient point where criminals, political prisoners and other people deemed undesirable by the czars and the Soviet regime passed through on their way to forced exile and later the gulags, often never to be heard from again.”⁴.

Since the rise and fall of the Communist political program and the Socialist economic programs in East Europe and Russia (formerly the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or U.S.S.R.) many regional cities have undergone dramatic changes, from densification to decline, as well as destruction and ruination as the result of armed conflict. Each set of urban conditions, while unique, bears a similar strain and pressure to rebuild so that cities and citizens might participate in global economy, perhaps the global geo-political game, and as we will see, the global contemporary art scene. In any case, these cities are faced with the dual challenge of dealing with its past, its current place and circumstance, as well as its future.

For instance, the city covered in the first article mentioned is Perm in Siberia, which in an effort to attract visitors to the city (the article, as well as the one on Ljubljana, was in the Travel section of the New York Times) and to keep in-place their population of young people has made plans for the construction a new museum of contemporary art. The second article is specific to Sarajevo, whose people have used art and the coordination of both globally and locally placed working artists to resist and recover from the devastation of a four-year military siege on the city during the 1990’s.

⁴ *ibid.*

Entitled, “A Sarajevo Bunker Takes on New Life as Art Museum,”⁵ the author considers the contemporary art scene, the city and the unlikely places that art is installed and occupies. In some ways, the angle on Sarajevo is similar to that taken in regard to Perm as the article focuses, again, on contemporary art, where in the world it can be found, and what it does –which raises relevant questions around built heritage and the way it transforms over time to eventually construct places anew. However, the foci differ as the reporter in Sarajevo finds high profile art in an unlikely place, 250 feet under the ground in a military bunker near the urban center. The exhibition in this case is site specific and, given its locale and the history of the site, must be studied for its uniqueness. The bunker in which it is housed was built from the late 1950’s through the 1970’s and was designed to protect the Yugoslav political and military leadership in the event of nuclear war. While the equivalent of 4.6 Billion USD was devoted to the project’s construction, it has stood merely as a relic to Cold War fears of atomic warfare until recently when it was occupied by a team of regional artists to exhibit contemporary art from 17 countries worldwide.⁶

Marko Lucić, a Vienna-based artist from the former Yugoslavia comments on the symbolism of the location in both historical and recent historical contexts:

The real perversion is that they built something over the decades that was expensive, that was sheltering, that was stable enough to survive an atomic war, but then a civil war happened from within, which was something an expensive shelter could not help them escape from.”⁷

⁵Ginanne Bronwell, “A Sarajevo Bunker Takes on New Life as Art Museum.” *The New York Times*, August 6, 2011. Accessed August 15, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/06/arts/06iht-scsarajevo06.html?pagewanted=all>.

⁶ Ginanne Bronwell, “A Sarajevo Bunker Takes on New Life as Art Museum.”

⁷ Ibid.

The war to which he refers is the Balkan War of the 1990's, which, as will be illustrated, tore through towns and cities across the former Yugoslavia.

As mentioned, Perm had a former life and image to overcome in order to move forward with new plans –such has also been the case for Sarajevo. During the war in the 1990's the city underwent dramatic and devastating changes over the course of what is now widely referred to as the Siege of Sarajevo. The international press reported on the damage and destruction in a way that came to secure for Sarajevo a singular public image. Approximately fifteen years after the end of the Siege, contemporary art projects such as those featured in the Times marks an effort to shift and change the image of urban ruination that many still recall. What is less clearly stated in both wartime and post-war reporting on Sarajevo is that not only has the production of art and coordination of art actions by the community been used as a way to shift and change the image of the city after the war, but also to protect and salvage places within the city itself as it came under fire during the events of the Siege.

The destruction of the city's built domain has been described by many scholars and urban researchers as a strategy specific to modern and contemporary urban warfare, akin to genocide, that is generally used to devastate cities and buildings and terrorize their citizens. The specifics of this term will be discussed later in greater detail. The effects of destroyed places on resident Sarajevans as they transformed from buildings to ruins on, however, has been less studied. This inquiry returns to the war to study the relationship that developed between people, specifically those who were part of the urban contemporary art community, and their city as they processed the

destruction of space and built heritage, and publicly responded to it both during *and* after the Siege.

The reaction of the arts community and working artists makes the city a unique case in the study of social, cultural and spatial techniques for resistance to urban warfare, their connection to the post-war reconstruction of public buildings and potentially, trends and models in contemporary urban development practices. However, the relationship of a people to their city itself is less straightforwardly utilitarian. Its consideration requires study of the meanings embedded in places by people and what stands to be lost as conflict-related destruction threatens their material existence.

Links that have been established between human association and urban space has allowed for a closer study of what, in addition to the buildings themselves, is at stake for modern cities and their residents as they are consumed by urbicidal military strategies. Scholarship on the makeup of cities has itself changed over the course of the 20th century. The idea that material makeup has *meaning* which is defined and inscribed into urban spaces according to use and associations that people have *with* them, is an idea that has been elaborately laid out by Maurice Halbwachs on collective memory in the mid-century and translated into English in 1980.⁸ In Halbwachs view, the *group* relates closely to space to generate meaning, and likewise, objects in space deeply affect members of this group, all by the process of association and memory:

The group not only transforms the space into which it has been inserted, but also yields and adapts to its physical surroundings. It becomes enclosed within the framework it has built. The group's

⁸ Maurice Halbwachs. *The collective memory*. (New York: Harper & Row 1980).

image of its external milieu and its stable relationships with this environment becomes paramount in the idea it forms of itself, permeating every element of its consciousness, moderating and governing its evolution.⁹

Halbwachs's thoughts on space as it becomes imbued with human constructions of meaning and vice versa, has since been advanced mainly by human geographers, including Tim Cresswell in his study not of space, but of *place*.

Cresswell renders space and place distinctly: "When humans invest meaning in a portion of space and then become attached to it in some way (naming is one such way) it becomes a place."¹⁰ This distinction makes the study of urban destruction all the more complex for scholars and researchers who continue to study urbicide and its effect as not only space, but place as well, is lost by one side of a conflict and then gained by another. And, forces seeking to either overtake or to remain in place compete. According to Halbwachs, the connections between groups of people and place drive their resistance to dis-placement. The group, he says "resists with all the force of its traditions...searches out and partially succeeds in recovering its former equilibrium amid novel circumstances...endeavors to hold firm or reshape itself in a district or on a street that is no longer ready-made for it but was once its own."¹¹

The group that will be discussed here is not all Sarajevans, most of whom experienced some degree of the threat of displacement and death, but rather, the artist community that responded to the those same conditions with creative, coordinated

⁹ Halbwachs, Maurice. "Space and the Collective Memory," In *The Collective Memory*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 2.

¹⁰ Tim Cresswell. *Place: a short introduction*. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).10.

¹¹ Maurice Halbwachs. "Space and the Collective Memory," 4.

practices that demonstrate the reaction Halbwachs has articulated. The arts community resisted the destruction by finding a place (or many places) for itself both during and after the war as their city changed. When discussing the specific role of the artist in relationship to place (particularly places in the 1990's when she wrote her book), Lucy Lippard has described an artistic practice that involved, "Looking around, more and more, to record what they see or would like to see in their own environments."¹² The actions coordinated by Sarajevo's contemporary arts community affirm this statement and can be seen as an urban placemaking tactic that has had many urban effects and has many implications.

The article that discusses the artists' intervention at the Sarajevo bunker as well features a single image and devotes one line at the bottom of the page to a project that is a case in point. Since its beginnings, Ars Aevi, The Sarajevo Center for Contemporary art has been a response by the arts community and working artists in Sarajevo to resist the violence and destruction and effectively counter uricide by envisioning ways to reoccupy and reconstitute places threatened and destroyed by urban warfare. In the nineteen years since its inception, Ars Aevi has been an idea, an instrument, a process, an experiment, a model for resistance and reconstruction, *and* an ideal contemporary art museum. In other words, the arts community, in cooperation with international artists, museum directors and architects, has founded a new place and even a new function of public building in Sarajevo based on pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict urban conditions.

¹²Lucy R. Lippard. *The lure of the local: senses of place in a multicentered society*. (New York: New Press, 1997) 19.

As work continues, the collection of high-caliber art in Sarajevo grows, yet the museum building, designed by Renzo Piano in 2000, remains unbuilt. Its status as such raises new questions that bring to light the terms of urban warfare, the destruction of heritage buildings and cities in general, but that must be dealt with in the context of aftermath conditions. And so, the plans to build a new, and first, museum of contemporary art in Sarajevo can and will be studied from angles that relate to its origins in place and in recent history, its specific type and the problems of both that have resulted in its unbuilt status which has therefore kept it from becoming the next so-called Bilbao.

CHAPTER 1. MAPPING THE URBAN-HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Sarajevo is a living panorama of creativity having roots in various epochs and belonging to different civilisations. It is a city that for centuries has been building a culture of living. It is a city of love, tolerance, youth, arts, sports, a city of the Olympic Peace and the specific and unique spiritual and material superstructure. As such, early in the spring of 1992, it started living the most difficult days in its history and growth.¹

-Muhiba Kaljanac, director of the Historical Museum, Sarajevo

Sarajevo, the capital city of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has often been marked as a geopolitical crossroads both globally and within the East European region. This is largely because historically, a range of dramatically different forces, which together have had a cosmopolitan social effect, have built Sarajevo. Major influences have historically arrived from East and West, the First and Second World, and finally, the globalized western capitalist world in the late 1980's and 1990's. Ottoman (Turkish), Austro-Hungarian (Habsburgs), Socialist (Yugoslav Partisans), and recently Global-Western (Capitalist) leadership have all been endowed with the power to enforce political agendas, sanction cultural practices, and as well, to plan and build the city.

The ways in which each system of power has influenced Sarajevo's built domain are recognizable for their contrasting differences. Building styles and urban plans have left their mark according to a given era's distinct political agenda and dominant cultural practices. As will be demonstrated, one major power after another entered and then left Sarajevo with the next. However, it was rare for successor states to outright destroy the city to which they had arrived, even if it was overtaken militarily. Successors have shared a unique tendency to build alongside rather than atop Sarajevo as built by

¹ *Opokljeno Sarajevo (Besieged Sarajevo)*. Muhiba Kaljanac, et al. Historical Museum, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo (2002). Exhibition catalog.

defeated empires. What has been left as a result is a unique and generally linear path of architectural and spatial legacies that have neatly progressed, as if increments on a timeline in proper order.

The map of the city, when pieced together historically, demonstrates the legacy and maintenance of urban cultural and spatial influences that culminate and operate as a heterogeneous whole. Sarajevo's makeup can be viewed as a map that supports the popular, and even official, story that the city and its citizens have for centuries co-existed in difference or, according to one description from an exhibition in Sarajevo that has reviewed the damage, have "been building a culture of living."²

According to Robert Donia, this spirit of respect and human as well as architectural diversity has been called multi-culturalism but only by those seeking to describe Sarajevo as it was before Balkan War of the 1990's and before the dissolution of Yugoslavia (1991), but from a retrospective view.³ Donia, on the other hand, describes a pluralist commons, or common life in the city that he describes as having the quality of *neighborliness* that more accurately captures the strength of character that cosmopolitan diversity brought to the city.⁴ What he is suggesting is that co-existence wasn't a point of contention that had to be negotiated by residents, it just simply was. Donia's study of the city reveals that Sarajevo has, over the centuries been made of shared spaces, neighborhoods and a general spirit of genuine civic pluralism. And it was this living space that came into question as it was both sought for capture and defended during the Siege of Sarajevo.

² *Opokljeno Sarajevo (Besieged Sarajevo)*. Muhiba Kaljanac, et al.

³ Robert J. Donia. *Sarajevo: a biography*. (Ann Arbor, Mich: University of Michigan Press, 2006.)

⁴ Robert J. Donia. Robert J. *Sarajevo: a biography*.

Ultimately, the purpose of mapping this history, or unfolding it in place, is to illustrate why Sarajevo with its unique story of formation has for centuries driven a dominant narrative that details a diverse and constantly changing urban and cultural environment. And then, to locate moments for the city, or points in its landscape which, according to scholarship on destroyed cities have directly or indirectly created a place vulnerable to the destructive military strategies of 20th-century urban warfare that took hold of Sarajevo during the Siege in the 1990's.

Sarajevo 1462-1980

The linear progression of a walk down the River Miljacka provides the backdrop for the accepted historical narrative that is often used to describe how Sarajevo has come to be a place rich with the work and practices different cultures and architectural styles. The Miljacka runs east to west and its north and banks support daily foot, car and tram traffic. Each day it is possible to pass through centuries of different histories that progress along the water. Each part of the city looks and feels different. Adjacent architectures can be charted by following the river, a kind of geographic timeline that spans over 500 years. A unified architectural language across Sarajevo's 400 square miles does not exist unless they are grouped as a whole and described together as *cosmopolitan*. The linear path, surprisingly yet effectively maps a nearly perfect chronology of historical development.

The first major, or at least formal urban development began in Sarajevo under the Ottoman Empire at the easternmost point of the city on the line drawn by the

Miljacka. The Turks occupied Sarajevo and used it for a military staging area and European capital of the Ottoman Empire from 1462 to 1878 (Figure 1). Turkish cultural influences have resulted in enduring Muslim roots and a subtle linguistic distinction from other parts of Bosnia and the Former Yugoslavia. Spatial and cultural practices define this part of Sarajevo, appropriately called Old Town (Stari Grad), Its most recognizable features are mosques, small cafes, fountains and open markets. *Bascarsija*, a sizeable wood-frame marketplace which, *Sebilj*, a large central fountain, and the oldest urban neighborhoods (mahale) that wind carefully up the hillside.

Most central to the old city is the Gazi Husrevbeg Mosque, named after its Ottoman founder, around which the market (carsija) -filled with cafes and shops of wares have been built, and while smaller than it has been historically, mainly due to fires, it has been maintained. However successful the market was as a center for civic and cultural activity during the Ottoman period, the city served mainly as a strategic military location from which the Ottomans leveraged the growth of their Empire northward into Europe. Thus, when the Empire ceased to expand and began to decline, so did the city.

Raids on Sarajevo by the Habsburgs began in the late seventeenth century and became more frequent and effective in decentralizing Ottoman rule as the Austro-Hungarian Empire moved south from Central Europe with the intent to territorially secure Bosnia. At times, the raids were destructive to mosques and the Ottoman marketplace in Sarajevo. But as the leadership of the Habsburg Monarchy finally took hold by the end of 1878, it became the task of “more thoughtful and experienced leaders to craft a

policy that would eventually revitalize Sarajevo as a city that accepted European cultural influences while retaining much of its Ottoman heritage.”⁵ From 1878 to 1914, damaged buildings and sites were restored as new, mainly Viennese, additions to the city were built.

The Austro-Hungarian period marked a quarter of the city that was constructed—quite literally *alongside*, or just West of the Bascarsija and Ottoman quarter. New development continued to move in that direction, and with few substantial anachronisms in architectural style or urban plan as it did. As Benjamin Kally von Nagy-Kallo was appointed as joint minister of finance by the Habsburg Monarchy, major changes in the urban plan began to materialize. Sarajevo’s center gradually transitioned to a grid of streets and sidewalks with one large square around which new buildings designed in the hard, heavy geometries of Viennese architectural trends contrasted sharply with the tile roofs, wood frames and winding streets that characterized the city built under Ottoman leadership.⁶

The Austro-Hungarian Empire’s stay was brief compared to the length of Ottoman leadership that preceded it but its contribution to Sarajevo’s built heritage was undeniably as significant. The first Sarajevo industries were founded during this time. The construction of hard city walls, tram lines, churches, hundreds of schools, Vijećnica (city hall and then the National Library), and the regional museum demonstrates that cities are historically malleable and penetrable to different kinds of power or influence,

⁵ Robert J. Donia. *Sarajevo: a biography*, 59.

⁶ Josip Vancas was the principal architect in Sarajevo. He was given a lot of local power as a member of the first Bosnian Parliament, was professionally trained in Architecture in Vienna and was a proponent of secessionist style.

but afford little predictability in their constant state of change. For instance, Kally, was successful in materializing his plan to makeover the central city around a downtown square and embed distinctly Western urban values into the fabric of the city –but not quite so in his plan to “divert popular attention from potentially divisive nationalism,”⁷ for it is widely agreed upon that this very issue drove the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand (heir to the Habsburg throne) and his wife on the Latin Bridge in Sarajevo which as many know, then set into motion the first of two World Wars.

The effect of the World Wars (1914-1945) on Sarajevo was like in kind to that felt by all affected countries –a great upheaval. However, it was a particularly unique time politically for the entire East European region. The South Slavs (Yugoslavs) were divided in a way that left the nature of regional leadership, and so the fate of the city of Sarajevo, an open question up to nearly the end of World War Two. The main military cohorts that were in competition for territorial determination in Yugoslavia were the Ustasha in Croatia (Nazi Allied Fascists), the Chetniks (Serb Nationalists) and the Partisans (Communists). The Partisans, led in part by Josip Broz, or Marshall “Tito” ultimately rose to power and formed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Tito united the competing camps, operated from a state capital in Belgrade, and markedly shaped the political and urban landscape of Sarajevo over the course of his forty-year presidency.

Tito’s leadership was unique compared to other Communist party leaders of the period. Power was first centralized and then distributed to workers in the six republics which was unlike the notoriously monopolizing center of what was then the Union of

⁷ Donia, *Sarajevo, A Biography*, 63.

Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). To Josef Stalin's chagrin, Tito managed to free Yugoslavia from much of the USSR's influence and for his own leadership, was widely approved of and rarely contested throughout his term.

Many Sarajevans welcomed Socialism and its political and economic programs, they lived and worked within it. The Industrialization that began with the Habsburgs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries flourished under Tito and Sarajevo's urban population grew to five times its former size as jobs were provided in manufacturing. The social housing program established by the central government sanctioned new construction to accommodate population growth and resulted in high-density neighborhoods that set them distinctly apart from spatial planning precedent in Sarajevo. Residential high-rises and dramatic densities defined the newly built quarters in the city that grew westward along the river and into the previously undeveloped fields have left the city with an observable socialist legacy in built form and living space.

The merits and failures of this kind of urban construction have been consistently debated in design circles. Socialist realism, with its repetitive and monotonous design bored local architects, but as public projects the buildings served the dual purpose of providing employment and housing for people in the city. Around 1950, a middle point that appeased both sides as modernist trends in architecture began to take the place of socialist realism. Architects in Sarajevo began to develop the city according to global modern design aesthetics *and* socialist sensibilities like equality and common space.⁸

⁸ Ivan Straus. *Nova bosanskohercegovačka arhitektura (New Bosnian-Herzegovinian Architecture): 1945-1975*. (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1977).

By the 1960's, revision rather than redundancy was the threat to Sarajevo's urban design as planners stated intentions to eliminate the Ottoman architecture particular to Bascarcija. This plan, however was never realized and Socialist Era. The value of the old city and even the Austro-Hungarian area was upheld and development found its eastern limit at approximately the point where the Austro-Hungarian quarter ended. Up until the beginning of the decline of SFRY, which of course slowed major construction in the late 1970's, new development of both industry and social housing moved consistently and enthusiastically westward, and outward.

Tito remained in power until his death in 1980, which means that he spent the last five or so years of his life managing a Second World state that was slowly caving, politically and economically, to First World pressure. Fierce competition between the two worlds, however, didn't pick up in a decidedly meaningful way until the Cold War that defined the world political economy of the 1980s, and in the years following Tito's death, Sarajevo was, for better or worse, caught between the two –politically and geographically.⁹

Arrival and production of a global cosmopolitanism, the 1980's

Sarajevo, until the 1980's, hosted influences from the East and West, from the First World with WWII as the Sarajevans and the Partisans were Allied in Nazi

⁹ Here I summarize a very complicated period of regional and world history. More detailed explanation of the decline and aftermath of the decline of Yugoslavia can be found in Stokes, Gale. 1993. *The walls came tumbling down: the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe*. New York: Oxford University Press. And, Ramet, Sabrina P, and Gale Stokes. 2008. "The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005". *The Journal of Modern History*. 80 (2): 470.

resistance, and then the Second World with the rise of the Partisans and the formation of Yugoslavia. Given these historical influences and Bosnia's central location between the states of Serbia and Croatia, the Sarajevo's composition was international and interethnic, and mainly consisted of Serbs, Croats and Bosnians. Tito's Sarajevo was more open (meaning that Yugoslavs could travel to and from, and work in Western Europe) than many Central and East European cities under socialism, but until internationalism at the global scale reached the city in the 1980's, the city had mainly operated at local and regional scales.

Regardless of Cold War turmoil –namely animosity and the fear of nuclear war, Sarajevo was selected to be the 1984 Winter Olympic City. The event both put the city on a global stage, and brought visitors to the city from all over the world. Sarajevo was selected for its relatively neutral position in the middle of the Cold War arms race, and for its advantageous topography –surrounded by hills and mountains.¹⁰ In preparation for the event, many of the cities buildings and public facilities were updated and even repurposed. The city authorities built and rehabilitated parts of Sarajevo that hosted ceremonies, games and athletes. One of these structures was a particularly well-known, centrally located icon initially built under Tito, called Skenderija Centar. Initially, it served as a public or social space and was then built up fifteen years later as the Dom Mladih (Youth Center) for the Olympic ceremonies. After the games, a Habsburg Villa was designated as a new Olympic Museum to display the material of Yugoslavia's success and pride. World visitors arrived in the city, and the stadiums

¹⁰ As mentioned, Tito's Socialist program allowed more civic freedoms than Stalinist models, which Tito and the Partisans made a clean break from. The SFRY was not directly tied to any support from the USSR like the Bloc countries.

and public centers provided a more than adequate backdrop for the athletes and games. As a result, the 1984 Winter Olympic Games are recalled fondly by many Sarajevans as one of the last globally featured events to take place in the city before the Siege tore it apart eight years later.

While the spectacular nature of the Olympic games is easily recalled as an instance of urban internationalism at the global scale –other indications that the city was open to accepting and participating in models for global, particularly Western, culture were also emerging in Sarajevo in the mid to late 1980's. For instance, just one year after the '84 Olympics Sarajevo held the first of three contemporary art biennales (1985, 1987, 1989). The biennale, called Jugoslav Dokumenta (Yugoslav Documenta), was the first international, and like the Olympics, globally scaled, event to come out of the arts community in Sarajevo. In line with the conventional biennale model, event organizers invited artists from around the world to view and contribute work to the exhibition. The success of both the '84 Olympics and Yugoslav Documenta indicated that Sarajevo was both open and cosmopolitan enough to host two iconic and timely international events staged at the global scale.

The Threat of War and the Dissolution of Yugoslavia

While Sarajevo's cosmopolitan public poised itself for the significant transitions which at the time (ca. 1989-1991)¹¹ were affecting most of Central and Eastern Europe, there were, however, many who feared what effect the folding of the Second World into the First would have on the SFRY. The resistance to the changes could first and foremost be found in political and geopolitical conversations around the future of Yugoslavia and South East Europe. The feared effect was the fragmentation of Yugoslavia into the six republics that had been united under Tito since the formation of the country during the Second World War.¹²

Their fears were realized with the secession of both Slovenia and Croatia in 1991. However, Slovenia and Croatia had not quite the interethnic mix that Bosnia and Herzegovina did at the time. Bosnia and Herzegovina, although majority Muslim, was made up mainly of a mix of Croat, Serb and Bosnian people. Their cultural influences came not from one place, one nation or religion, but from many. There was a high Serb population, particularly in Bosnia (rather than Herzegovina in the South) which created a tension that erupted into disputes over territories and rights, yet many people who recall this time in Sarajevo did not believe that these negotiations would escalate to the point

¹¹ 1989-1991 saw the collapse of the second world. The USSR as well as the Eastern Block and any Central European Countries were transitioning (many of them rather smoothly) to democratic political and capitalist economic systems. For more information see note 6, this chapter.

¹² The republics were Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and the Autonomous Republic of Macedonia.

of full-blown war.¹³ In any case, they were not prepared for armed conflict. Bosnia had no official army for up until March 1992, they were still a part of Yugoslavia. They had hosted the Olympic Games and the Biennales in the name of the entire country of Yugoslavia, not the republic of B-H or Sarajevo.

However, in 1992 –after two republics had left Yugoslavia under tense circumstances, and the city of Sarajevo was rather well equipped by modern standards to provide for its citizens, the Bosnian leadership was faced with the difficult decision of whether or not to declare independence from Yugoslavia. Tensions rose between the ethnic groups for fear that Bosnia and Herzegovina would secede as a primarily Muslim state (Their president at the time, Alija Izetbegovic, was Bosnian-Muslim –or, Bosniak) and the minority populations would be treated unfairly. There was little basis for this claim, however, given the demographic makeup and the way they had generally treated fairly throughout history. However, according to one historical perspective, there was a diplomatic solution in the works.¹⁴

Armed conflict had already flared in the Slovenia and Croatia over their secession, and so it was feared that the same would occur in Bosnia but to a level of greater severity because of the inter-ethnic demographics. According to their proportions, the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina would be divided amongst the three ethnic groups that shared the territory. As the story goes, Izetbegovic was willing to accept leadership 45.5 percent of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The rest would be divided

¹³Boris Cindric (Student and Soldier for Sarajevo during the Siege of Sarajevo), in discussion with the author, February 2011.

¹⁴ David N. Gibbs. *First do no harm: humanitarian intervention and the destruction of Yugoslavia*. (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009).

accordingly and given to Croatia (12 percent) and Serbia (42.5 percent).¹⁵ The majority of the international community supported this decision as it would be the best chance to avoid a war led by Nationalist Serb Forces who called themselves Chetniks and the Yugoslav National Army (JNA). The United States under George Bush, however, encouraged Izetbegovic to declare independence for all of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁶ The first shots on Sarajevo were fired that night.

The inter-ethnic mix of people and living space that was building to become a global city, particularly via arts and cultural events, was thoroughly endangered from that point forward. The first part of Sarajevo's urban history demonstrates how cosmopolitanism and modern urbanization were built into the city over centuries. The next consists of a story the changing the spatial order as well as the transformation of the state of cosmopolitan cultural life of the city as it came under a four-year military siege, *The Siege of Sarajevo*.

¹⁵ Gibbs, *First do no harm: humanitarian intervention and the destruction of Yugoslavia*.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2. URBICIDE AND THE SIEGE OF SARAJEVO, 1992-1996

“...the problem is not to have criteria that make sense. They need merely exist in making coincide a specific difference and tracing the line on a map”¹

-Jacques Rancière on difference, geopolitics and Serb military strategy in Sarajevo.

The next period in Sarajevo’s urban history (1992-1996), is best characterized not as the former by its *construction*, but rather its *destruction*. For Sarajevo, geopolitical decisions surrounding independence resulted in a long, violent urban siege and severe damage and destruction. Though B-H was recognized by the international community as a new state, the international-*ism* experienced by Sarajevans with the global events of the 1980’s abruptly ended. The war overtook the city, its people, and places to a degree that has changed its urban history as well as the historical narrative surrounding its construction. The narrative is distinct from history itself in that it is the way the story of the city has most commonly been framed and told, while history itself is made of events that produce objects like buildings, streets and cities. The line previously drawn *through* the linear city was diverted and drawn *around* the city as it was surrounded by attacking forces. According to Robert Bevan, a scholar who has studied the damage closely, nearly every building inside of the front lines was affected by sniper shells and mortar fire.² Everything changed, including the concept for its history that was so easily supported by the makeup of the city itself.

Over the course of four years, Nationalist Serb forces surrounded Sarajevo and shelled people, homes, mosques, public areas and buildings, as well as cultural and

¹ Jacques Rancière and Steve Corcoran.”Borges in Sarajevo, “ in *Chronicles of consensual times*. (London: Continuum 2005), 5.

² Robert Bevan. *The destruction of memory: architecture at war*. (London: Reaktion, 2006).

government institutions throughout the city. The city lost approximately 10,000 of its 300,000 residents as they were either killed or fled. The list of damaged historical buildings and cultural property exceeds 1,300.³ The Siege of Sarajevo was the first moment in Sarajevo's history to have had a totalizing effect of damage and destruction on people, buildings and the city as a whole.

The particular type of severe destruction done to Sarajevo makes it unlike many other cities in the East European region, yet similar to other urban places that have been recognized and studied for their destruction. They are often studied for the military strategy that intentionally overtakes them, often referred to as *urbicide*. According to Bogdan Bogdanović on Sarajevo, urbicidal tactics can be identified as “the intentional attack on the human and inert fabric of the city with the intent of destroying the civic values embodied within it –the very spaces for interaction where cultures are generated and shared.”⁴ And so, if the interpretation that Sarajevo is a city made of shared space is legitimate,⁵ then it follows that the entire city was destroyed.

New Cities, New Wars –Targets and Threats

Stephen Graham introduces his edited volume on *Cities, War and Terrorism*⁶ by suggesting that phenomena like severe damage and destruction, while tragic, are nothing new to the global history of war *or* cities. According to Graham, people have

³ Robert Bevan. *The destruction of memory: architecture at war*. (London: Reaktion, 2006).

⁴ Bogdan Bogdanović. “The City and Death,” in Jeri Labon, ed., Michael Henry Heim, trans., *Balkan Blues: Writing Out of Yugoslavia* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 5.

⁵ Here I refer again to Donia's perspective on shared space and multiculturalism.

⁶ Stephen Graham. *Cities, war, and terrorism: towards an urban geopolitics*. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

spent just as much energy destroying cities as building them.⁷ Modern and post-modern urban warfare, like that which occurred in Sarajevo, however, have been treated as unique by those who study destroyed cities. Urbicide, as a 20th-century phenomenon of urban warfare, has been linked to characteristics that define modern and post-modern trends in urban development.

There are two points of analysis that have helped to begin to answer why modern cities are such threatening places and strategic targets to violent military forces. The first, according to many, is the cosmopolitan heterogeneities that many times co-exist in modern cities. After centuries of transition between eras of different kinds of influence, layers build and dynamic spatial as well as cultural differences converge in one place to threaten a given group beset on the imposition of a singular (political or cultural) ideology by force. And the other, according to Martin Shaw, is urbanization and horizontally sprawling development densities that began with industrialization that drove urbanization after the World Wars. With this, Shaw says, emerged vital if peripheral sites for concentrated resources that were often located around rather than inside cities, making them both easy and effective targets.⁸

In *New Wars of the City: Relationships of "Urbicide" and "Genocide,"*⁹ Shaw applies both of these urban elements to his analysis of "new wars." He claims that trends in modern urban growth, specifically industrialization and urbanization have made the border between the city and the surrounding state increasingly blurred and

⁷ Stephen Graham. "Introduction: Cities, Warfare, and States of Emergency" in *Cities, war, and terrorism: towards an urban geopolitics*. Stephen Graham, ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

⁸ Martin Shaw. "New Wars of the City: Relationships of 'Urbicide and Genocide'" in *Cities, war, and terrorism: towards an urban geopolitics*. Stephen Graham, ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

⁹ Martin Shaw, "New Wars of the City: Relationships of 'Urbicide and Genocide.'"

permeable. The center of the city, according to Shaw, was once the prize for victory in war rather than the target of the warfare. With industrialization and advancement in energy resources networked by urban infrastructure from industry and manufacturing, however, fixed centers have become harder to locate, less dense, and their value becomes distributed throughout the city. And so, as states have gone to war, cities that have grown beyond bounds historically in-place for protection (e.g. fortification walls, protected governmental districts) have become increasingly vulnerable to attack.¹⁰ Cities that come under fire often have their industries, utilities, peripheries *and* center destroyed, which results in what Shaw refers to as “total war.”¹¹

There may have been conditions that made Sarajevo vulnerable to the devastating effect of total war that Shaw does not fully account for, but their rapid modern-era industrial growth was, true to form, a significant target early in the Siege. The sprawling build up of industry in the modern period (a trend begun in the late Austro-Hungarian period and driven forward by Tito) and dense residential complexes to house industrial workers, were tall and vulnerable. The dense high-rises built to house workers were often targeted and large numbers of people were killed, injured and displaced. As utility and industrial buildings were destroyed, the urban energy supply was cut off, and manufacturing was made impossible. Commonplace functions like freedom of movement, assumed right to domicile, communication and medical treatment for the sick and wounded became rare, and it became clear that the Siege had quickly surpassed the limits of geo-political negotiations and statecraft strategies

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

wherein the destruction of industrial and utility buildings might pass as collateral damage.¹² Every part of life in the city was under attack and what made the city run, made the city stop.¹³

Martin Coward and Martin Shaw, both researchers and scholars on Sarajevo and Bosnia agree that ethnic groups across Bosnia were targeted based on their ethnic and religious differences –the Nationalist Serb forces were selective and destructive to the Muslim population, and at times the retaliation was specific as well. However, both Shaw and Coward have called attention to the fact that cities are not easily defined according to one ethnicity or background; this is particularly the case in cosmopolitan Sarajevo. Coward and Shaw have separately studied the totalizing effect of the Siege and as a result have both identified the occurrence of urbicide as the strategy that targeted not only a singular ethnic group residing in the city, but also plural and heterogeneous human life and living spaces to upset or overtake the cosmopolitanism itself. As has been noted in the case of Sarajevo, the city is more of an agglomeration, made of a multitude of influences and perspectives including Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic, Jewish, Serb, Bosnian, Croat, Socialist and Capitalist and for that very reason (rather than strictly that of its Muslim heritage) was perceived as a threat. Their interpretation of why Sarajevo was targeted suggests that the group mentality held by

¹² Collateral Damage is the only damage legally allowed in urban areas during armed conflict according to The 1908 Hague Convention, the first legal document to clearly define the laws of war as a part of International Humanitarian Law. The Hague Convention in full text (English) can be accessed at <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/INTRO/235?OpenDocument>.

¹³ The Siege of Sarajevo has been studied by lawyers who have pieced together a narrative of days as they unfolded, deaths as they occurred, and buildings as they were destroyed that supports this claim. While each building that was damaged or destroyed will not be indexed here, The Final Report to the United Nations on the Siege of Sarajevo is a detailed resource that helps to pinpoint events and create an overall, and generally accepted story of the four-year attack on the city. It can be accessed at <http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/comexpert/anx/vi-01.htm>.

groups of Bosnian city residents was diverse and open, and not at all homogenous and as might be implied by Halbwach's study of collectivity and memory in groups that relates to urban space, and not as singular as has been suggested by the invading Nationalist Serb forces. The city was defended by Sarajevans, perhaps on the grounds of collectivity, but not around a singular identity –rather, an identity that was shared, spectral and different, just as its spaces.

This particular threat of the cosmopolitan city, indicated by everyday facts of urban life like intermarriage, mixed neighborhoods, equal access to resources and high levels of advanced education were present, and not only of symbolic spaces within it, has been cited as a motivation for the severity of the Siege by many scholars and researchers of pre-war as well as wartime and post-conflict Sarajevo.¹⁴ And, as well by General Radovan Karadžić who has been accused of ordering its subjugation as he declared, “this is a fight to the finish, a battle for living space”¹⁵ on a radio recording used at The Hague as evidence against him for orchestrating crimes against humanity.

In the case of Sarajevo, The Hague Convention and International Humanitarian Law¹⁶ was ineffective against urbicidal tactics that rely on the very type of destruction the doctrine prohibits to accomplish the desired intent. The Siege overwhelmed the city and the number of damaged buildings grew. According to one witness to the destruction,

¹⁴ See Andras Riedlmayer in “The war on people and the war on culture,” *New Combat*, Autumn (1994), 16-19, and also Robert Hayden as cited by Martin Coward, *Urbicide in Bosnia*, 154 and Robert Donia in *Sarajevo, A Biography*.

¹⁵ “Radovan Karadzic trial: key quotes – Telegraph,” Last modified October 27, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/bosnia/6447941/Radovan-Karadzic-trial-key-quotes.html>.

¹⁶ The Hague Convention, among other things, prohibits the destruction of cultural property in the event of armed conflict.

each building's destruction revealed the vulnerability of the next.¹⁷ The destruction catalyzed groups of architects and students of architecture to organize, document and discuss its effect publicly and internationally. While more or less incapable of defending the actual physical material of the city during the siege, their material supplement to the story of the city's destruction from a spatial standpoint is invaluable for documenting and understanding the weight and breadth of its impact on people and places.

The Student Association of Architects-Sarajevo (SAA-S) in the Architecture Department at University of Sarajevo and Das Sabih, the Sarajevo Architects Association, a professional group, have independently produced images and texts that were presented as exhibitions in public and academic venues so that the destruction they recorded was provided a forum in which it could be represented, interpreted and discussed.¹⁸ The projects (magazines, screenings, exhibitions) ranged in media and audience, and vacillated between document and testament. As a whole, their material coheres to form a rich source information that adds content and interpretive depth to a mapped urban history of Sarajevo.

¹⁷ Boris Cindric (Student and Soldier for Sarajevo during the Siege of Sarajevo, founder of Sarajevo Association of Student Architects), in discussion with the author, February 2011.

¹⁸ Association of Architects DAS-SABIH, *Warchitecture: Urbicide Sarajevo* (Sarajevo: Association of Architects DAS-SABIH, 1994).

The SAA-S mapped the Siege (Figures 1 and 2):



Figure 1. Years of Living Dangerously 1992-1995. A map drawn by the SAA-S to locate the front lines around Sarajevo and depict destroyed and targeted areas within the city. Boris Cindrić, founder of SAA-S, Private Collection.

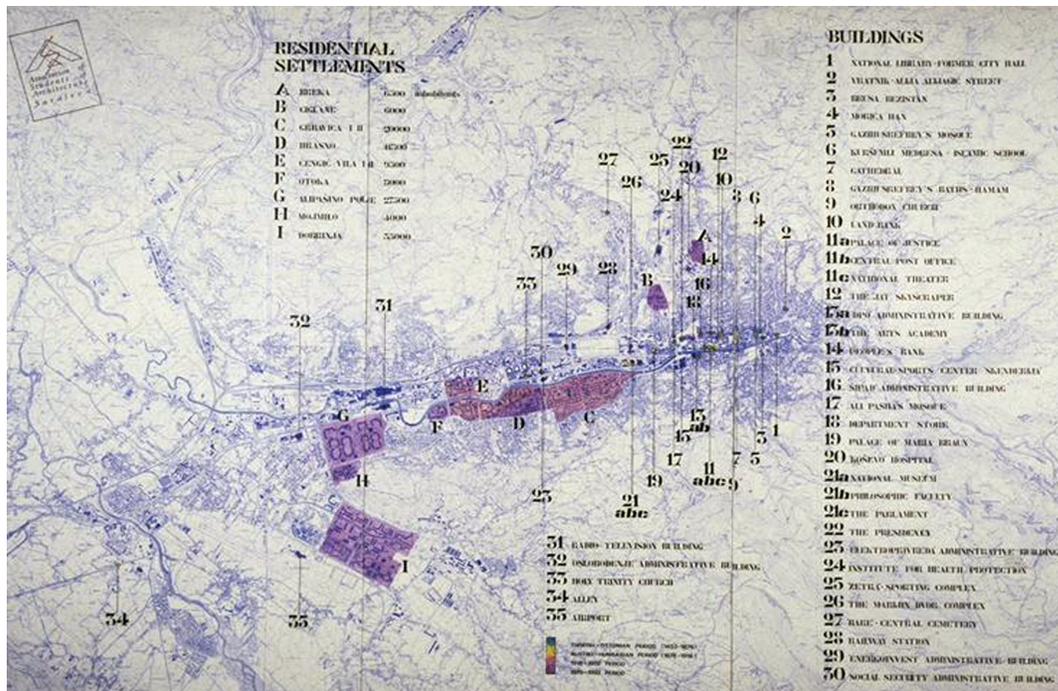


Figure 2. Damage according to settlements and Buildings drawn by SAA-S. Boris Cindrić, founder of SAA-S, Private Collection.

Their spatial and geographic representation of the city not only makes for a more complete story that integrates the intimate knowledge of place as carried by residents as it was threatened and destroyed– but also one that helps to illustrate the spatial practice of destruction, and underscores the value of their record to Sarajevo’s urban history as it stands to backdrop the future of the city. Their map produced during the war, for instance, offers more information about targeted and destroyed buildings and urban areas than those produced by the cities planning department (figure 3):

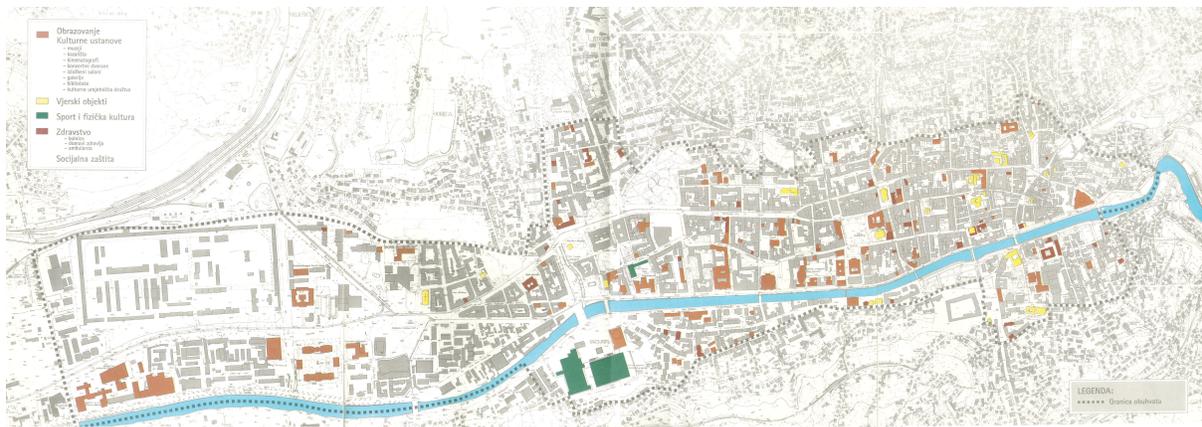


Figure 3. Cultural and Social Buildings in Sarajevo, 1997. Sarajevo Urban Planning Department, 1997.

Even under close study, this map could not reveal the dramatic revision to the architecture of the city that occurred as a result of the Siege. The representation of the National Library (Figure 5), for instance, looks very different than those on record with those documenting the destruction of the city (Figure 6). The buildings

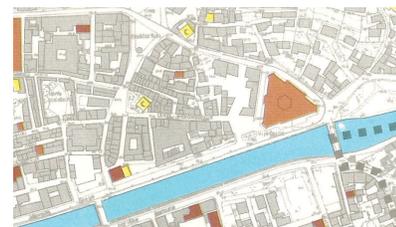


Figure 4. Vijećnica (National Library) Sarajevo Urban Planning Department, 1997.

interior, along with everything inside was burned. This map created by the planning department provides few means for understanding with any accuracy the condition of

the city the year it was created, and as a result avoids acknowledgement of one of the



Figure 5. Vijećnica, 1992. Photograph, Das Sabih. 1992

most major and totalizing periods in Sarajevo’s urban history, or at the very least indirectly disallows a place for the Siege in the historical narrative as well as future development.

The city map of functions was made in 1997, just one year after the end of the Siege. The thinness of the

information about the buildings on the new map of the city was not for lack of accessible material to include. If the ruins in the city was not testament enough to their changed state, the destruction to many of the properties marked on this map was recorded and indexed quite thoroughly by SAA-S and by Das Sabih, the professional association of architects (Figure 6):

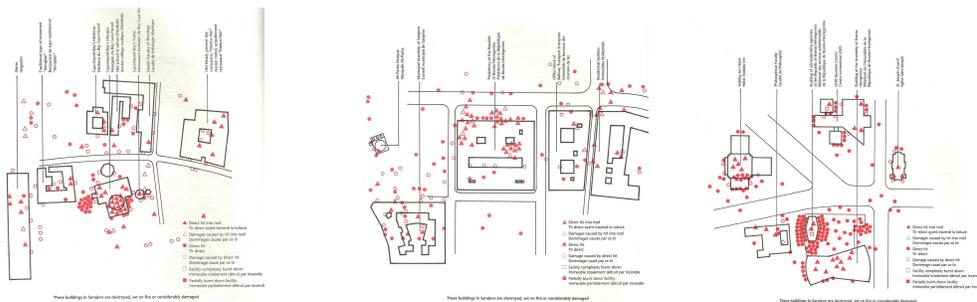


Figure 6. Mapping the destruction to the city in the Ottoman Quarter, the Austro-Hungarian Quarter and New Sarajevo (modern and contemporary buildings). From the *Warchitecture – Urbicide Sarajevo* Exhibition Catalog. Das Sabih, 1992.

Their photographs and maps cohered as a new image of the city and its places as they were transformed by damage and destruction.

Das Sabih created a general platform for discussion of the damage and their documentation of it, sometimes in the form of a conference, exhibition or screening. In 1994, the exhibition, *Urbicide –Sarajevo, Sarajevo Une Ville Blessée*, traveled from Sarajevo to France –first to Bordeaux and then to Paris. The Centre Georges Pompidou, established as a public space for contemporary art and culture, hosted their collected works and was followed other European Galleries and then by Storefront for Art and Architecture and, Dia Art Center in New York which held a symposium entitled *Sarajevo: Cultural Resistance Under Siege* and then Parsons School of Design which supported the comprehensive coordination of discussion around the topic of wartime architecture and the destruction of cultural property with a related exhibition entitled *Sarajevo: Dream and Reality*. They documented and discussed the makeup of the city as a whole as it was transformed by the war, and according to both those who experienced the war as well as those who study it, much more was lost than buildings.

Robert Bevan has indexed conflict-related damage in many different places worldwide, and as a result has drawn clear connections between crimes against humanity, and crimes against urbanity, specifically in regard to the way destruction affects memory. In *Destruction of Memory, Architecture at War*, he takes a view of urbicide that is specific to the cultural dimension of the destruction to cities. Erasure by urbicide, says Bevan, occurs when one national, ethnic or religious group is targeted by another and is oppressed by the forceful destruction of their architecture.¹⁹

His main cases for such an assertion are spatial studies of Nazi persecution of the Jews and the attack on Bosnia by the Serb Nationalist forces. In his book, Bevan

¹⁹ , Robert Bevan. *The destruction of memory: architecture at war*. (London: Reaktion, 2006.)

compares the severe destruction related to Kristallnacht, (the night of broken glass, 1938) to the War in Bosnia (mainly Mostar and Sarajevo). Kristallnacht and the Siege of Sarajevo both entailed severe loss of cultural property at the hands of one group looking to terrorize another by violent destruction of their urban places, and so their cultural memory. And in the global context of conflicts that have a clear spatial dimension (and most do) Bevan recalls other 20th-Century contested territories where the right to occupy and ascribe meaning to a city as a minority or marginalized group is intentionally and violently challenged by a repressive force of destruction: Belfast, the West Bank and Gaza, Jerusalem, Beirut and the Muslim/Hindu/Buddhist divides that still plague places in India. The list goes on, and as it does Bevan has found continual affirmation in his thought that “The link between erasing any physical reminder of a people and its collective memory and the killing of the people themselves is ineluctable.”²⁰

However, it is the task of any who may choose to research cities precisely what those people, their collective memory and spatial relationships entailed. Of what does the physical remind?

The city of Sarajevo was specifically *not* reminder of a Muslim people to everyone who lived there, although this was part of the city and population. And so, if what Halbwachs says is true, that “The group not only transforms the space into which it has been inserted, but also yields and adapts to its physical surroundings. It becomes enclosed within the framework it has built...”²¹ then it follows that urban spatial conditions that were defended by those who identified with the perhaps collective in a

²⁰ Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory*, 2006.

²¹ Maurice Halbwachs, “Space and the Collective Memory,” In *The Collective Memory*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

sense, but certainly not uniform but rather in line cosmopolitan spirit that had for so long defined the city. The city, its Muslim and Non-Muslim places, was defended by Muslim and Non-Muslim people alike. Bogdanović, after all, has articulated his notion of culture in the plural form in his definition of urbicide, based on the destruction of Sarajevo.

Plurality is antithetical to singularity and so the explanation that difference itself is a threat that drives modern and post-modern cities, is sensible and recognizable. Plural, heterogeneous, cosmopolitan cities pose a threat to the force of war that takes on an overtone that is decidedly and heavy and singular –and as will be noted later, even serve as a productive cultural and spatial counterweight.

Spatial Transformation, Material and Meaning

The story of the city as a place that was transforming more each day of the Siege than it had over hundreds of years requires consideration of the human associations embedded therein. In an effort to understand the nature of the material changes and what this meant for the conception of the city as a new place, Eyal Weizman and Andrew Herscher have created overlapping frames in which to view and study the damage. They have studied destruction as a spatial strategy via the ruins and the documentation with both practical and conceptual considerations of architecture's agency in twentieth century urban warfare.

Eyal Weizman, an architect and scholar who has researched the damage done to both the Gaza and the West Bank, and some in Sarajevo, has drawn parallels and

connections between the intentional destruction of urban architecture and the transformation of living spaces that come under armed conflict. More precisely, he has studied occupation, urban warfare and the way both use space as a malleable medium to forcefully portray a message. In his study of Israeli Defense Force (IDF) military tactics in the Occupied Territories, he has found an intentional breakdown and strategic reconfiguration of the urban territory. IDF tactics, says Weizman, involved “a conception of the city as not just the site but also the very medium of warfare – a flexible, almost liquid medium that is forever contingent and in flux.”²² Essentially, Weizman has proposed that urban warfare be viewed (and has been explicitly articulated by IDF commanders) as a spatial strategy intended to first disrupt and then to gain control over the configuration of enemy territory –in this case, by intentional modification and destruction of the space of the city and the incitement of fear and terror in its people. As structures, mainly homes, were invaded and transformed into ruins by destructive military force, their meaning and purpose shifted –their identity as a place was disrupted, and essentially re-placed as another.

Andrew Herscher, has directly applied the study of urban warfare and the primary source documentation recorded by Das Sabih to a study of Sarajevo with similar findings in terms of intent and effect of the military strategy of the Nationalist Serb Forces. In line with Weizman, Herscher has studied architecture as it has been transformed to ruins. In so doing, he has found architecture to be capable of carrying

²² , Eyal Weizman. "The Art of War - The Israeli army has been heavily influenced by contemporary philosophy, highlighting the considerable overlap between military and architectural theory". *Frieze : Contemporary Art and Culture* 99 (2006): 146. Or, last accessed August 1, 2011. http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/the_art_of_war/.

what he calls a “Language of Damage,”²³ which later supports what he develops as a “Warchitectural Theory.”²⁴ The latter’s title is borrowed from Das Sabih’s 1993 exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou, *Warchitecture*. With his theory, Herscher claims that both the symbolic and material effects of destruction are equally as compelling as construction.²⁵ He insists that as violent force takes one place, it creates another, namely a ruin rather than a city to live in.

Herscher, grapples not only with loss of memory, physical reminders or space itself, but also with the agency of space as it changes form. He views intentional damage to buildings as a strategy deployed to shift the public conception of their meaning with their materiality as he asks “How then to do justice to the destruction of Sarajevo?...”²⁶ Herscher is not asking for justice in the legal sense, but rather as it relates to representation and description of the destruction. When a building is violently transformed what then, Herscher asks, is at stake? Like Cresswell, he is concerned with naming this new place: “...By What name to call it?”²⁷

Das Sabih, along with Andrew Herscher have called it both *Warchitecture* and *Urbicide* in the study of Sarajevo as it was destroyed, both titles imply that groups inside and outside of the city agree that destruction was an intentional spatial practice with a clear effect. As urban targets were deliberately selected and destroyed, life, cultural identity, common use and public image were all affected as the built heritage

²³ Andrew Herscher. "The Language of Damage," *Grey Room*. 1, 7 (2002): 68-71.

²⁴ Andrew Herscher. "Warchitectural Theory," *JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION*. 61, 3 (2008): 35-43. Or, last accessed August 1, 2011 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/doi/10.1111/j.1531-314X.2007.00167.x/pdf>

²⁶ Herscher, “Warchitectural Theory.”

²⁷ *Ibid.*

and the heterogeneous place gave way. As mentioned, the *total* destruction of Sarajevo was unprecedented –a blanket effect of any spatial practice had never before taken hold of the entire city until 1992, when urbicide arrived with the Siege and the narrative that described neatly faceted, yet congenially shared spaces was now dramatically upset. Thus, Das Sabih was the was one of the very first map the city to the following effect depicted on the map below (Figure.7)

Groups like the SAA and Das Sabih mapped a wholly changing city. As they did, they acknowledged the historical narrative, adapted it and began to consider the notion of a future for Sarajevo. Their work, along with that of historians, urbanists, geographers and researchers of war and cities not only provides a framework for understanding the spatial dimension of urban warfare, but as well a historical backdrop before which the future, if uncertain, unfolds.

Robert Donia and Martin Shaw agree that despite the length and severity of the Siege of Sarajevo, Sarajevo along with its citizens retained a social life and many of its cosmopolitan aspects,²⁸ but they do not describe how, or by what means. They do not discuss how Halbwachs' notion

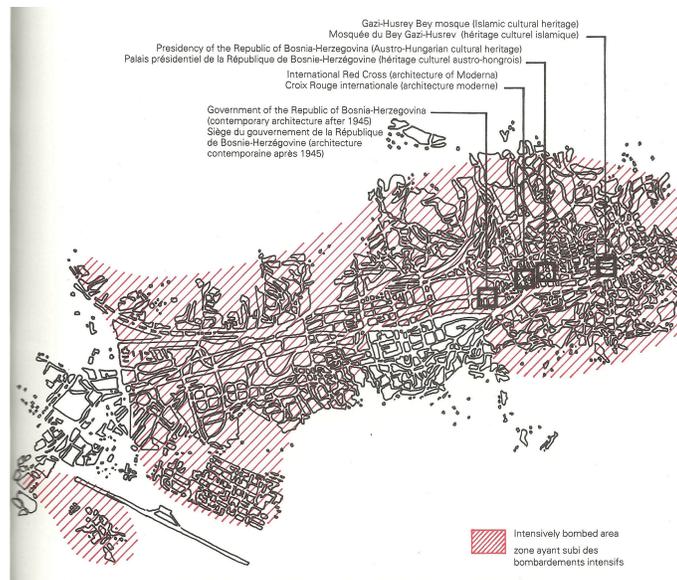


Figure 7. Map indicating the surrounded city and intensively bombed area. Das Sabih, 1992.

²⁸ Donia, Sarajevo –a biography. Shaw, Martin, “New Wars of the City: Relationships of ‘Urbicide and Genocide’”

of social and spatial “equilibrium” was restored. Clearly, architects acknowledged what was at stake as violence and destruction overtook the city, they actively documented and discussed the conditions. And then there were those who challenged it outright with a constructive, and as we will see, productive spatial tactics intended to both resist and counter the losses. The urban historical record was reshuffled in terms of its meaning, materiality and historical narrative, as a result artists and arts community organizers responded by occupying and transforming the new places, for example ruins and abandoned spaces, as they emerged across the city. They sifted through ruins and abandoned buildings in search of both a new place to stage social life and creative intervention that would, by their very presence, resist death and erasure. Without study of these tactics, Herscher’s questions: “How then to do justice to the destruction of Sarajevo? By what name to call it?”²⁹ only partly considered, and the story of life and survival of the city under Siege incomplete.

²⁹ Herscher, “Warchitectural Theory.”

CHAPTER 3. ART VERSUS WAR AND DEATH IN SARAJEVO 1992-PRESENT

*Community –koinonia communitas, emerges at times of profound social transformation or of great turmoil including the destructions of a social order...thus arises koinonia, or the drive to it, the drive to community. It comes or it emerges, perhaps it constitutes itself, because what it calls, what it names, what it designates is not or is no longer given.*¹

-Jean Luc Nancy

*Without leaving the place where he has no choice but to live and which lays down its law for him, he establishes within it a degree of plurality and creativity. By an art of being in between, he draws unexpected results from his situation.*²

-Michel De Certeau

When Michel de Certeau discusses the division of the city and sites for specific roles or behaviors, in *The Practice of Everyday Life*,³ he removes the barrier between them and rather folds sites of work, leisure, etc. together referring to them as a “*bricolage*.”⁴ He identifies each place as having a predetermined point or purpose, and then a potential counterpoint that is non-specific and socially or temporally determined. Regarding the bricolage of place, de Certeau is concerned with human presence and action just as much as he is with space. There is a layer of depth added to the space studied by this model of thought, as it allows for consideration of not only what has happened but also what does or can happen, or as Cresswell and Halbwachs might say, the potential for social and cultural meaning.

By proposing that there is a plurality common to the relationship between action and space, he opens up the entire field of *place* to an ongoing, push-pull process of purposing and re-purposing. One of his main points of focus in his chapter on “Making-

¹ Jean-Luc Nancy. “Communism, the word” in *The Idea of Communism* ed. Douzinas, Costas, and Slavoj Žižek. (London: Verso 2010).

² Michel de Certeau. *The practice of everyday life*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 30.

³ Michel de Certeau. *The practice of everyday life*.

⁴ Michel de Certeau. *The practice of everyday life*, 30.

do”⁵ is that of “transverse tactics”⁶ that generally “do not obey the law of place...”⁷ and then emergent places, which, for realization, require transgressive action. He goes on to specify differences between *strategies* and *tactics* related to this process, both of which useful for the study of different “types of operations”⁸ that were used to transgress within the space of the city of Sarajevo while under Siege and create new places.

The first point of transgression in Sarajevo has been discussed at length as *urbicide*, a military *strategy* meant to “produce, tabulate and impose”⁹ the destruction of place and then control the reconfiguration of its use and meaning. The second point of transgression, carried out by working artists and arts community organizers, entailed a series of challenges to the rules that governed movement and life in the city as it was destroyed. As such, art and action were paired in the formation of an urban-spatial *tactic*, or a set of them that would “use, manipulate and divert”¹⁰ the spaces created by the former.

In many ways, de Certeau’s interpretation of the “art of being in between”¹¹ is, according to Lucy Lippard, in line with the production of both art and place as done by working artists. In her book, *Lure of the Local, Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*, Lippard has located a point “between place and change,” in what she calls a “web formed by land, history, culture and place...where artists thrive.”¹² And so it follows that the arts community along with working artists responded directly to the destruction

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² Lucy R. Lippard. *The lure of the local: senses of place in a multicentered society*. (New York: New Press, 1997), 18-19.

of living space in Sarajevo by continuing to live in Sarajevo as it transformed. As the city changed, so did art and its production. Urban space and art took on the material aspects of transformation as working artists and organizers of expressive action integrated with places in the city via creative responses to it.

Documentation of the experience of these changes is not easily come by, however, it can be recalled spatially, culturally and historically with qualitative ethnographic research. Rather than document, there exists ample testimony to the phenomenon of the drastic changes to social and cultural life. As a result, this study of the arts community as it both affected and was affected by the Siege is an ethnography of life in the city as artists remained critical, responsive and productive, both culturally and spatially, inside of the front lines and within the very fabric of besieged Sarajevo.

Trio

One narrative vignette found in *Portraits of Sarajevo*¹³, tells the story of the lives of two graphic designers who with one more made up the design group *Trio*. The story recalls the lack of choice as well as the unexpected results found by de Certeau in his view of creative counteractions to dominant practices:¹⁴

In late February 1993 we decided for the first and, so far at least, the last time, to go on a 'business trip,' the way others here already had. We planned to do it by night, running, crawling, rolling across the airport runway that was supposedly under UN protection but was actually controlled by the Serbian army...On our side of the barrier they pushed some blue cards into our hands, cut in zigzag shapes with some numbers on them, they pointed to the wire in

¹³ This collection of stories is composed of short chapters that are dominated by primary source statements. Dizdarević, Zlatko, Midhat Ridjanović, and Ammiel Alcalay. *Portraits of Sarajevo*. (New York: Fromm International, 1994).

¹⁴ Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 30.

front of us and said: Now scram, its over there...that night we tried to get across the runway five times but UNPROFOR stopped us every time. Finally, around three in the morning, we gave up on the whole idea and, completely frozen, miserable and dead tired and scared out of our wits, we went back home. For a year after that, we never stopped laughing at ourselves for what we did that night...We must have really wanted to fail deep down and it forced us to think of a more ingenious ways to reach the outside world since we couldn't do it physically. That old tune of Sarajevans who had left saying it was more important to get out and do something for Sarajevo from the outside than to stay kept nagging us. Then we started doing things with some posters; we would fax them around town when there was electricity. I guess the great idea was born from this, our idea of making postcards that would fool the UNPROFOR people, the journalists, the chetniks and everyone else...Its art, its tiny, and we can get it out to do the 'work' for us...¹⁵

All that Bojan and Lejla Hadzihaililović (two of the three in Trio) needed to continue working after they had begun was electricity, two working computers and printers, as they said, "All the rest we have".¹⁶ With observation, art and few resources they commented on where they were and what they had. They adapted to the city around them and inserted themselves into it with creative practice. Ultimately, the artists that formed Trio, found a way to make comment on marginality through subversive graphics that appropriated Western icons for the purpose of retrofitting them with messages from the besieged city.(Figure 8)

¹⁵ Zlatko Dizdarević, Midhat Ridjanović, and Ammiel Alcalay. *Portraits of Sarajevo*. (New York: Fromm International, 1994), 18-19.

¹⁶ Zlatko Dizdarević, Midhat Ridjanović, and Ammiel Alcalay. *Portraits of Sarajevo*, 19.

Many of the messages were both iconic and ironic. The logos depicted absurdities like branding Sarajevo as a spectacular urban place like Hollywood (here I refer to the bottom center image in Figure 8), or as a former market for transnational corporations like Coca-Cola (and here to the second from the bottom left in Figure 8). They commented on barriers that needed to be overcome to end the war and restore peace. And they commented on the limits of westernization of the city. With irony and even sarcasm, their ad-campaign *did the work* of letting the world know how they might help and



Figure 8. Collected postcards created by Trio during the war. Boris Cindric, founder of SAA-S, Private Collection.

they testified to problems of the city that were less obvious than the violent treatment of its buildings and people. They were able to convey messages that reporting, which was mostly focused on the politics of violence and suggested that the war was in some way inevitable or impenetrable to outside forces, did not.

With graphics printed in the familiar and transportable form of a postcard, and their distribution, Trio directly challenged any global public or pop cultural assumption that Sarajevo was helpless prey to violence. Their symbolic compositions united worlds inside and outside of the front lines in a powerful tension. Their contemporary image

selection calls for the recognition that the interpretation of the war and its destruction should not be framed as irreparable extension of some misplaced, if persistent, notion of ethnic Balkan barbarism, but rather treated as an unacceptable and deplorable violation of respect for urban cultural identity and the cosmopolitan place in which it is historically embedded.

Genocide and uricide were overtaking a modern European city –its cultural buildings destroyed in direct violation of the International Humanitarian Law,¹⁷ and yet the rest of Europe stood by. The people of Sarajevo waited. As they did they publicly responded and many times took both art and space as media for their message.

Performance within and below the ruins

Some of the actions initiated were perhaps more directly critical of the political, cultural and spatial violence, like Trio –and some potentially less critical, but just as expressive and useful in countering its effect. Take for instance the case of Vedran Smailovic who refused to allow the new conditions to take away his 20-year-long career as a cellist in the Sarajevo Symphony. However, he responded by continuing his creative practice in the spaces of the city, regardless of what they had become. The National Library was destroyed, and it became a site for one of Smailovic’s cello performances.

He played in the National Library, at funeral services and in the old Turkish market, traditionally safe places that had, under the circumstances become highly

dangerous and partly or mostly destroyed. His story was one of the few covered as acts of resistance to the particularly severe destruction to the city and its everyday cultural life. According to a local account, “Sarajevo became a city of theatres, concerts, exhibitions, festivals, thus proving that culture and arts even in the most difficult times are an essential human need.”¹⁸ Together the consistent work of arts community culminated during the war to sustain cultural, cosmopolitan life in the city as it was threatened with destruction by urbicidal military tactics. Sarajevo is said to have held over 25 exhibitions of art in the city over the course of the Siege.¹⁹

One such event was the first Sarajevo Film Festival. The beginning of the festival is one such example of the shifting of purposes of urban space for the sake of responding to the wartime changes and sustaining the cosmopolitan functions of the city before the war. The cinema was destroyed and in an effort to replace the venue, the festival began with basement screenings that were meant to be a way to bring people together and to find a way to share in a cultural identity that was not as strictly defensive as the armed military strategy was required to be, but rather generative and creative.²⁰ Its value is underscored as it has grown to become the Sarajevo International Film Festival, a well attended, city supported, event that has been held each year since 1992.

Each spring, the festival opens space in the city to people who continue to testify to its success as a social and cultural strategy for resistance and reconstruction. During

¹⁸ *Opkoljeno Sarajevo (Besieged Sarajevo)* Exhibition Catalog, 4.

¹⁹ Caroline Juler. “Frontline,” *Art Monthly*, May (1994), 13.

²⁰ Kenneth Turan.. “Sarajevo” in *Sundance to Sarajevo Film Festivals and the World They Made*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 89-109.

the war, one of the most important things was to remain hidden so as to not be killed, but indeed to remain. The screenings that beame the festival moved around the city to wherever safe space could be secured, and the people of Sarajevo risked injury and even death to attend, not only in solidarity against destruction, but in Certeaudian terms, to “make do.”²¹ Their gathering and very presence despite great attempts to eliminate their possibility sustained a consciousness very much tied to the public, cosmopolitan life and shared space described by Donia in his view of Sarajevo before the war. The Sarajevo Film Festival has endured far longer than the Siege of Sarajevo and attracts a global audience –a sign of the strength and validity that not only military defenses, but social forces and creative responses have been vital to sustaining and protecting life in a city that suffers the destruction of 20th, and now 21st, century warfare.

In the first instance, Trio sustained a voice in the city that was artfully expressed, and the Film Festival protected particular social and cultural practice –however, there is as well an instance that creative vision that originally aimed to directly reconstitute the cultural life as it was lost in the city. The idea for a new museum of contemporary art, emerged in the Sarajevo arts community at a height of uncertainty, where public and religious buildings like museums, mosques and the library were being destroyed, or as Nancy calls “*times of profound social transformation or of great turmoil including the destructions of a social order.*”²² It has since evolved into a major urban art museum project has both raised new, and unearthed old questions around the role of art, culture

²¹ Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.

²² Jean-Luc Nancy. “Communism, the word” in *The Idea of Communism* ed. Douzinas, Costas, and Slavoj Žižek. (London: Verso 2010).

and building in the city in the wake of a crisis, or as Lippard would say, at a point
“between place and change.”²³

²³ Lucy R. Lippard. *The lure of the local: senses of place in a multichentered society*, 19.

CHAPTER 4. TO WHAT EFFECT? SARAJEVO AND THE ART OF UNCERTAINTY

*...we can understand how we recapture the past only by understanding how it is, in effect, preserved by our surroundings. It is to space –the space we occupy, traverse, have continual access to, or can at any time reconstruct in thought and imagination – that we must turn our attention.*¹

-Maurice Halbwachs

The Ars Aevi project was begun as a nameless idea to redeem the losses of wartime destruction. In fact, it was undertaken as what could be viewed as a Certeaudian “transverse tactic”² that meant to constructively subvert the dominant and destructive military strategy behind the Nationalist Serb-led siege of the city. The destruction catalyzed a response among working artists and the urban art community that has been ongoing long after the war and as a result, urban spaces both conventional and nonconventional, local and international, have opened up for the installation of new contemporary art and subsequently, public interpretation.

Cooperation between Sarajevo’s arts community and both local and international working artists was key to the initial phases of Ars Aevi’s locally developed concept and has continued to sustain its international growth. A museum with a large collection and no museum building, Ars Aevi, over the course of its evolution has in some ways taken on familiar models for museum and institution building and has as well, whether purposefully or incidentally, differed to the point where it extends the bounds around conventional museum typology both formally and programmatically.

¹ Maurice Halbwachs. “Space and the Collective Memory,” In *The Collective Memory*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 2.

² , Michel de Certeau. *The practice of everyday life*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 30.

Its differences in comparison with other art museum projects are largely a result of the projects unique beginning and the uncertain ways in which it has evolved and changed since. Its similarities have to do with global trends and precedents in urban art museum projects. Ultimately, Ars Aevi has been many things. Its definition has largely depended on the spatial and temporal urban context in which it has existed and adapted. For instance, it has been set in the city as an act of resistance to the destruction of the city and its cosmopolitan culture, and then placed as a site for proposed reconstruction. As it has evolved, questions around the project that complicate its original intent have emerged. Each question eventually arrives to the nebulous place where the role of built heritage, the destruction of built heritage (urbicide), art, architecture and models for urban development converge. And, where these relationships can be studied for their value to understanding the role of working artists and the local arts community as they responded to the destruction and have shaped reconstruction and reconstitution of cultural life in Sarajevo.

Uncertain Origins: Cataclysm and Catalyst

*Not even the most astute planners could anticipate such unity among the victims of all faiths and generations, such resolute, adamant resistance, such readiness to defend human dignity throughout the four years of hardship.*³

-Enver Hadžiomerspahić, primary founder and executive officer of Ars Aevi

Enver Hadžiomerspahić, the same man who planned the ceremonial events of the 1984 Winter Olympics, initially conceived of the Ars Aevi collection of contemporary world art. He was at his home, which shared a garden with the Sarajevo Olympic Museum, as he watched it burn (Figure 8) at the hands of armed forces invading the city.⁴ The Olympic Museum was significant to the cultural heritage of Sarajevo for both container *and* content. Originally, a villa built under the Habsburgs, the building was eventually repurposed as a place devoted to housing commemorative material of the city's Olympic Games. In many ways, the museum symbolized the pride of hosting a global event in the city of Sarajevo.



Figure 8. Olympic Museum, June 1992. Ars Aevi, *Facts*, exhibition catalog, 2005.

The Olympic Museum was destroyed in June 1992, at an early peak of the Siege. As Hadžiomerspahić felt the heat of its flames in his own home, he began to

³ Enver Hadžiomerspahić. *Facts*. Sarajevo: International Project Ars Aevi, 2005. Exhibition Catalog, 45.

⁴ Ibid.

seek redemption in a new “even bigger, even better museum.”⁵ Recalling his personal reaction, he says: “...I decided to invite the great artists of our time to express their protest against this injustice by donating their works and thus forming the collection of *their* future museum in Sarajevo.”⁶ To say the least, the foundations for what would become a project in urban re-development and institution building were set under personal and highly uncertain circumstances that had an undeniably catalyzing effect on the arts community.

Hadžiomerspahić’s idea was not to challenge only the destruction to Sarajevo’s built heritage with a new building to replace the old, but as well the isolation and fear felt by those living within the frontlines. By collecting art from internationally located, acclaimed artists, a solidarity and resistance movement with an arts agenda channeled into the city. Their action perforated the war zone to an end far different from those of armed forces and war reporters.⁷ Art itself became a tactic deployed by both conceptual and material means and in its various forms, like those that have been discussed, sustained resistance efforts of both the period art scene and the foundational ideas behind *Ars Aevi*. The possibilities that the art world afforded those working toward the goals for a new museum of contemporary art were envisioned as both specific to the conditions within city, and internationally projected, which was a main point for *Ars Aevi*. The relationship between a local art *scene* and a broader art *world* was formed before

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid. And a thought emphasized by Enver Hadžiomerspahić in an interview with the author, February 2011. Italics mine.

⁷ The UNHCR, with few exceptions, allowed mainly UN Protection Forces and Journalists to cross the borders during the Siege.

the war had ended, as a tactical relationship necessary for reclaiming space for the cultural life of the city, it was in place as it had just begun.

Over the course of two years under siege conditions, Hadžiomerspahić's idea to form the new collection and museum gained traction. He traveled from Sarajevo to Venice for the 1993 Biennale where the first action on behalf of Ars Aevi was to be staged in an exhibition entitled *Witness to Existence*. The collected work by Bosnian artists was promoted on an international stage while their capital city was under siege. With social and civic support, as well as that of the city and state government, and very little from the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) who granted only one pass to Hadžiomerspahić rather than one to each of the contributing artists to the exhibition, the work from within the frontlines was displayed before an at a global forum for contemporary art. The UNHCR also did not authorize the shipment of the work, and so video documentation of the exhibition had to suffice as representation of the work and action of the *Witness to Existence* artists. Despite these challenges, Hadžiomerspahić's contact and the work and the work that arrived from Bosnia was compelling, and fruitful.

At the Biennale, Hadžiomerspahić reached Enrico Comi, a trusted contact from the days of Yugoslav Dokumenta and Editor/Director of Contemporary art magazine, *Spazio Humano*, in Milan. Comi setup the *Spazio Humano* Contemporary Art Center in Milan and organized exhibitions that would found the permanent collection for Ars Aevi. The conditions in Sarajevo as expressed by Hadžiomerspahić and the work presented at the Biennale catalyzed artists across the Adriatic and made connections between

artistic thought in late 20th-Century Italy and urban society. The very first piece in the founding Milano Collection was contributed by Michelangelo Pistoletto, a contemporary artist well-known for his contribution to the *Arte Povera* (Art of Poverty) movement in the 1960's, and who's firm belief is that art is crucial to the assessment and discussion of societal conditions. Some of Pistoletto's central artistic values from the year when he donated *La Porta dello Specchio* to what would become Ars Aevi's Milano Collection were fully articulated in his 1994 essay, *The "Progetto Arte" ("Project Art") Manifesto*:

Progetto Arte (Project Art) is based on the idea that art is the most sensitive and complete expression of human thought, and that the time has come for artists to take on the responsibility of establishing ties among all other human activities, from economics to politics, science to religion, education to behaviour – in a word, among the threads that make up the fabric of society.⁸

He goes on in the same essay to discuss the problems of territorial identity, global economic imbalance and religious dogma –criticizing each as counter to the notion of a beneficial universality underpinned by contemporary art. While Pistoletto makes no specific reference to the Balkan War of the 1990's, his insights were directly in-line with the development of creative tactics undertaken by the arts community that was central to the practice of observing and creatively responding to the ground conditions in Sarajevo from 1994 to 1996.

Thanks to mayoral support from Sarajevo, a few artists whose work was held in Prato followed suit and donated art work, and incidentally, the name of the greater project itself with a 1996 exhibition entitled *Ars Aevi*. The Moderna Galerija (directed by

⁸ Michelangelo Pistoletto. "The Progetto Arte (Project Art) Manifesto, 1994" accessed August 1, 2011. http://www.pistoletto.it/eng/testi/the_progetto_arte_manifesto.pdf.

Zdenka Badinovać) in Ljubljana, Slovenia then joined the effort so that by 1997 –the project had 36 art objects in its permanent collection that included the work of Pistoletto and other recognizable names that included but were not limited to Daniel Buren, Enrico Castellani, Jannis Kounellis, Marina Abramović, Anish Kapoor, Marjetica Potrč and Bill Viola. One action, trip to the largest global forum of contemporary art and artists, the Venice Biennale, generated many small subsequent actions, which culminated to a form of artistic collaboration, had begun to reconstitute some of the rich cultural life that was compromised by the violence and destruction to the city of Sarajevo. By 1997, the war ended and while crises related to aftermath restructuring brought new burdens to the city, Hadžiomerspahić and his partners could boast an effort in coordinated internationalism that yielded a high-caliber collection of contemporary art by global standards.

From the beginning, the founders had visions that reached beyond the borders of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the South East European region.

Hadžiomerspahić articulates them clearly in a statement that reflects on collection strategies of Ars Aevi in relation to the global contemporary art circuit:

Everyone is entitled to the good intentions of inviting world artists into a project. During and after the Sarajevo tragedy, that right became even more prominent...It was very important that each exhibition, each new nucleus of the Collection, have a prominent international context. Planning the collective exhibitions in various cities and museums of Europe, I wanted the process of formation of the Collection to simultaneously become a powerful process of regional and international promotion and affirmation of our initiative.⁹

⁹ Enver Hadžiomerspahić, *Facts*, 39.

The project, in its multi-faceted entirety, was poised to operate at spectrum of scales that ranged from global to local in that places, artists and work would form a network of ideas and material that would channel in and out Sarajevo.

For obvious reasons, these channels opened and the network became freer to expand when war finally came to an end in 1996 and the battle lines receded.¹⁰ The drive for collecting was sustained and the project developed further as the city transitioned from conflict to post-conflict conditions. The capacity for collective vision and solidarity around not only resistance, but recovery and reconstitution by prominent artists in the international art world was underscored when high-profile American artists like Cindy Sherman, Nan Goldin and others donated their work in support of the project after a pavilion was set up in honor of Ars Aevi at the 1997 Venice Biennale. That year, the Ars Aevi/Venice Collection was formed.

In 1998, two new collections/nuclei were formed, both significant in their own right but for different and almost paradoxical reasons. The largest in terms of number of works, the Vienna Collection, came to the permanent collection so that the project then held just under one hundred pieces of world-class art. And the other was the Sarajevo Collection –a celebration of Bosnian and Herzegovinian artists who contributed to the holdings of Ars Aevi. To then, a few of Sarajevo's established artists had their pieces donated by agent cities –for instance, Nebojsa Serić-Šoba, who stayed and fought in the war but moved emigrated afterward, from Vienna. But by the end of that year, the

¹⁰ The Dayton Accord was signed in November 1995 to end the war and create new borders for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The shelling and mortar fire ended in early 1996

first collection of works of contemporary art that included work by artists within and beyond Bosnia and Herzegovina was well established in Sarajevo.

In review, by the beginning of 1999, Ars Aevi held nearly 100 collected works of international artists from five cities, and had five international partners in support of what had become a collective endeavor to truly surpass the spatially and culturally destructive effects of the war. Ars Aevi coordinators in Sarajevo had the validation they needed from the material quantity and qualitative substance of the collection. It was a project that originated with faith in artists at home and abroad, one that was finally affirmed in that it had become what Hadžiomerspahić describes as an “inevitable, respected and culturally-, artistically-, politically- and globally-relevant fact.”¹¹ (56) As such, the project continued to expand its international network, it acquired new work, and was beginning to support public art installations in Sarajevo. It began to root itself back at home where it began to finally materialize its anticipated effect, almost.

Art, Architecture and Placing the Museum

Piano: ...So it will be a place where the experience of celebrated artists and the endeavor of young artists meet. This is my dream and I think it can come true.

Oris: Are there any reasons for thinking this dream might come true?

Piano: The first is that I believe in it.¹²

The uncertain terms of the overall development of the project revealed the promise there was in an idea for a museum that began as a resistance tactic –however,

¹¹ Enver Hadžiomerspahić, *Facts*, 56.

¹² Renzo Piano, Andrija Rusan, Dejan Vekić, and Robert Leš. 2004. "Arhitektura pojasnjuje stvari prek prostora: Renzo Piano". *Oris*, 6 (2004) 4-19.

when Ars Aevi began to take on a familiar model that would entail a form of spatial and institutional fixity, namely the museum building designed by Renzo Piano, new and pressing questions began to surface. From the beginning, Hadžiomerspahić had in mind a “bigger, better museum”¹³ after the Olympic Museum was destroyed. Nonetheless, when the problem of site, support and development of the project were to be negotiated, art and its community support system, both internationally and locally, had to prepare themselves for setbacks. The building was scheduled to be opened by 2009, and has, since its plans were drawn up in 1999 remained a work on paper. The reasons for this were and are telling of the challenges there are in implementing the contemporary art museum project, particularly in post-conflict, contested cities like Sarajevo.

When Renzo Piano got on board with the project in 1999 he was Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In the short but diverse history of international contemporary art museums, this was the first patron-to-architect relationship to take such a form. As an ambassador, he would serve as a celebrity liaison with specific skills that would benefit both Sarajevo, and as well, the goals of UNESCO’s cultural program by designing a museum that should “work[s] for the endogenous development of social communities whose testimonies it conserves while lending a voice to their cultural aspirations.”¹⁴ According to Hadžiomerspahić, Piano, with his career-long experience designing cultural buildings and museums, was seen as a proper fit for the project -an appropriate executor of the

¹³ Enver Hadžiomerspahić, *Facts*.

¹⁴ “Museums” Accessed May 24, 2011. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/movable-heritage-and-museums/museums/>.

belief that solidarity and an arts program had a place in the cultural life of Sarajevo and that Sarajevo had a place in global contemporary art world.

The building would celebrate the determination of Sarajevans to overcome the many challenges there were in building a compelling collection of donated work throughout and after one of the most difficult periods of their city's history. Renzo Piano himself, believed in it.¹⁵ According to what Piano has said in his only interview to discuss the project, his feeling that architecture is able to negotiate the particularities of place and the universalities of accepted global language in building,¹⁶ his sensibilities were very much in line with the founding goals of Ars Aevi. And as well, one of the founding artists, Pistoletto. In other words, the thoughts circulating around the museum and the building project were very for their time, the mid-to late 1990's and into the early 21st century. In 1994, Pistoletto was making connections between art, architecture and universality¹⁷, and Lippard in 1997 was drawing parallels between the interpretations and the actions of artists who she believes to be particularly apt to develop "senses of place in a multi-centered society,"¹⁸ that includes the multi-faceted and even fractal dimensions of social, historical and urban space.

The building and the collection it would hold stood to perform a variety of tasks for art, architecture at the global and local scale. The work of the local arts community, and the involvement of international working artists, and then the Piano design assured this. Locally, in working toward Ars Aevi's mission to build a link between old and new

¹⁵ Piano, *Architecture Speaks*.

¹⁶ Piano, *Architecture Speaks*.

¹⁷ Pistoletto, *Arte Progetto 1994*.

¹⁸ This is a reference to the subtitle of Lippard's 1997 Book, *Lure of the Local, senses of place in a multicentered society*.

parts of the city¹⁹ Piano and partners in the Renzo Piano Building Workshop (RPBW) selected a site along the river where the Austro-Hungarian tradition as represented by the National Museum, and the Museum of the Revolution (now called the Historical Museum and The War Museum) built in the Mid-Century Modern tradition supported by the Socialist Republic meet at

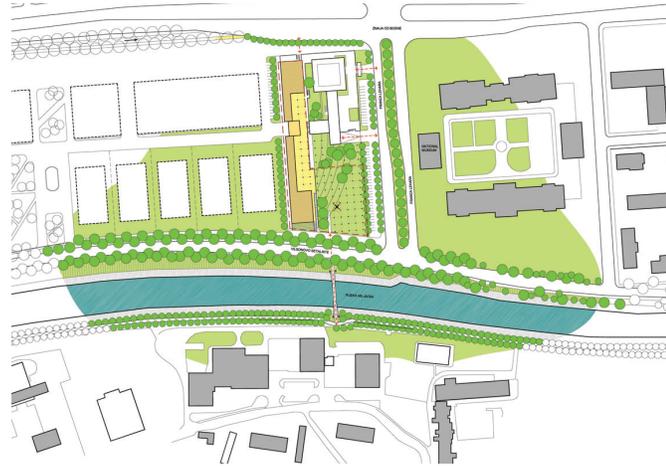


Figure 9. Plan with site, bridge and green space, RPBW 1999/2000. Ars Aevi, Private Collection.

the foot of Grbavica –a residential neighborhood that sustained heavy damage during the war in the 1990’s. According to both Hadžiomerspahić, embedded personally in the history of the city, and Piano, “interested in the context,”²⁰ the selected location would provide a site where the global reach of high-level, international art and architecture integrate for a cultural building project that according to Piano “stems from a particular place.”²¹

Mapped onto the site, the plan indicates the location of the future museum in Yellow and Light Brown on the plan. The only white square building in the green area marks the site of the History Museum, and the two rectangular forms to the East of the North-South walking path mark the Regional Museum. (Figure 9)

¹⁹ Enver Hadžiomerspahić in a discussion with the author, February 2011.

²⁰ Piano, *Architecture Speaks*.

²¹ *Ibid.*

A material artifact of creative culture, the projected museum stands to both enclose and radiate meaning that would by not so much be fixed, but rather secure a place from which a network of channels that circulate both art and people in, out and through the city would operate. The site as-is welcomes public gathering in that it currently has two monumental museums devoted to the national and urban history through which a walking path that leads to the river guides foot traffic. Piano, in consideration of the site and needs of people in the city, designed the bridge so that pedestrians from the south bank would gain access the center of the city on the north bank *via* the site where the museum building has been planned. (Figure 9)

For promotion, and in solidarity and good faith, the Ars Aevi bridge (2002) was constructed (Figure 10) with funds from the Renzo Piano Building Workshop. When the site was first selected three years prior, French artist Daniel Buren installed public work, *Deconstruction of the Monument (Dekonstrucija Spomenika)* there, (Figure 11) which more or less sums up built activity at the location since plans were made. Buren's work itself has long problematized museum buildings and galleries, spatial and institutional entities that house and manage the arts.



Figure 10. Ars Aevi Bridge, Sarajevo. Photograph, Ars Aevi, 2004.



Figure 11. Daniel Buren Installation *Dekonstrucija Spomenika* (Deconstruction of the Monument) Photograph, Ars Aevi.

The collection, the site and the plans for the museum building converge where Buren's piece, made of rebar and white flags marked with his signature vertical stripes, was installed and visited by Sarajevo's public. *Deconstruction of the Monument*, a part of Buren's body of work as an artist well known for being part of the Institutional Critique movement that began in the 1970's, is an on-site reflection on the challenges of the formal art institution. With work whose content is relatively neutral but whose context alters and shapes its meaning, he critiques any so-called neutrality in art or monumental necessity of museum architecture. Asserting that neutrality is generally myth, Buren has been known for examining and challenging the art institution in his practice as well as his well-known 1977 article, "The Function of the Museum."²² that identifies specific roles, qualities and problems of museums as art and the public intersect there in the space of the institution. This inquiry into the museum has been a longstanding concern across the history of contemporary art museum buildings as a modern typology and global trend. Historically, the museum as concept and building has been a point of great concern, perhaps before but especially since one of the most spectacular museum designs was imagined and built in upper Manhattan as a result of a partnership between Frank Lloyd Wright and Solomon R Guggenheim.

To What Effect?

When Guggenheim and the director of his gallery, Hilla Rebay, approached Frank Lloyd Wright, their idea was to call attention to the collection and to do it justice

²² Alexander Alberro, and Blake Stimson. *Institutional Critique: an anthology of artists' writings*. (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press 2009), 102-106.

with what Rebay referred to as “a temple of spirit.”²³ Wright was near the end of his long career, and had reached a level of fame that made it a surprise that he had not yet designed a New York City building. After much consideration of sites around New York, they finally settled on a 5th avenue location and managed to secure the property of the entire block for the museum. The Solomon R. Guggenheim museum was in process from 1946 to 1959 when it finally opened. Conflict and controversy over a high-style building as museum for modern painting was sustained over the thirteen years of planning by all parties involved, and continues to this day.

Newspaper articles leading up to the opening reveals that one of the most concerned parties were art and architecture critics and artists as they scrutinized the effect Wright’s galleries had on the art objects.²⁴ His gallery spaces, a continuous descending spiral that appears to ramp down from the center of the height of the entire interior volume, were completely new to museum design and stood out just as much as the paintings. This effect was precedent-setting for new museum buildings as up to that point museums, complete with white-box interior galleries and stoic exterior, were thought proper as long as they were as neutral as possible. Wright’s favored site was highly urban and according to him, offered an opportunity to extend the sidewalk into the museum –his sought effect was democratization, while others have read the site and building, in combination with the gallery display as commoditization.

²³ Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. *The Guggenheim: Frank Lloyd Wright and the making of the modern museum*. (New York: Guggenheim Museum 2009).

²⁴ Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. *The Guggenheim: Frank Lloyd Wright and the making of the modern museum*.

It was the opinion of many critics that the building satisfied the art market more than it did the art.²⁵ In the context of the city, the architecture stood out as too “belligerent”²⁶ to the urban corridor along 5th avenue. But this was not a concern for the city of New York or those who studied the city mainly because the museum, while it needed to be legally sanctioned, was commissioned by patrons of the Arts, privately funded, and not seen as an urban project aside from its urban location.

Patronage, agenda and justification behind the formation of new art museum plans, has changed gradually and significantly since the idea to build the Guggenheim in New York with a famed architect like Frank Lloyd Wright came to be realized. Museums have since become architectural and urban projects more than they are houses and displays for collections of art. One such example that serves as a fitting illustration of the shift in agenda as well as site, execution, function and generally, the *effect*, of the museum on cities is the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. The Centre Pompidou is representative of many things, but first and foremost it has been deeply analyzed, and criticized for its treatment of both the art inside and the urban environment immediately outside the groundbreaking building.

A wealthy art collector with a large collection, commitment to contemporary art, initiated the Guggenheim. Georges Pompidou, however did not collect art, he was the President of France and France wanted a new museum building and cultural center in Paris. The competition for a building project at the Beaubourg site was inspired in part by the collection of art objects, and it was as well a political project that would represent

²⁵ Amir Ameri. "The Spatial Dialectics of Authenticity". *SubStance*. 33, 2 (2004).

²⁶ Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. *The Guggenheim: Frank Lloyd Wright and the making of the modern museum*.

the state as it was built into the fabric of the capital city.²⁷ Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers won the competition with a building unlike any that had been seen before, let alone used as a museum and cultural center. Piano has referred to the building as a factory²⁸ –a conceptual and descriptive term for the high-tech design that remains a point of contention for its effect on the art and the site at Beaubourg.

Criticism of Centre Pompidou's effect was clearly articulated by Jean Baudrillard in his famed essay, *"The Beaubourg Effect, Implosion and Deterrence."*²⁹ Baudrillard is well known not for his art or architectural criticism, but more for his study of communication, culture and social relationships. As a result, many of his thoughts on "The Beaubourg Effect" posit what the museum does, what it says and what it means for art and the public both inside and outside of the museum. According to Baudrillard, the institution of the state as carried by the museum building and program bears down on the site at Beaubourg. The site, called locally Beaubourg, before the museum was an open plaza for parking, markets and walking. The Beaubourg effect (implosion and deterrence) is described as a as an institution that programs behaviors inside and outside the museum building, by inscribing a specific set of rules that *deter* certain kinds of public conduct. The implosion entails a crisis in meaning for the art objects enclosed with its space. In total, the museum strips the spaces on both sides of the museum walls of their socially constructed meaning that is then immediately replaced by an

²⁷ Nathan Silver. *The making of Beaubourg: a building biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris.* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1994)

²⁸ Piano, *Architecture Speaks.*

²⁹ Jean Baudrillard. Rosalind Krauss, and Annette Michelson. 1982. "The Beaubourg-Effect: Implosion and Deterrence". *October*. 20 (1982): 3-13.

institutionally imposed script generally for the sake of gaining either control, capital, or both.

What Baudrillard suggests is that before the museum landed at Beaubourg, the public freely passed through the area and the freedom of passage was deeply affected, even erased, by the museum. The art inside was also a consideration of Baudrillard's as the museum institution absorbs it as well. The institution as well as the building encloses it and sets it up for display with the same rigid agenda that is imposed on the exterior space –an interpretive problem, as has been noted by artists like Buren. The perceived effects of the institutionalization of art done by the museum as urban project meet at Institutional and cultural Critique in a way that frames the general perspective of critics as they see and experience new museum buildings that transform space and art.

Twenty years later, the tendency to study a museum for its effect was alive and well as it was again applied to the next big moment in museum architecture, The Guggenheim at Bilbao in the Basque Region of Spain. However, the set of concerns and considerations for critics has changed with the terms of patronage, intent and effect. The Guggenheim Bilbao has been viewed mainly as an urban development strategy for renewing and revitalizing the sluggish economy of the entire city by promoting global tourism to spectacular architecture.³⁰ Artists, collectors or even politicians did not initiate the Guggenheim Bilbao with a penchant for the cultural value of art in the city, but rather

³⁰ Joan Ockman. 'New Politics of the Spectacle: "Bilbao" and the Global Imagination' in *Architecture and Tourism, perception, performance and place*, D. Medina Lasansky and Brian McLaren, editors, (Berg, NYC, 2004).

by Basque authorities who were evaluating decline in the city in strictly numerical and spatial terms.

Bilbao was a shipping and manufacturing hub in Northern Spain and as soon as industry began to decline, so did the city. With vacant buildings and low productivity, the city was looking for a way to generate cash flow by reconfiguring the city so that it might attract, as was briefly mentioned earlier with the case of Perm, young people and tourists. The Basque art scene was present, but apparently not sufficiently marketable as the authorities turned to the Guggenheim for a collection of contemporary art and ultimately, Frank Gehry for a building.

Gehry has one of the most recognizable formal signatures in the world of contemporary architecture. The Gehry building at Bilbao, the site and the interest it generated –approximately 15 million people strong, was a precedent for study in urban renewal via art museum. It sparkled on the water's edge, and promised economic success with monumental architecture as a tourist destination, another long tradition. According to studies called the Bilbao effect,³¹ a play on Baudrillard's term, the entire landscape of the city of Bilbao was transformed, investment came in and fiscal output increased. A study of the support for the art scene by the Basque Authorities reveals that funds as well as patronage escalated dramatically.³² As a result, Thomas Krens, the director of the Guggenheim in New York at the time, had an estimated 130

³¹ J. Stewart, 1999. "The Guggenheim effect Bilbao's revival as a financial and industrial centre". EUROMONEY -LONDON-. (Dec): 74-77, Beatriz Plaza, Manuel Tironi, and Silke Haarich. 2009. "Bilbao's Art Scene and the 'Guggenheim effect; Revisited". *European Planning Studies*. 17 (11): 1711-1729.

³² Ibid.

proposals to expand their collection into cities around the world “what the Guggenheim Bilbao did to Bilbao.”³³

At Pompidou, it can be said that the art museum showcased art for all but the cultural centre was intended (for better or worse) for the Parisian and French public, and the Guggenheim, perhaps aficionados (to their delight or displeasure) of fine art. Public attendance at the Guggenheim suggests a gradually broadening pool of public attendees that included and even targeted international tourists. These comparisons in visitation and reception suggest that critics of architecture and assessors of urban development strategies for the local and global economy have overtaken the study of a given museum’s *effect*. For instance, very little is said in popular media and scholarship about the contents of the collection while the interior and exterior, the materiality and volume, but especially the economic impact of Gehry’s building on Bilbao are deeply studied. The Guggenheim Effect was written just after the museum opened in 1997 – again, just the time when Lippard and Pistoletto were positing artists as rightful placemakers. However, given its focus, it would appear that the place of the artist in the city is outside of the museum institution despite being conceptually tied to the space inside.

With Sarajevo, this is just it. The role and form of the museum is not necessarily meant for art, if it were, Sarajevo would likely have a new museum designed by Renzo Piano to house its remarkable collection of art. The impenetrability of plans and monumental museum projects to artists and the public underscores the value of both

³³ Barbara Isenberg and Frank O. Gehry.. “The Bilbao Effect” in *Conversations with Frank Gehry*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf 2009), 132.

institutional and cultural critique as articulated by critics like Buren and Baudrillard.

Renzo Piano, when asked if he thinks that he can “redefine the framework of post-war Bosnian Society with his project,”³⁴ reflects not on the building, but on the place and the people which he describes simply as “real,” rather than of the vernissage, or patrons poised to act with an mission that has a primarily abstract political or economic agenda. He cites their reality, rooted in-place and from-below, “on the street”³⁵ as a part of why believes that the project will work when in fact, it might be exactly why it hasn’t. The Ars Aevi museum has not yet been envisioned by the city as an urban project, rather it is viewed as a collection of contemporary art, which appears to be less of a concern for new museum projects as they are planned.

The perceived failure of the Guggenheim in New York to serve the art for which it was supposed to be built set a precedent as soon as the architecture of the building drew critical attention and crowds to the project. The museum itself rather than the art had become the spectacular object on display that has left an open question around the value and role of the art itself. A case in point is MAXXI in Rome, whose patrons, the Rome authorities, explicitly remarked that they were seeking the so-called *Bilbao Effect* as Zaha Hadid, probably the next most recognizable name in contemporary global architecture after Frank Ghery began the project in 2004. MAXXI held only nine pieces of art in its permanent collection at the time it was planned, yet over 479, 628 people visited over the course of its first year open.³⁶ Hadid has built another center for

³⁴ Piano, *Architecture Speaks*.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶“MAXXI’s First Birthday 479,628 Visitors in 310 Days of Opening: 1,547 a Day” accessed August 1, 2011. http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=47863

contemporary art in Cincinnati that has no collection nor does it intend to have one –and so the question of what concept drives the museums, formally and programmatically, remains open.

The Art of Uncertainty, and Possibility

The conversation, particularly an open one, then leads back to the question of placing art, artists and art museums at the site in post-conflict Sarajevo. The new museum is now planned to open in 2014, with few significant changes in plans. It will be situated along the Miljacka near the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Regional Museum. While its institutional frame remains uncertain, it is an extension of the response to the destruction of other symbols and houses of national history, like the Olympic Museum and the National Library. It will likely be as it began, a simultaneously local and a global undertaking, and in this way strangely in-line with trends in rescaling (local to global and back again) and perhaps eventually evaluated by the tourist market. Its site in Sarajevo, its large and uniquely assembled permanent collection as well as its potential place in the global cannon of contemporary art and architecture raise questions that all of the precedents mentioned here have, in one way or another –and yet it is a return to the focus of the art, artist and community. Despite the uncertain time at which the project was founded, and the new uncertainties it faces with global funding and finance models that are known for having their way with post-

crisis places³⁷ its non-conventional expansion technique for the collection and the to-be-determined status of the building –Sarajevo has a museum, although it has taken a perhaps unexpected, if necessary turn. As a result of the lack of fixed space in the form of the museum building, the work in the collection has been mobilized and installed around sites in the city by some of the founding artists (Figure 12).

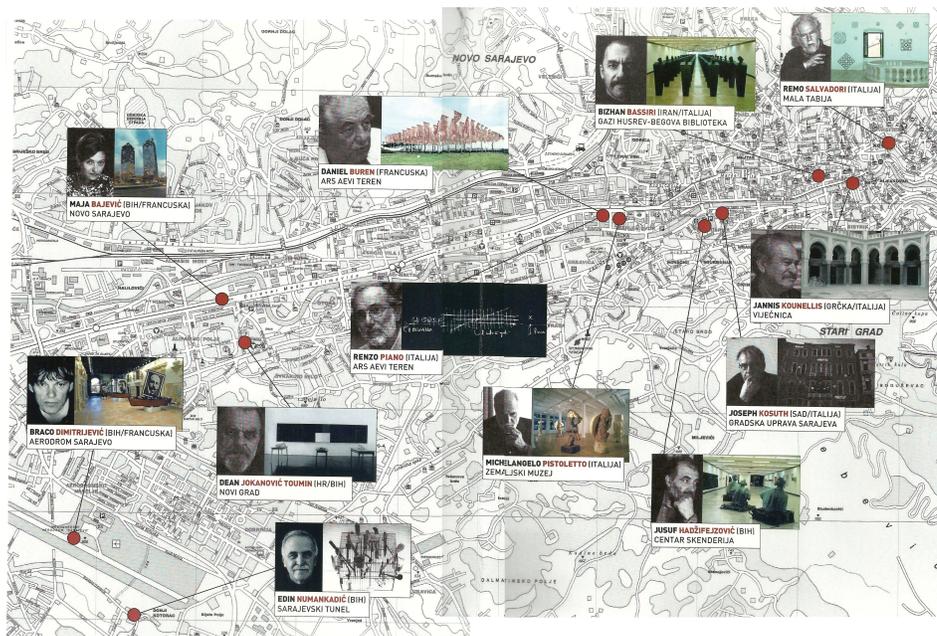


Figure 12. Map of Public Works and Artists Sponsored by Ars Aevi in Sarajevo. Ars Aevi Promotional Material, 2011.

The creation and staging of public artworks by international artists together take the form of a circuitous network that connects different parts of the Sarajevo, outside and beyond the scope of the museum. A new museum that is appropriately and

³⁷ I am referring to the popular story of *The Shock Doctrine* by Naomi Klein that insists that privatization agendas swoop into crisis areas to “shock” economic systems in these areas so that, as dependents, they better fit Western Capitalist models for global imperialism. Also, *The Rise of the Relief and Reconstruction Complex* by Walden Bello, and David N. Gibbs’ critique of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank for their role in the decline of Yugoslavia via the conflict in the Balkans as outlined in his book, *First do no harm, humanitarian intervention and the destruction of Yugoslavia*

necessarily de-centered, and by default rather tactical much like its origins, has been built where the public display of art is integral to the reinterpretation of spaces that have been damaged, destroyed, and in some cases, rebuilt. The National Library, yet to be restored, has been opened for visitors to exhibitions by Jannis Kounellis and Braco Dimitrijević. As stated by Robert Bevan “A library or art gallery is a cache of historical memory, evidence that a given communities presence extends into the past and legitimizing it in the present and on into the future.”³⁸ Kounellis and Dimitrijević bring the two places together in purpose. Skenderija Centar square and the youth center built for the 1984 Winter Olympic Games has been revisited by Josef Kossuth and hence reoccupied by resident Sarajevans, some of whom remember the war, and some as part of a new, younger generation that knows only the stories that now shape both spatial tactics and collective memories of how Sarajevo has come to be what it is today.

The words *renewal*, or *effect* go unmentioned by the arts community around Ars Aevi, and so while projects and interventions made by working artists who keep “looking around” as Lippard suggests, to find places for art like those that may capture the attention of the *New York Times*, the Sarajevo Center for Contemporary Art remains yet another point of uncertainty that inspires the imagination to reconsider the role and *place* of art and architecture in the city of Sarajevo and the rest of the world (Figure 13).

³⁸ Robert Bevan. *Destruction of Memory*, 8.

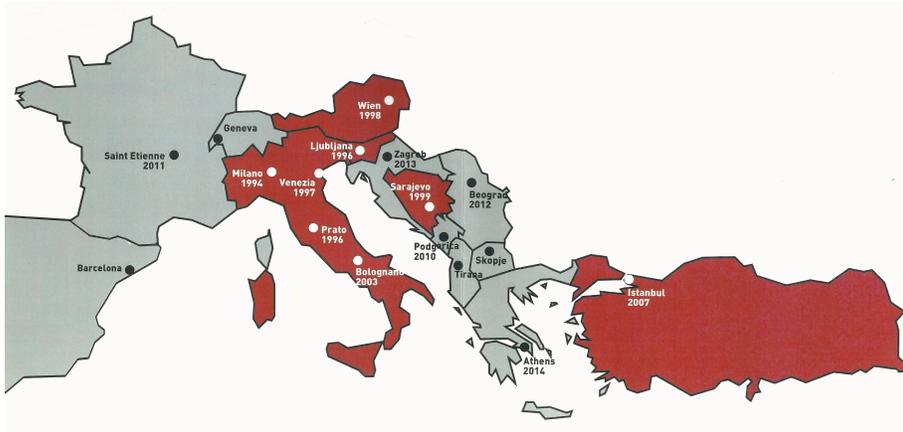


Figure 13. Ars Aevi Collection Network, contributing cities and countries marked in red, those planned for the future, in black. Ars Aevi Promotional Material, 2011.

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