

MELIKA SALIHBEĞ BOSNAWI

TRAGICA YUGOSLAVICA - VLADIMIR DEDIJER

Mister VLADIMIR DEDIJER, famous Josip Broz Tito's biographer, historian, Russell Committee's Chairman, and a human of noble character but with completely perished illusions by the end of his life, I met in the days of my own political drama.

A brief history:

In autumn 1985, I was relieved from the communist jail in Focha - while dying (on 74th day of hunger strike). Half a year later, after recovery, I was invited to Belgrade, where, within contacts with the then political opposition, I met Mr. Vladimir Dedijer on two occasions. First time it was in a public place, the other time in his home. This second chance was a truly unforgettable conversation with a leading Communist dissident, a tired man, but a man of some completely new insights. Namely, it was wholly in line with the then world moment to talk about events in Iran, which, besides, had tremendous impact on political, and my fate in general. What follows took me by surprise, but, of course, pleased as well.

The other story:

Invited to be a guest at the first celebration of the victory of Islamic Revolution, Mr. Dedijer was received by Imam Khomeini. He swore to me (and some others) that he had seen a halo around his head, the man who appeared to him as a unique phenomenon in modern history of spirit, likewise of politics. Vladimir related too about his consequent defence of the Imam and his revolution in Yugoslav Federal Assembly, recalling the opponents of his admiration to some Yugoslav similar experiences after the Liberation in 1945.

I still tremendously regret that I turned down his offer to jointly write and publish his initial "Tehran Diary". It's not known to me if such a concept has been found in his legacy. He too regretted my refusal with the following words "Why you Muslims do not trust anybody?", telling me that he encountered the same rejection when he was looking for participants in writing about multiple massacres perpetuated during modern history against Muslims in Sandzak.*

Shortly after our meeting in Belgrade, Mr. Dedijer moved to Slovenia, from where he used to write to me. These two cards that have miraculously survived many a police raid of my (seven times again purchased) mailbox and my home, the wartime (1992) bombing and consequent moving its remains here there, speak for themselves more than anything else about Dedijer's last years which took him first his son, and then shifted him to USA.

What one reads here is but a humble homage to one of the few true friends' voices in times of my absolute isolation from the ex-Yugoslav

societies and almost complete life. The estrangement, relentlessly progress even today, although restricted to a scary small area of what for centuries used to be Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PostScript:

I was arrested for the second time, then consequently forced into exile, to roam the world from London, Toronto, Washington DC..., to Istanbul, Tehran and Cairo...; Marko was eventually killed; Vladimir, broken but morally upright, died; Yugoslavia ended, and burst out bleeding; Bosnia - Vlado's and mine ancestral homeland - has been devastated and crippled. Now there remain only our books, and rare friend' letters to soothe.

**(Sanjak is a region in Serbia, populated by Muslim majority, once making a part of a wider administrative Ottoman unit, which is nowadays divided between Serbia, Bosnia & Monte Negro).*