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INTERVIEWER: Asaf Bećirović

Why have you been arrested on the 23 of March 1983? And if I can ask you kindly to remember the moment of the arrest. How did it look like? What after your detention happened to your son Amir?

Bismi'illâh. Because there is no a political regime in the World allowing different, and plus powerful, opinion! The key is in this powerful! Islamic idea was a powerful idea - especially in relation to that of Communism, devoid of any eschatology, without which learning, on that The Before and that The After not a human being can normally live - and which in those years once again in the history, vigorously shook the world. With the shake, that is still going on.

So you were not surprised!?

No! In principle. Being an intellectual and artist, who, in the midst of an atheistic regime, dared to dress herself according to the Islamic dress code, stating in public, therefore, her Metaphysics, i.e. belief in the Beyond, I knew they would come for me. The moment I experienced intimate religious transformation in Karbala, Iraq in 1978/9, and when its soon manifestation caused a public (and street) unparalleled reaction, followed by the dissipation of friends and family, when the ring was becoming almost touchable, that was the question of a day ... But these things - retaliation in a way of arrest because of different belief and thought - always surprise you, just like death. We all know that one day we will die, but it is always sudden.

What really astonished me, and I have never forgiven neither of the participants (and none ever did ask for forgiveness), was the brutality with which it was performed. The cruelty without paralleled! The more so because majority out of them (I think) seven, who turned up in my home immediately after one Sabah (early morning prayer), were women, mothers, or potential mothers. This set of "satanic faces" (some are even today in my first neighborhood), who will practically take me at once to the

five-years imprisonment, as it will be decided later during famous show-process "Sarajevo The12", were joined by our neighbours, tidy sorted downstairs, to express the public outrage and say farewell. ("One is led by the seven, the seven lead one"... ah my Mak!), while at the half-open door, puffy-faced before the imminent burst of crying, was shaking my kid, with words that are still now in my ears: "Mom, please, come back soon, I am scared."

It was crime non plus ultra, to leave just like that, in the ransacked apartment, a minor child of a single mothers ... What will follow in the school where he previously was an excellent student (tested and found to be of an exceptional intelligence), what will be especially arranged for him at the police stations - slapping, demands to report all - who calls, helps..., about it you have to ask my son, if he even today gets not choked with pain while remembering.

I am starting to realize, this cruelty is primarily related to your son. Yes. I was already intellectually mature (38), wholly sure in the choice of my Metaphysics and Eschatology, and if you wish, the Physics which goes with it (hijab, worshiping, mosque. . .). My son Amir only seven days before the event, which has tragically marked his life, turned to 12. Confused by such a number of people who raided our peaceful home shortly after our performing the morning prayer, escaped to the treasure chest, sat on it with a guitar in his hands, which he had just received as a birthday present from his father, and played gently through its strings, while the police, in the presence of some two witnesses brought about along, raged the home. Where are the filmmakers. . .!

So did they find anything incriminating?

Of course they did! Audio cassettes with reading Qur'ân (which I never got back), and two typewriters, out of the two one was also never given back, for the policemen love antiquities just like Goering. (Writing) machine-guns, than, of a member of the Literary Society of Bosnia & Hercegovina, about whose poetry only few days prior to it, in her review of my latest manuscript with which I will be arrested, Dara Sekulic wrote to be something best on the Yugoslavia sole ever since 1945. The said Society of B&H. men of letters will following night, in "TV Dally News", for my arrest was official, publicly announce my kick out from it, while President (now late Tahmishcic) will ask for my life imprisonment!!!

What have you written so dangerous?

Philosophic poetry, essays on visual art, Sufi texts.

What then was your incrimination in court?

Mostly what others have said that I said or thought, frightened or paid or obscene witnesses. . . , ethically, all alike.

With what evidence you were sentenced to five years in prison?

With unprovable, with kind of which, in deep nebulas of their minds, the then gods of our roseate Communist happiness fulfilled Article 133 of the Criminal Code of SFR Yugoslavia. Among the international human rights activists that incrimination was called "thought crime." And the convicted upon that article, used to be immediately put on the list of "prisoners of conscience" by Amnesty International, on which list I myself was found twice. Knowing not, neither I nor international partisans for fundamental people rights, that, from those casemates, I will not still today be freed.

With what then evidence. . . ?

With nebulous!

What two occasions, and why not still today?

I was twice arrested, trialed (second time in an emergency procedure), and by the Black police van taken to the prison, but let us leave the latter for the second anniversary. It is much more difficult, and without limitation in time, my life imprisonment in the intrigue / fitnah of the powerful Charshia; in the darkness of egos of the guilty consciences; in the public opinion formed by the communist, and then by quasi-democratic regime; in the blindness of my bh. compatriots, especially the Bosniaks and / co-believers, who all together by no means accept any party non-alignment, and by no means the diversity of the Islamic school of thought. Some of my fellow citizens, however, so many times changed their opinion, that they stopped to have opinion as such.

Were you again arrested after "SARAJEVO PROCESS"?

Yes, two years after my "release" upon the first verdict. My

son Amir's (16) being constantly called for the "informative interrogation," my brother Jakub's expulsion from his job, the starvation of us three (initially four, then Azra got married), my contacts with foreign correspondents in Belgrade, with the opposition in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, with dear Vladimir Dedijer. . . , reaction of the Amnesty International and the Worldwide democratic corpus which was then united in bringing down Communism. . . , my interviews given to Slovenian Magazine "Mladina", their refusal to give me passport. . . , were all the reasons for my decision to arrange my individual public demonstration (which I announced through the foreign correspondents in Belgrade and Helsinki Committee), with the poster in my hands reading: "Hunger is the best spice when you eat, hunger is the best way to die, if you are Muslim believers".

They were waiting for me at the entrance door to my building, I threw out the window of the police car the poster on the street full of people, students and pupils during the morning rush, an automatic taking me to the court, the urgent trial and judgment, and delivering me again by the Black police car to the solitary confinement into Youth Division of Foca prison (the solitary confinement for the adult female was occupied), in which during my earlier stay one underage girl committed suicide for which no one has been held responsible.

An urgent reaction of Amnesty International, un urgent, practically throw to the street (after a month of freezing in a solitary confinement), and then again, days of scarcity, identity check and breaking leg at the Dental Clinic, a plaster almost up to the groin, police frantically banging at the door at least once a week, ex literary friend in a role of the spy, already ten years telephone tapping, hell of the "freedom" away from which my son will be one day taken to London by an English-convert to Islam, British and International media attention resulting in receiving telephone call and obtaining my passport and the step out of hell for which some of my compatriots and believers even today nostalgically yearn.

Follow beautiful years in London, travels to the United States, Canada, Egypt, Iran, Turkey. . . , international conferences, lectures, symposiums, from Oxford to Saint Louis, countless interviews, a wonderful new acquaintances. . . , citizen of the world, with full lungs, I breathe, collecting the material in the Congress and other libraries, and write my novel "Cathartic Dreams".

Freedom is a state of mind, I repeat. Halas! Spirit is not welcome for any authority, and that is the topic of my drama "Citadel of Light." Then, I was the first in Yugoslavia, and for a long while the only intellectual and artist who wore (and wear now, although because of my age a little less strict) incriminating Islamic dress. Today, new ideologists, and among them my fellow ex-detainees and their children, become my new angry gods and creators of new political terror. All of them, in media or elsewhere, from among the Communists, through Democrats, to Feminists (the latest behaviour exactly of that female guard who we used to call in Slavonska Pozega prison A Miner-Male!), are my today's fundamentalistic opponents. Bitter enemies of my credo, my ethics and my aesthetics based on that. Sometimes my writing deceive them, they do announce, while delighted, readiness to publish it (as two Luce of that famous Belgrade radio), but abruptly quit. . .

Late switch the lights in bigotries' darkness.

Thanks!

Sarajevo, 15-19. February 2013.

(Note: Full text of the interview available in Bosnian)