

SREBRENICA

CRIME & PUNISHMENT

April 27 - May 14, 2006



Documentation & Research

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On Agreeing To Evil, Konstanty Gebert
One Day in the Life of Dražen Erdemović, Slavenka Drakulić
Human Rights and Genocide: Absolute Concepts vs. Relative Politics, Hazem Saghieh
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with the Heinrich Böll Foundation – Middle East Office.

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the Heinrich Böll Foundation.
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SREBRENICA...

“Safe Haven” for a Massacre

Srebrenica, once a small, unknown village in northeastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, became the symbol of the horrific atrocities that were committed during a campaign of ethnic cleansing and a sober reminder of the impotence of the international community to confront genocide. On April 16, 1993 Srebrenica was designated a “Safe Haven” by UN Security Council decree 819. In July of 1995, two years after the issuance of that decree, over 7,000 people, mostly men and boys, were killed in an organized massacre by Bosnian Serbs. Tens of thousands of women, children, and elderly, under the patronage of the UN peacekeeping forces, were evacuated by bus. It served as a particularly humiliating lesson to Europe, which pledged after World War II and the ghastly acts of the Nazis regime, never to stand idly by while crimes against humanity occurred in its own backyard.

The recurrence of such atrocities leads us to assume that they are not exclusive to a region, a culture, or even a group of people. Srebrenica has forced us to reflect and pose several questions, about the human capacity to commit such crimes and about the ability of international institutions, such as the UN, to intervene in such cases.

Most people, around the world, discovered the abhorrence of what happened during the war in the Balkans primarily through photos. Perhaps what continues to cling to our memory the most are the images of Srebrenica’s massacre. For this reason, Heinrich Böll Foundation, ten years after the massacre, initiated the project “Srebrenica– Remembrance for the Future”, which includes an exhibition of documentary photographs about the genocide in Srebrenica. The exhibition includes 33 photos by 5 Bosnian and 5 international photographers, portraying the fate of the survivors and victims.

The collection was first exhibited in Brussels, in June, 2005. The photographs were then displayed in Belgrade, Berlin, Washington, Strasbourg, and Sarajevo. Historical and political discussion forums inspired by Srebrenica’s commemoration accompanied every show. In Beirut, too, the exhibition is accompanied by a roundtable titled “Srebrenica – Crime and Punishment.”

UMAM

Documentation & Research

UMAM applied for status as an NGO from the Ministry of the Interior in 2002, but the application was only approved in 2005. In the meantime, UMAM D&R registered as a civil company with non-profit status. The status of NGO gained, UMAM will be recovering soon this status.

"Closing the files" is a often-used phrase within Lebanese political vocabulary.

UMAM – Documentation and Research was founded in 2004 as a non-profit **civil company** to deal with the issues of civil violence and war memories. More specifically, its aim is to address the necessity and feasibility of actively revisiting Lebanon's violent past, an undertaking fiercely contested among Lebanese.

Since the official end of the civil war in 1990, the question "to forget, or not to forget?" has split the Lebanese into two camps, one calling for forgiveness and "**closing the files**" of the past, and another insisting superficial forgiveness can only lead to further violence, whether outwardly expressed or buried, and not to a peaceful future.

The Lebanese regime that emerged after the war was founded by way of a truce between warlords-cum-politicians. The actors in this new regime made "closing the files" of the past a kind of civil religion, under the pretext that discarding the past was the only way to end the cycle of violence. As of late, this regime has come under sharp condemnation by nearly the entire political class, including (hastily) even those who were once its staunchest supporters, on the grounds that it was an oppressive security establishment.

This policy of forgetting, undertaken under the aegis of the Ta'if Agreement, which led to the Syrian Baathist "tutelage" over Lebanon, found its judicial expression in the amnesty law which was passed by the Parliament in 1991. The practical outcome was the recycling of former warlords, whose slates were now officially cleaned, into the new political system and the incorporation of thousands of ex-militiamen into the military and administrative bodies of the state. Once Lebanon was partially freed from this "tutelage/occupation", the Lebanese parliament found itself, once again, passing two new "private" amnesty laws, one whitewashing a former Christian warlord, and another clearing the name of a presumed Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group, all for the sake of a so-called "national reconciliation". It goes without saying that the fifteen years of Lebanese collaboration with its Syrian occupiers was never considered as a subject of accountability.

In 1991, as well as in 2005, however, there were some "heretics" within Lebanese society who wondered how a parliament

UMAM D&R would like to thank all those who made possible the organization of this event and the implementation of this document, especially Medico International for its institutional support.

could absolve, with a single vote, such persons, some of whom could be considered war criminals. These Lebanese have continued to persist that a forged forgiveness could never “close the files” of the past. They also stressed the necessity of revisiting the past, however painful the task, as they believed this agonizing process would be the key to preventing Lebanese from resorting to violence to solve their political and social differences.

The hollowness of this amnesty is evident on many levels. Even the elites of the post-war regime, the authors of the national amnesty and self-proclaimed advocates of “closing the files” of the past, frequently dredge up events from the war for political ammunition. That is to say, although the memory of the war has been suspended, it lingers in a volatile state and can be mobilized at any moment. And in place of a collective exercise in confronting the past, either in the political or civil sphere, each community has built up its own “self-serving” history, one based on victims and victimizers, easily manipulated for political purposes. Rather than a collection of individual narratives, memory has become an ideological reserve in each community.

Since memory persists as a potent force that can easily be triggered, and cannot be suppressed by forgiveness, forced or otherwise, two questions arise: How can we, as Lebanese, assume that forgetting will ensure civil peace? Isn't engaging our history the less perilous path?

Based on this analysis and on the conviction that probing Lebanese memory is an inalienable right that cannot be suspended by law, UMAM D&R, even before acquiring its legal status, initiated a series of activities falling under two categories: First, documentation and research; second, public events, encounters, and discussions.

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Commemorating the Srebrenica Massacre in Beirut

Here, we feel it important to briefly address the question, “Why commemorate the Srebrenica massacre in Beirut?” Behind this straightforward question lie many implicit references and comparisons...and something unsettling.

Let us first explore the underlying issues contained in this question by addressing perhaps the most obvious connotation, which could be formulated in terms of “confronting memories” across time and space or, the supposition that the commemoration of Srebrenica in 2006 Beirut has a special significance.

There are parallels to be drawn between two societies or regions that have experienced in past memory and recent history nightmares that led to the collapse of the structural components of the state. It would be an exaggeration

to claim that this commemoration could have an “added value” by virtue of holding it in a specific place just because of the fact that this place has a bloody history. The problem with such an approach is the consequent temptation to draw comparisons between horrors, which could be productive, as long as it does not prevent us from addressing the issue of human horror itself.

We undersign this statement, in the opening of this booklet, because an activity such as a photo exhibition, a seminar or a film screening cannot claim to provide more than what it displays, regardless of its host city. At the very least, this event endeavors to put forward that the vital question, *hic et nunc* and elsewhere, is: Why Srebrenica...the macabre reincarnation of that which humanity continues to pledge will happen “never again”?

DOCUMENTATION & RESEARCH:

UMAM D&R maintains a large and diverse database of materials ranging from books to newspapers to personal and official documents – gathered within the greater context of documenting Lebanon’s civil wars. New material is systematically searched for and archived.

In addition, UMAM D&R is producing its own audio and video database through exclusive interviews with actors in the Lebanese wars. UMAM D&R collects the narratives of the victims, but also of the perpetrators to create a dynamic resource for understanding and sharing experiences of civil violence.

Researchers, journalists and the general public can freely access and copy UMAM D&R’s continuously growing material. A catalogue of these documents will soon be available through UMAM D&R’s website (www.umam-dr.org).

LEBANESE MEMORIAL:

UMAM D&R , in a cooperative effort with Dar al-Jadeed, is publishing a collection of books committed to furthering UMAM D&R’s aim. In our ongoing project entitled “Divan az-Zakira al-Loubnaniyya” (“Lebanese Memorial”), UMAM D&R and Dar al-Jadeed are publishing materials dealing with various themes in Lebanese history – in particular those related to civil violence, including two books which have been published thus far.

In a similar fashion, UMAM D&R cooperates in a non-profit venture with UMAM Productions to produce audiovisual materials dealing with related issues.

TALKING POINTS:

UMAM D&R organizes and hosts on its premises a variety of events, including discussions, debates, arts performances and exhibitions, and screenings of documentaries and feature films. Through its wide-ranging events calendar, UMAM D&R provides an open space for cultural activities – from Lebanon and elsewhere.

BY WAY OF CHRONOLOGY...

While dealing with a horrific event such as the Srebrenica massacre, we cannot refrain, in our effort to render such an act understandable, from asking ourselves: how far back in the timeline leading up to the incident should we look in order to understand its cause and conceive a rational, “historical” explanation?

Let's assume, in the case of the Srebrenica massacre, that the fragmentation of the former-Yugoslavia is not sufficient to account for the massacre. Would it be more satisfactory to go back to the end of the First World War, which witnessed the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the integration of Bosnia-Herzegovina into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes? Or would it be enough to explain the “root” causes of this massacre to venture back to the eve of the First World War (1908), when Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed to Austria-Hungary, or even to the Congress of Berlin in 1878, which followed the end of the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), and during which Austria-Hungary was given a mandate to occupy and govern Bosnia and Herzegovina, in an effort by Europe to ensure that Russia did not dominate the Balkans? Could any of these dates be a convincing starting point for a realistic timeline of the massacre? A beginning which allows us to say: “Yes! Here is the origin of the massacre.”

Regardless of the starting point, any timeline or rational explanation backed by political developments and historical dates cannot exhaustively account for a horror committed by human beings against other human beings, whoever the perpetrators, whoever the victims.

This being the case, the following chronology does not pretend to be a historical report about the Srebrenica massacre. All it is able to highlight are some milestones on the road which ultimately led up to this massacre, but which ultimately were not responsible for it...

DETAILED GENERAL

January 1993 Muslim forces, under the command of Naser Orić, more than double the size of Muslim territory in eastern Bosnia.

January 7, 1993 The Bosnian Muslim forces attack the Serb-controlled village of Kravica and commit atrocities against the local population.

March 1993 The Bosnian Serb Army, backed with troops and weapons from neighboring Serbia, reverses all of Orić's gains, and again threatens to take Srebrenica. By now, 60,000 people have flooded into Srebrenica, exhausted, starving, and frightened.

March 12, 1993 Fearing the total collapse of Srebrenica, French General Philippe Morillon, the UN Commander in Bosnia, without permission from his superiors, bluffs his way through the Serb front line and arrives in the town. He sees for himself the nightmare in Srebrenica and declares the refugees "under the protection of the UN."

April 16, 1993 With the Serbs once again on the verge of taking the town, the UN Security Council passes Resolution 819, declaring that Srebrenica and a 30 square mile area around the town is now the first United Nations Safe Area.

January 1995 A Dutch battalion arrives in Srebrenica.

April 1995 The Muslim leadership asks Naser Orić to vacate the enclave, leaving a demoralized and ill-equipped Muslim defense force.

May 1995 The Serbs hold 350 Dutch Peacekeepers hostage around Sarajevo in response to NATO air strikes.

1918

As an outcome of World War I, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes is formed. Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina had been part of the fallen Austro-Hungarian Empire; Serbia and Montenegro existed as an independent state (Macedonia was then part of Serbia).

1945

After World War II, the monarchy becomes a Communist republic under Prime Minister Tito. Now called the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, it was composed of six republics: Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Montenegro, as well as two provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina.

1980

Tito's iron grip on Yugoslavia keeps ethnic tensions in check until his death in 1980. Without his pan-Slavic influence, ethnic and nationalist differences begin to flare.

June 1991

Slovenia and Croatia each declare independence. With 90% of its population ethnic Slovenians, Slovenia is able to break away with only a brief period of fighting. Because 12% of Croatia's population is Serbian, however, Yugoslavia fights hard against its secession for the next four years. As Croatia moves towards independence, it evicts most of its Serbian population.

December 1991

The Serb minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina holds an unofficial referendum opposing the separation from Yugoslavia, while local Serbs declare a new republic, the Republica Srpska, separate from Bosnia.

January 1992

Macedonia declares independence.

April 1992

Bosnia and Herzegovina declares independence. The most ethnically diverse of the Yugoslav republics, Bosnia is 43% Muslim, 31% Serbian, and 17% Croatian.

May 22, 1995 General Bertrand Janvier, the United Nations Commander in Bosnia, confronts the UN in New York, urging the Security Council either to protect the Safe Area with massive troop increases or to withdraw the vulnerable peacekeepers in order to allow decisive air strikes. He is told to carry on as usual.

June 1995 From April through June, the Serbs tighten their stranglehold, cutting off convoys to the Safe Area.

July 5, 1995 Shelling erupts in the southern part of Srebrenica.

July 8, 1995 Serb soldiers break through the Muslim lines, instruct the men and women of Srebrenica to surrender their weapons and leave. In a chaotic moment, a Muslim throws a hand grenade at the peacekeepers, resulting in one fatality.

July 9, 1995 Shelling is constant as refugees flee from the advancing Serbs in the south. The Muslim defenders abandon their final position, while the Serbs advance to half a mile from town. The road to Srebrenica is now open. Thirty Dutch peacekeepers are taken hostage by the Serbs.

July 10, 1995 Colonel Karremans files his third request for air support with the United Nations. The Serbs shell Dutch positions. UN Commander General Janvier rejects the request for Air Support. Serbs are positioned on the hillside over the town center. Karremans again makes a request for Air Support. General Janvier finally agrees to Air Support. The Serb attacks stop. Colonel Janvier postpones the air strikes until morning. Karremans tells the town leaders that 50 NATO planes will bomb Serb positions at 6 a.m. the next morning.

Serbia and Montenegro form the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with Slobodan Milošević as its leader. War breaks out. Ethnic cleansing is rampant in the newly proclaimed Serb Republic but also widespread in Muslim and Croat-controlled areas.

1993

Tensions rise and violence reaches new peaks. The confrontations reach an unprecedented level of complexity: Muslims and Serbs form an alliance against Croats in Herzegovina, rival Muslim forces fight each other in north-west Bosnia, Croats and Serbs fight against Muslims in central Bosnia.

UN safe havens for Bosnian Muslim civilians are created, to include several cities among them Sarajevo and Srebrenica. The UN passes resolution 827, stipulating the “the establishment of an international tribunal and the prosecution of persons responsible for the above-mentioned violations of international humanitarian law will contribute to ensuring that such violations are halted and effectively redressed,...”

1995

Despite the presence of Dutch UN troops, the Safe Haven of Srebrenica is overrun by Bosnian Serb forces under General Ratko Mladić.

NATO air strikes against Serb positions help Muslim and Croat forces to make big territorial gains, expelling thousands of Serb civilians on the way.

Dayton Peace Accords signed in Paris create two entities of roughly equal size, one for Bosnian Muslims and Croats, the other for Serbs. An international peacekeeping force is deployed.

1996

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia begins work in the Hague. Dražen Erdemović, a Croat who fought for the Serbs and took part in the Srebrenica massacres, is the first person to be convicted. He is sentenced to five years in prison.

July 11, 1995

9:00 a.m. Colonel Karremans is told that his request for close air support was submitted on the wrong form. He must re-submit the request.

10:30 a.m. The air support request reaches General Janvier. Airborne since 6 a.m., the NATO planes are out of fuel and must return to their base in Italy.

11:00 a.m. General Janvier is unsure of Serb intentions and again hesitates to approve air support. More than 20,000 refugees – women, children, sick and elderly – flee for the main Dutch base at Potočari, three miles away.

12:05 p.m. General Janvier authorizes air support, four hours after the request is submitted.

2:40 p.m. Two Dutch F-16 Fighters drop two bombs on Serb positions. The Serbs threaten to kill Dutch hostages and shell refugees. Further strikes are abandoned.

4:15 p.m. General Ratko Mladić enters Srebrenica to claim the town for the Bosnian Serbs. He is accompanied by Serb camera crews. 5,000 refugees shelter inside the Dutch base. More than 20,000 people seek refuge in nearby factories and fields.

4:45 p.m. Serb soldiers arrive at Potočari.

8:30 p.m. Mladić summons Colonel Karremans to a meeting. Colonel Karremans asks for food and medicine. General Mladić delivers an ultimatum: the Muslims must hand over their weapons to guarantee their lives.

Midnight The remaining weapons are carried away by Muslim defenders, who lead 15,000 men on a perilous 40 mile journey through mountains and minefields toward Muslim territory. Mladić and General Krstić meet a delegation of Srebrenicans. Mladić again demands that weapons must be surrendered. He says: "Allah can't help you but Mladić can."

July 12, 1995

Buses arrive to take women and children to Muslim territory, while the Serbs begin separating out all men from age 12 to 77. The Serbs insist that men must be questioned to identify Muslim War Criminals.

5:00 p.m. The buses are too frequent for the Dutch to monitor. Twenty-three thousand women and children will be deported in the next 30 hours. Hundreds of men are held in trucks and warehouses. The Serbs shell men attempting to flee through the mountains. Hundreds are killed, while thousands wander the hills.

July 13, 1995

Hundreds of men are captured as they try to flee through the mountains.

10:00 a.m. 400 men are held in a Bratunac warehouse.

Noon Dutch peacekeepers begin to carry out Serb demands to expel 5,000 refugees from their base. Many of these people will be killed by the Serb Army.

4 p.m.-midnight Hundreds of exhausted men are captured trying to flee through the mountains. In a nearby warehouse in Kravica Village, hundreds of prisoners are gunned down. More than 1,000

men are killed in and around Srebrenica. Lt. Vincent Egbers and 13 peacekeepers leave the Serb base at Nova Kasaba after being held for 24 hours.

July 16, 1995

After five days of fleeing through the mountains from Serb attacks, the first refugees arrive in Muslim territory.

Following negotiations between the UN and the Bosnian Serbs, the Dutch are at last permitted to leave Srebrenica. Weapons, food and medical supplies are left behind.

First reports of the massacre are now emerging. The head of the UN Mission in Bosnia, Yasushi Akashi, fails to report evidence of atrocities.

Colonel Karremans calls the attack on Srebrenica "an excellently planned military operation." He makes no mention of the atrocities.

In the mountains around Srebrenica, the killing goes on for weeks.

Between July 12 and July 16, 1995 the Bosnian Serb Army kills thousands of Muslim men.



Acif Hodović, 1995



Acif Hodović, 1995



Acif Hodović, 1995

ON AGREEING TO EVIL

KONSTANTY GEBERT

Tadeusz Mazowiecki (born April 18, 1927 in Płock) is a Polish author, journalist, social worker and politician, formerly one of the leaders of the Solidarity movement, and the first non-communist prime minister in Central and Eastern Europe after World War II. In 1992 he was elected the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations and its representative in former Yugoslavia during the Yugoslav Wars. In 1995, directly after the massacre in Srebrenica, he resigned in protest against the policies of European countries and of the USA that did nothing to help the nations of Bosnia and Herzegovina

I was against us going there. The anger was evident even among the officials who received us in Tuzla. Out there, in the tent city, which had sprung up at an unused airfield, well within range of Serb guns, the thousands of women survivors would certainly not fail to vent their rage, and the rapporteur—I argued—might find himself in physical danger. **Mazowiecki** ruled otherwise. This was what he had been hired to do, he explained. Not listening to the eye-witnesses of what apparently was the greatest war-crime committed in a war which had no shortage of those, would be a clear dereliction of duty.

I fidgeted nervously as our car, with an escort of beefy Swedish policemen, drove along the lines of freshly laid out tents, their pristine whiteness incongruous with what their inhabitants had gone through. People stared at the blue UN pennant the car was flying. As we got out in the middle of the camp, the Swedes fanning out to protect us from possible harm, the irony of the whole thing became almost grotesque. We were there to collect information about human rights abuses these people had suffered, in order to report to the world, so that something could be done about it. It was logical to assume that the perpetrators of these abuses could be a menace to us—but the victims?

The victims had lived through three years of hell. And all through these years—while the aggressors destroyed village after village, home after home, life after life—the blue pennant flying from the hood of our car had stood for inaction, measured words, irrelevant hand-wringing. Last time these people had seen the UN flag, it might have been on an APC back in Srebrenica, retreating so quickly before the Serb onslaught, that it actually ran over a Bosnian, who was also running for dear life. Or maybe in Potočari, where UN soldiers had surrendered the thousands of civilians who had fled to their camp. Or maybe even on the road to Tuzla, where the trucks and buses, in which the Serbs were transporting the women of Srebrenica to the Bosnian front lines, passed by commandeered UN vehicles, manned now by Serb soldiers in UN uniforms and returning from yet

another ambush set up to trap the men of Srebrenica fleeing through the forests. This is what the blue pennant must have stood for in their eyes. It was the flag of accomplices to genocide. And we came under that flag.

For a moment there was silence, and then the first cat-calls erupted. Suddenly, somebody yelled: “Ovo nije UN! Ovo je Mazowiecki!” This is not the UN. This is Mazowiecki. And we did not need the Swedes anymore.

That same evening we were back in Tuzla, having listened to hours upon hours of stories, too well documented now for it to be necessary to retell them. But then, even to veteran observers of the ongoing horror, the sheer intensity of the evil seemed to defy credibility. I heard other journalists comment that the Bosnians were engaging in rhetoric overkill, some justifying it by the world’s growing indifference to the daily reports of carnage. Mazowiecki, however, did not seem to doubt what he had heard. Not only because, after three years of listening to reports of slaughter, he had a keen ear for the false note, the too-horrifying detail. But mainly because for him this was not, as Neville Chamberlain had said about Czechoslovakia in 1938, “a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing.” As a young man, he had witnessed the Nazi onslaught in Poland and its genocidal aftermath. He certainly was no expert on Bosnia when the UN first sent him there—but the experience of his youth had immunized him to the facile belief that some things are just too horrible to be true.

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This was when Mazowiecki decided to turn in his UN mandate as human rights rapporteur for the former Yugoslavia. “I cannot pretend to be able to protect human rights under this banner anymore,” he told me. He, too, had noticed the stares people in the camp gave to the blue pennant. And he added: “After Srebrenica, as a Pole, I feel less safe in Europe.”

This was the gist of it. The massacre of eight thousand boys and men, as horrible as it was, stood for something more horrible still: the democratic states’ willingness to turn a blind eye to murder. After all, in 1995 Srebrenica had better security guarantees than Poland did. Having regained its independence from the Soviet Empire barely six years earlier, all Poland had in the way of such guarantees was the Partnership for Peace agreement, in which NATO promised “consultations” if our security was threatened. Srebrenica was a UN safe haven: the attack on it should have almost automatically triggered a NATO response. Provided, as it later turned out,

that the request be faxed on an appropriate form. Provided also there was a political will to act, even if the form was appropriate. "We deplore the fall of Srebrenica and the forthcoming fall of Žepa," UN special envoy Yasushi Akashi had infamously declared, when that other besieged safe haven was still resisting. This was it. There was to be no more.

True, this turned out not to be the end of the story. Another Serb outrage just one month later finally triggered the international response which—had it begun three years earlier—could have saved the lives of two hundred thousand people, including those of the boys and men of Srebrenica. And in 1999 the NATO intervention in Kosovo prevented another ethnic cleansing from degenerating into what could have been another genocide. And yet Yasushi Akashi's words will go down in history together with those of Neville Chamberlain. Or rather should go down, but will probably be remembered by scholars only. "You were given the choice between war and dishonor," Winston Churchill had answered Chamberlain. "You chose dishonor and you will have war." And the war Akashi had tried so hard to avoid also finally came. But it remained



Paul Lowe, 1995

mercifully limited to “a faraway country.” Those who had chosen dishonor did not have to pay dishonor’s price. Bosnia did not engrave another “never again” in the mind of humanity.

But why is it that another “never again” should at all have been necessary? Never means never: this commitment should not have a limited shelf life. On the face of it, one needs not to have personally experienced a genocide to identify another one as it occurs. Mazowiecki’s age and experience should not have been a factor, nor was he the only person, among those involved in trying to solve the Bosnian conflict, to have this personal traumatic background. Was he then, as some have accused him, hysterically over-reacting to what was not a repeat of what Europe had sworn never to allow again to happen? Was Bosnia just a civil war with no evident right and wrong, in which all parties were guilty, even if to different degrees? Or was it just a “humanitarian problem,” to be treated by massive infusion of UNHCR aid? If so, Srebrenica would have been only a bavure, a case of local nastiness, deplorable, to be sure, but hardly a valid cause for the kind of moral outrage Mazowiecki had shown. The more so as his outrage was directed not only at the perpetrators, but primarily at those who were trying to calm things down, to start some kind of meaningful dialogue, to engage the “warring parties” into negotiations. In short, was Mazowiecki wrong to have made the reaction of the camp’s inhabitants his own? Theirs, after all, was understandable under their circumstances. But his?

A brief answer to that question can of course be found in The Hague Tribunal’s verdict in the case of Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstić, sentenced in 2001 for genocide committed in Srebrenica. “In July 1995 General Krstić, individually you agreed to evil. And this is why today this trial chamber convicts you and sentences you to 46 years in prison,” said Judge Almiro Rodrigues. The verdict was upheld on appeal, though Krstić’s prison sentence was reduced. Since then, two other Bosnian Serb officers have been sentenced for participating in the genocide. Legally, the case is closed, although this might fail to convince doubters, such as for instance, Poland’s foremost historian of the Balkans, Professor Marek Waldenberg, who maintained, in a book he published on the Yugoslav conflict, that it is still unclear what exactly happened in Srebrenica. Even if legitimate suspicions of bias are set aside, one may in fact claim that the difference between Srebrenica and Auschwitz—to put it in the starkest terms—is too great for the same term to be applied to both horrors.

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This observation is, of course, correct. Srebrenica was not Auschwitz, nor was the Serb nationalist project just a revised version of the Nazi one. Krstić and his bosses were perfectly happy to allow Bosnian Muslims to live—provided they did so somewhere else, and not on hallowed Serb soil. Born after the war to a sole survivor of a family destroyed in the Shoah, I have no doubts that, if I could choose, I would prefer to be “ethnically cleansed” than “finally solved.” A chance to live, even as a refugee, is not to be cast aside lightly. No, the Serb nationalists were not present-day Nazis.

And yet this chance to live was never offered to the eight thousand, nor to untold thousands of others, butchered in cold blood in order to terrify others still into flight. Listening to survivors' stories throughout the years of Bosnia's war, I could not help thinking this is family, not foreign, history. Nor does it take the industrial nightmare of Auschwitz for a massacre to be genocide. Half of the victims of the Shoah were murdered the same way those of Srebrenica were: by bullets fired hour after hour by hard-working soldiers in a clearing somewhere in the woods. Had there been no gas chambers, the Shoah would have been no less a genocide. And the genocide convention, drafted when the world was still reeling from the discovery of the camps, was written in a way that would make it impossible for the perpetrators to hide behind technicalities. General Krstić, who argued in his appeal that the number of victims at Srebrenica was too small for the term "genocide" to be applicable, discovered this at his own expense.

So why was it that, until August 1995, it was Akashi who represented the international consensus, while Mazowiecki was the odd man out? Could David Rieff have been right, when he wrote that all that "never again" really means is "never again shall Germans kill Jews in Europe in the 1940s"? To an extent, yes. The genocide convention cannot be arguably credited for having prevented any genocide. After Biafra and Cambodia, after Rwanda, and yes, after Bosnia, this is evident to all. As Simone Weil, herself an Auschwitz survivor, said at the ceremonies of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the camp in January 2005: "And yet, the desire of all of us that this 'should never happen again' has not come true. There have since occurred other cases of genocide." Just a few days later, a UN panel released its report on Darfour. What was happening there, it had found, was not genocide, for genocidal intent could not be proven. The 80 thousand dead were victims, then, not of genocide but of war crimes and crimes against humanity—not less heinous, the panel stressed.

Nitpicking? Not really. Rather the UN panel's opinion—which might eventually be overturned by a court of law—points to the seriousness with which an allegation of genocide should be treated. Not every horrible act constitutes genocide. But The Hague Tribunal ruled that Srebrenica did. So, once again, why the unwillingness to act? General Krstić, after all, was not the only one who "agreed to evil." Those who could have stopped his evil, and did not, must share a part of the responsibility.

Many people I spoke to in Bosnia had their own explanations of this criminal inaction. They spoke darkly of sinister plots, hinted at French or Russian covert dealings with the Serbs to further their great-power interests, or simply alleged the UN had given Generals Mladić and Krstić a green light for carving more sensible borders of a future Bosnian rump state—this, some maintained, with the tacit consent of Sarajevo. It is obviously impossible at present to substantiate such claims, but I sympathize with the motivation that underlies them: with the unstated belief that the international community's inaction requires explanation, an explanation

possible only if some other interests, be they unspeakable, proved more important than Srebrenica's right to live. For this belief indicates that, for all their disillusionment, the conspiracy theorists still believe that the international community would have acted, had those dark interests not intervened.

It is of course impossible to tell what will come to light when, at some later date, diplomatic archives will be unsealed. My feeling is, however, that no particularly unspeakable acts will be revealed, other than those already committed in broad daylight, for all to see. For the belief that there must be a reason to explain the international community's unwillingness to act, as sympathetic as I am to its underpinnings, in itself seems to me unwarranted. It is simply wrong to believe that "the world will do something" unless pressed beyond the outer limits of moral endurance. The list of those who had discovered this through untold suffering is long, and the Bosnians were simply then the latest addition to the list. Just as General Krstić agreed to do evil, others agreed there is not much which can be done to stop him. The entire strategy of Krstić and the likes of him is predicated on this canny realization.

But just as the Bosnians were wrong to believe "the world" would act, Krstić and his bosses were wrong to assume it never would. In this sense, the martyrdom of the eight thousand did serve a useful purpose. At Srebrenica, a threshold was crossed, though all involved realized it of course only after the fact. The combination of the horror of the act, the cravenness of the reaction, and the defenselessness of the victims generated a sense of outrage, and contributed to an unexpected steeling of the will. In this sense, Mazowiecki was not the odd man out, but, the first man in. From this moment on, all that was needed was yet another Serb provocation. When they obliged, at Markale in August, the reaction finally came. And yet it is safe to assume that if Srebrenica had been less horrific, or Markale late in coming, that reaction might not have happened. This was not a belated revision of the strategy that had guided international responses since the summer of 1991, but rather a reconceptualization of the entire situation. Somehow, Srebrenica was perceived as something entirely new, and demanding a new reaction. But it was not.

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Srebrenica was simply yet another manifestation of the evil that has abided with us for centuries, which after Auschwitz, the world had vowed to banish forever from the face of the planet, and which has yet never left us. Not a year has passed without a Srebrenica being committed somewhere, and without anonymous Krstićes getting away with the crimes they are responsible for, their goals realized. Could it be that this is because we have decided that Auschwitz is a museum, a place we go to study the past—and not one in which we are confronted with our present and future?

ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF DRAŽEN ERDEMOVIĆ

SLAVENKA DRAKULIĆ

Dražen Erdemović, born in 1971 in Tuzla, Bosnia, of a Croatian mother and a Serbian father, was accused of crimes against humanity for taking part in a massacre of Muslim men from Srebrenica on 16 July 1995. During the investigation and the trial, he repeatedly expressed his remorse for the crimes he had committed. Erdemović explained that he had been forced to shoot because, when he refused, his commander had threatened him with death. His initial sentence was ten years in prison, but on appeal it was reduced to five years, because the Tribunal acknowledged that Erdemović had acted under extreme duress. He was a witness for the prosecution in the Krstić case, as well as in the Karadžić–Mladić case. Today he is free and enjoys the status of a protected witness.



It was already past nine o'clock in the morning when Dražen Erdemović and his unit arrived at the Branjevo collective farm.

They had not been told what their task would be. Their commander, Brano Gojković, had not been very talkative during the bus ride from their base in Vlasenica; he hadn't even told his soldiers where they were going. Dražen did not like it. Their 10th Sabotage Detachment of the armed forces of Republika Srpska usually had clear tasks, like reconnaissance missions or planting explosives in enemy territory, and they were always informed about them well in advance. But this was different. Whatever the mission was, it was secret. The only thing Dražen knew was that they were bringing a lot of ammunition with them, for both pistols and automatic weapons.

It was not a long drive, and when they got out of the bus they found themselves near a farm. It was a pig farm, but it seemed deserted; there were no animals to be seen and no people except a lone watchman. There was a big oak tree in the yard, and Dražen and several other soldiers sat under it. Although it was still early in the morning, it was already hot. Dražen looked at the fields surrounding the farm, the nearby woods shimmering in the heat and the blue mountains beyond. The view was beautiful. It reminded him of the small village where his parents lived and where he used to spend his summers as a child. Bosnia was beautiful; he had always thought so. Not that he had travelled enough to be able to make comparisons, but he had heard this from others as well. If only he could go to a river and swim! Yes, that was what he wanted to do. Just as he had when he was a small boy, swimming in the stream near his village with his pals, feasting on a tomato and a piece of bread spread with lard that his grandmother had given him for lunch. Dražen could still remember the feeling when, hot from running, he would jump into the cold water, and then, afterwards, bite into a tomato warmed by the sun.

But he had not come to Branjevo to swim. He lit a cigarette, somewhat uneasy. What are we waiting for? he asked Ivan, a soldier sitting next to him, a Croat. But Ivan was not in a good mood either. Don't ask too much, he murmured. Dražen decided to let it go and lay down. The grass under the tree was still cool and wet from the morning dew. The sky above was so blue that it almost hurt his eyes. He closed them and let his thoughts drift. If only he could get out of the whole thing, the war, this uniform of his, the shooting. He had never liked being a soldier and never thought he was a good one. He had never demonstrated any enthusiasm for it and for this reason had not made much of a career in the army. Once he had been promoted, but he held his new rank for only two months before his superiors detected how reluctant a soldier he was. Things never worked out for him; it was almost as if there was an outside force determining



his life. He should have stayed in Tuzla, but there was no work there for a locksmith, his occupation before he joined the army. Besides, all the men his age had been drafted into the Serbian, Croatian or Bosnian units. He was drafted by the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) in 1990, served as an army policeman in Belgrade, then was sent to fight the Croats in Slavonia. He came back to Tuzla in 1992 but was soon mobilised by the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) units in Herzegovina. After a year he got out of the HVO and for some time tried to avoid the war. Then he got married. Soon a baby was born. Things just seemed to happen to him. Like now. He was supposed to be in Switzerland, instead of this Branjevo. He and his wife had come to Republika Srpska because he had managed to arrange to get documents, so that they could leave their country gone mad. But when they arrived in Bijeljina, the man with their documents never showed up! So they were stuck there, with a baby boy and no money. Dražen had to find a job. Three months earlier a friend had told him that armed forces of Republika Srpska paid well and would provide him with a house, too. Indeed, Dražen was soon allotted a house that had belonged to a Muslim, but he considered being a soldier a temporary solution. He was much more concerned with trying to obtain the valid documents which would enable him and his young family to leave. This was the easiest way out—or so Dražen thought. But instead of going to Switzerland, he had ended up in Branjevo.

At first it was all right; his squad wasn't really involved in actual fighting. He had been a soldier for four years now, in different units and in different parts of what used to be Yugoslavia, but he was still finding this war unreal, just as when you are part of something but feel as if you're not really there. That was how Dražen felt: he was there, but never fully present in his uniform.

Lying in the grass now in the Branjevo farm, he felt the ground vibrating slightly. It reminded him of the time he had put his ear on a railway line and could hear the train coming long before it appeared from behind a nearby hill. He stood up and looked around. The others were not alerted yet, but they soon would be. A bus was coming towards them. It was a rather battered vehicle, one of those buses that take peasants between villages and breaks down more often than not. Dražen could see the name "Centro trans" on it in big letters and a few soldiers sitting in the front. It stopped before the main building, some fifteen metres from them. Their commander spoke briefly to the driver while two other soldiers opened the rear door. A man appeared. Dražen will remember him forever, because at that moment it became clear to him what their task was to be, and he suddenly shivered. The man was tall and very thin. He had a moustache, but Dražen could not tell his age because the man was blindfolded with a piece of dirty cloth. He wore a bluish shirt soaked with sweat, a pair of blue trousers with white stripes down the side and sneakers. His hands were tied behind his back. The man got down from the bus and took a few unsteady steps. More men followed; they were also blindfolded. A soldier marched them to a field alongside the farm.

The commander assembled his unit and told them that buses would be brought in carrying civilians from Srebrenica. He meant captured Muslim

men who had surrendered to the units of Republika Srpska. They are to be executed by our unit, the commander told them. Dražen and his comrades-in-arms suddenly learned that their squad was to become a firing squad, and he didn't like it at all. Never before had they been assigned such a task. But nobody said a word. Only one of them, Pero, seemed eager to begin, but Dražen noticed that he was drinking from a bottle of brandy. Dražen looked at the prisoners. They were standing with their backs to the soldiers. One man half turned his head towards them, as if he expected something. Was there something he wanted from them? Dražen felt a strong revulsion and he was afraid that he would vomit.

No, he would not do it! He couldn't kill men just like that, point-blank. As he went up to his commander, his hands were trembling. I don't want to do this, he said. Brano Gojković turned towards Dražen, as if he had not heard him properly. What? he said. Dražen knew the trick. Gojković wanted him to repeat his words loud enough for everybody to hear, so that he would have witnesses for whatever might happen next. Dražen looked at the soldiers. Comrades, I don't want to do this. Are you normal? Do you know what you are doing? he said, but less firmly, feeling his bravery quickly evaporating as the others studiously avoided his eyes. Pero openly laughed at him. A moment of awkward silence followed. It occurred to Dražen that he had not heard a single bird singing that day. Gojković looked at Dražen without flinching. His expression was serious. Erdemović, he said, if you don't want to do it, walk over there and stand together with the prisoners so that we can shoot you, too. Give me your machine gun!

Dražen must have understood instantly that the officer meant what he was saying. But he was confused; he had not expected such a reaction. He had hoped, briefly, that he could get out of this mess if he just said no. What did he expect? He remembered hearing about an earlier case of disobedience; when a soldier had been executed at the order of Lieutenant Colonel Pelemis, and he realised that now it was too late to say no. He should have said it long ago. His heart was beating so strongly that he could hear nothing but its pumping. For perhaps a minute, or even less, Dražen just stood there with the Kalashnikov in his hands. For a moment he thought of running into the woods. But he saw the face of his wife before him, and he felt helpless. They could take revenge on her and the baby at any time. He was responsible for three lives. It was an excuse, yes; the truth was that he had proved to be a coward and he knew it, but what else could he have done? Gojković would not hesitate to order him killed and Pero would do it with pleasure, although Dražen did not understand what he had against him. Maybe the fact that Dražen was not a pure Serb, which made it even more advisable to take Gojković's threat seriously.

The commander was no longer looking at him, as if he had no interest in his decision. He ordered the soldiers to take up a position behind the prisoners and the prisoners to kneel on the ground. Dražen took his place at the end of the squad. His heart was still beating loudly when he aimed at an elderly man whose face, luckily enough, he had not seen before. He quickly, feverishly, weighed up his options. Of course, he could fire be-



Zijah Gafić, 2002



Zijah Gafić, 2002

tween two prisoners. But his prisoner would still have to be killed. Like having to die twice. Besides, their firing squad was a small one of only a dozen soldiers, and if he didn't aim properly it could be detected immediately. The commander would know, and he would be executed. No, he must aim properly. Then a command came—"Shoot!"—and the man disappeared from his view. He remembered only that his first victim wore a grey T-shirt. Dražen closed his eyes and tried to calm himself down. But the new prisoners were already in front of him. One of them shouted: Fuck you, bloody... and did not even have time to finish his sentence before the command to fire came again. Once he started, Dražen kept shooting every few minutes without thinking much about what he was doing. The only thing he was aware of was trying to aim at elderly people rather than young ones—it seemed less of a waste. Soon the bus had been emptied.

When Dražen looked at his watch, he was shocked: it had taken them only fifteen minutes to execute some sixty people! A second bus had already arrived. The men in the bus could not see what was awaiting them as they were blindfolded, too. Dražen was glad about that; he thought this was actually an act of mercy towards these poor men. But pretty soon after that, buses began to arrive carrying men who were not blindfolded. Their hands were not even tied. It was as though they had been hurriedly pushed into buses and sent to the Branjevo farm. But why such hurry? Dražen did not understand. And there was something else that he did not understand, that did not seem logical to him: these men who came later could surely see what was about to happen to them. They could see dead bodies on the ground and soldiers standing there with Kalashnikovs. And yet, they stepped down from the bus and marched to the execution site with two soldiers. Why didn't any of them try to escape into the nearby wood? Dražen wondered. In a couple of minutes you could dive into the safety of the trees; there was at least a slim chance of survival. But not a single prisoner tried to break away. Dražen had never seen such a spectacle before: prisoners walking in orderly fashion towards their execution site, like animals in a slaughterhouse. Did they believe somebody would save them? If all of them had tried to run, surely some would have reached safety. At the very least, they would die knowing that they had tried. They had nothing to lose. They were to be executed, and they must have known it the moment they got off the bus. Dražen wished they would try to run; at least it would give him a reason to shoot at them, and it would be more fair, because they would have had a chance to escape. But no. The prisoners were pouring in in a steady, peaceful stream as if some kind of mental paralysis had seized them.

Maybe these men no longer felt anything? But then he saw something and realised this couldn't be so. As he aimed at the nape of a man's neck, Dražen saw a telltale stain on the back of his trousers. There was a wet spot there, getting bigger and bigger. He heard a command and shot once more. When the man fell down, Dražen saw that he was still alive, still urinating out of fear. Dražen was suddenly embarrassed, as if it was happening to him. It could happen to me, too, he thought, but pushed the unpleasant notion away. He was tired and angry with himself, with Gojković, with everybody. It was just not right to execute all these men. If they were soldiers then they were prisoners of war, and if they were civilians, what was happening to them was even more unjustified. He and his fellow soldiers were doing something wrong, that much he knew. If there were any justice, then these men would not be executed just like that, without a trial, without any proof of their guilt. Hundreds of men could not disappear just like that. Their relatives would be looking for them, and eventually Dražen's unit would be held accountable for their deaths. If Gojković didn't want witnesses, what about his own soldiers? Were they not witnesses to the crime? How could he be sure that nobody would talk?

Just then, Dražen heard another noise. Among the prisoners standing in the field was a man of perhaps sixty, grey-haired and neatly dressed. Don't kill me, he shouted, I saved the lives of many Serbs in Srebrenica. I could give you their names, I am sure they would vouch for me. He started to pull a piece of paper out of his pocket. Dražen approached him and took him aside. He gave him a cigarette and a glass of orange juice. The man sat down and lit the cigarette. His hands were trembling as he handed the paper to Dražen. Here are names and telephone numbers, you can check them if you want, it's true what I am saying... But Dražen knew that the man would not be allowed to live, because he was already a witness to the execution. Why did he take him aside, then? Dražen was impressed by this man who had not silently accepted death like the others. He seemed honest and brave, and Dražen wanted to prolong his life for as long as he could. But the man did not look as if he had any hope left. We all used to live together, Muslims, Serbs, Croats, the man said to Dražen. What happened to us ordinary people? Why did we let it happen? Yes, indeed, what happened to us, Dražen said; if only somebody could explain that to me, if only I knew, but I don't know any more than you do, I am a half-Croat, my wife is a Serb.

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Dražen understood that he and the man in front of him had something in common: they had nothing against people of other nationalities. But how could you do this? the man asked as he inhaled the smoke from the cigarette, sensing it would be his last. What could Dražen tell him but that he did not have a choice? It sounded like a stupid thing to say to a man about to lose his life, it sounded damned stupid. But it was the truth. Dražen was aware that the man was guilty only of being the wrong nationality, and in this he didn't have a choice either.

There was no more time for a conversation. Pero and another soldier approached them and took the man away. Dražen said no, don't do it, knowing that it was all he could do. Shut up, don't be stupid, Ivan said. In a minute it was over; the man was dead.

It must have been past noon, but the soldiers did not have much time for a break. At the beginning, every half-hour Dražen would go and sit under the tree and have a cigarette. It was a kind of escape, a break. But then he no longer craved a cigarette. His movements became more and more mechanical. He would aim at somebody's head and shoot, and before he had time to wipe his forehead the next one would be kneeling in front of him. He preferred it that way; if he paused for too long, he would become aware of the foul odour of the bodies. In the heat bodies started to decompose almost immediately. The stench reminded him of a butcher's shop. Sometimes his mother would send him to buy meat, though he tried to avoid it. In summer the stench in the butcher's shop was unbearable, and fat, green flies would land on pieces of raw meat to eat and lay their eggs. The butcher would entertain himself by catching flies and dropping them in a glass of water. Dražen would run home, eager to get away from the smell. What a fine nose you have, his mother would tease him. Now the same kind of stench was coming from the field, the same kind of green flies descending on the fresh bodies.

Ivan, perhaps noticing that Dražen was becoming nauseated, offered him a brandy, a strong homemade sljivovica. Dražen took several sips and felt better. With the alcohol taking over, he could keep shooting for some time without giving himself a chance to think. As he took another long sip of the sljivovica, Dražen saw out of the corner of his eye a young boy stepping down from a bus. The boy was not blindfolded and Dražen saw his face, though he had promised himself that he would not look at the prisoners' faces, as it made shooting more difficult. The boy might have been fifteen, perhaps younger. His chest was bare and his pale skin exposed to the sun. The boy looked at the soldiers and then at the rows of dead bodies in the field. His eyes grew bigger and bigger, as if he could not take in all that he saw. But he is a boy, only a boy, Dražen murmured more or less to himself, careful not to stand behind him. When the prisoners knelt down in front of the squad, just before the command to shoot came, Dražen heard the boy's voice. Mother, he whispered, Mother! That day Dražen heard men begging for their lives, grown men crying like children; he heard them promising money, cars, even houses to the soldiers. Many were cursing, some of them were sobbing. But this boy was just calling for his mother, as children sometimes do when they awake from a bad dream and all they long for is their mother's hand on their forehead. A minute later the boy was dead, but Dražen was sure he could still hear his voice. I am beginning to hallucinate, he thought. For the second time that day he felt so nauseous that he had to run to the bushes and vomit. Nothing came out except yellowish liquid smelling of alcohol.

The next bus had not yet arrived. Dražen leant against a tree, exhausted. It was already two o'clock. Since ten that morning he had been shooting, trying not to look at the prisoners, trying not to think about them, trying not to feel anything. Now he felt numb, his body as stiff as wood. He felt like a puppet on a string, able only to raise his hands and fire his gun again and again. He sat there staring at the horizon. He heard somebody wailing, then a solitary shot. Dražen did not turn his head; he did not want to see anything more, he had had enough of killing. How many more buses would come? After three o'clock in the afternoon it was over.

Gojković announced that there would be no more arrivals, and they quickly boarded their own bus.

The sun was still high in the sky, and the stench in the air was unbearable. Dražen had to get away from this nightmarish place. Again, he wanted to jump into water or at least to take a shower and wash away the smell of death. If only he could wash his hands! Dražen carefully examined them. There was no blood on them, only a blister on his right index finger. A round, pink blister. How strange, Dražen thought, to get a blister from killing people. He estimated that he must have fired some seventy times. He had killed perhaps seventy people and got a blister! Suddenly, it was so funny that Dražen began to laugh hysterically.

At last they were leaving the Branjevo farm. The field was covered with corpses. Who would bury them? And where? Dražen turned his head away. This was no longer any of his business. He had done his part; for him it was over. For the first time that day he could breathe deeply.

But it was not over. Not yet.

When they arrived in neighbouring Pilica, the commander informed them that there were five hundred men in the House of Culture and that they also were to be executed. This time it was easier to say no, because Dražen was not the only one to do so. They were all tired from the killing and they refused to go on. But there were fresh soldiers who volunteered for the task and the commander accepted them. Dražen sat in a cafe across from the House of Culture and ordered a strong black coffee. Just before their group arrived, some Muslim men, prisoners from the House, had broken out and had all been killed as they ran down the street. Soldiers were still searching the corpses for money and gold. Dražen stared at them, just stared, sipping his coffee. It was too sweet.

Dražen knew that he would never forget this day, and that it would remain his curse: that smell of fresh air in the morning, the blue of the sky, the sound of the first bus arriving, the thin man with a moustache, another man's trousers soaked with urine, the stench of rotten meat, the dark red colour of blood gushing from a wound, the man who asked him how he could do what he was doing, the boy calling for his mother. He sensed that this day would change his entire life—that it was already changing. He felt tears coming. Boys don't cry, his father used to tell him when he came home with bleeding cuts on his knees. But where was his father now? Where were they all now—his parents, his wife, his friends? Dražen had never felt so alone, alone with twelve hundred dead bodies that would be with him wherever he went **(1)**.

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(1) From "They Would Never Hurt a Fly" by Slavenka Drakulić.
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Human Rights and Genocide: ABSOLUTE CONCEPTS VS. RELATIVE POLITICS

translated from Arabic by Max Weiss **HAZEM SAGHIEH**

Upon examining the politics of human rights, particularly with respect to genocide, we find ourselves bombarded theoretically with absolute concepts that leave little room for uncertainty, such as: “human rights”, “victim”, “perpetrator”, “genocide”, and “atrocities”. Further reflection on such concepts, however, reveals that this lexicon of absolutes—both negative and positive—insist on a moralistic clarity which belies the murky ethics of political reality.

In all likelihood, it is this stark contrast between human rights discourse and actual policy that produces naïve astonishment, brimming with the language of moral accusation. Those distraught people decrying human rights violations or those with varying degrees of legal consciousness don’t hesitate to use the weapon of their indignation against injustices, time and again, despite their recurrent and bitter discovery that its blade has been dulled.

Beyond naïve astonishment, we can even begin to make out a populist, anti-political consciousness that claims there is no distinction to be made between democratic and non-democratic regimes, as both are equally self-interested and indifferent to crimes against humanity. Such a supposition is no less dangerous than genocide itself, because it harbors the seeds of total anarchy, in addition to its convenient use by a number of demagogues who do not hesitate to engage in violence and bloodshed to seize power.

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We already have a great many examples that testify to the wide gap between the absolutism of human rights and its derivatives, on the one hand, and the relativism of its politics, that are repeated, in some form or another, year after year.

We know, for example, that during the Holocaust, the democratic world attempted to close its eyes and ears to exceptional horror. On several occasions, the Allied leadership dissuaded their allies from bombing Nazi concentration camps or the railroads that led to them. When the war ended, the “developed world”, through its politicians, intellectuals, teachers, and elites said, as one: “Never again”. But it happened again, in other shapes, in many other parts of the globe, as did the tendency to turn away, and sometimes even collude with the insidious perpetrators, at least in what many people perceived as collusion.

The world confronted the Rwandan tragedy in 1994 with silence,

paralysis and a series of meetings, in Europe and the United States, out of which nothing concrete ever materialized. All that American President Bill Clinton vocalized at the time was a noble apology to the victims of the genocide who were, by that time, already buried in the ground. And perhaps we might have noticed, well before the Jewish Holocaust, a similar impotency vis-à-vis the Armenian genocide in 1915; which we saw again with the Cambodian genocide at the hands of the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s; and again with the Bosnian massacres in 1990's, whose victims were ignored for a long time. There are even some of the opinion that the reaction in the United States to the Armenian genocide, nearly a century ago, and the reaction to the current tragedy in Darfur, bespeaks a decrease in democratic "sensitivity" and a contradiction to the supposed interests and effects of globalization.

What's the problem, then?

One ventures to say that this matter is far more complicated than the politics of self-interest, indifference, or (the sometimes hasty accusation of) racism, without ignoring their relevance. The issue lies in different ways of conceiving the state, first in terms of making laws and enshrining inalienable rights and, then, in terms inculcating a consciousness of those rights.

It is worth mentioning that the great national and civil breakdowns that resulted in or accompanied genocides and other crimes against humanity have taken place alongside the collapse of the state and/or the collapse of the international or regional systems that sustained it. The Armenian genocide took place during the First World War; the Nazi Holocaust during the Second World War; and the Yugoslav War with the conclusion of the Cold War. Similarly, the Cambodian genocide cannot be separated from the Sino-Soviet-American conflict, while the horrors in Africa have always been associated with the recently created national borders and the instability they generated.

To descend from generalizations, let us recall how, during General Ratko Mladić's assault on Srebrenica, Richard Holbrooke, U.S. Presidential Advisor for European Affairs, described the international system as having "no more energy left". In 1991, after the victory over Saddam Hussein and the liberation of Kuwait, President George Bush did not leave any ambiguity regarding the intention of his country not to intervene militarily in the former Yugoslavia. And it never occurred to his successor, Bill Clinton,

despite his decisive words in support of Bosnian Muslims, to send military forces to the region. It is true that he urged NATO to use its warplanes to bombard the Serbs, but its European allies, who also had forces stationed there, did not, which paralyzed the initiative of the Western military alliance. While this did not result in the fall of Srebrenica or the inability to protect it from the air, it convinced the Serbs that anything was possible and taught the Bosnian Muslims, by contrast, that there is no power except God's. The aerial images that then-American Secretary of State Madeline Albright presented before the Security Council with great fanfare three weeks after the fall of Srebrenica, revealed a great deal of impotency tinted by a good measure of farce.

In this context, perhaps Iraq has supplied us with the plainest example of the indissoluble relationship between genocide and the collapse of the regional-international system sustaining a country, particularly with respect to the difficulties of building a nation-state that can unite, under the banner of a constitution, three identities—Sunni Arab, Shia Arab and Kurdish. The Baghdad Baathists' war on the Kurds is well-known, as is their war on the Shia, which reached its peak during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988), especially during its last years, when the desire to end the hostilities increased on both sides. The tragic outcome, a fruit of that shared desire, was Halabja.

We are not searching for a theoretical relationship of universal relevance that professes to explain everything that has happened right under our noses, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that pre-state proclivities appear when states or their systems break down, precisely like the dreams that are expressed when consciousness goes dormant during sleep.

It is worth noting here that states which commit atrocities, even when they are not in a recognized state of collapse, retain within themselves all of their “non-” or “pre-” state elements. It is true that the Nazi state, which carried out the Holocaust, was, by definition, a modern state, but also the ideal model of an extreme, authoritarian organization. It was, at the same time, a racial state, and by virtue of its particular theory of German nationalism that exceeded the borders of the German nation-state, pan-Germanic nationalism, it built up a counter-authority to the state, if we understand the latter to be a legal and constitutional entity in a given territory. The German-American political scientist Hannah Arendt made a famous comparison between the fact that Nazism led to the Holocaust whereas the Dreyfus Affair, at the turn of the 20th century, led to no such event. This was due, Arendt argued, to the existence and acknowledgement of a nation-state in France, as opposed to the attempt to racially and ideologically transcend the nation-state in Germany. To a lesser extent, we might say the same thing about the Ottoman Empire, which, during its implementation of the Armenian genocide, was struggling to prevent its own transformation from an empire into a nation-state. The same is true of the Yugoslavian state, a mini-empire whose defining feature was a great degree of Communist force exercised by General Tito's government.

In this sense, orchestrators of genocide often articulate the integration of the ethnic or religious level, which precedes the state, with the hegemonic or imperial level, which transcends the state. But the state, in its national and constitutional sense, which is defined in a specific territory, can find no place for itself in such a scheme. Since the outbreak of the Bosnian War in April 1992, for example, random killing, rape and torture were an integral part of the “ethnic cleansing”, guided by a conscious Serbian strategy, which entailed “cleansing” large parts of the country of its Muslim population and was inspired by the dream of a “Greater Serbia”. Srebrenica, where more than 7,000 Muslims were killed, was the most visible monument of that dark program of “purification”.

Genocide might require the diminishment of the nation-state just as it might require its enlargement. In the summer of 1993, for example, Bosnian President Haris Silajdžić declared that if the Serbs did not agree to relinquish the suburbs of Sarajevo that they controlled from scattered Muslim enclaves, he was prepared to directly confront the residents of those enclaves and ask them to leave. In November 1995, according to Richard Holbrooke’s account, the Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegović, informed him that, in order to maintain a united Sarajevo within the framework of a broader agreement, he was prepared to hand over Srebrenica and other remaining enclaves to the Serbs. In that way, they would be sufficiently rid of those who were not, in his words, “the people” of Izetbegović. It is possible, of course, to consider such a tactic as comparable to the work of ethnic cleansing campaigns as it fulfils the same objective. What’s more, one cannot interpret the barbaric use and propagation of atrocities in such cases, which include rape, as anything other than the insistent refusal to co-exist within a single national community. As the rapist sows his rage in the womb of the raped woman, he also sows it in her future and in generations to come. Gang rapes in Darfur, for example, were among the most effective means of making the Darfurians understand that the government ruling them was completely foreign, and that coexistence in one nation with one destiny was impossible. This technique was one of most prominent factors causing the number of those who fled their villages to rise to the millions, which provided a great service to the expansionist strategy of Khartoum and the Janjaweed fighters. Rape, in this case, makes intra-national relationships in a given country look like the relationship between an invading army and a foreign people subjected to invasion: like the entrance of the Red Army in Germany at the close of the Second World War; or in the wars of the Indian subcontinent that transformed what had constituted a single people until 1947 into two peoples, and, since the early 1970’s with the creation of Bangladesh, into three peoples.

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If this connection between the nation-state/homeland/people and the prevention of atrocities is correct, then it is also true that the most important contribution in support of human rights is to help establish states with defined boundaries, maintained by the rule of law, which are only viable among stable regional regimes.

Even a brief historical analysis reveals that the crucial element in the overwhelming majority of atrocities, regardless of whether Raphael Lemkin’s definition of genocide is correct, is the failed integration of the

European nation-state form as it appeared in the “Third World” with competing ethnic and religious formations in countries invaded by the European powers. For example, the tragedy of the Tutsis in the spring of 1994 is inseparable, at heart, from the Hutu revolution that broke out in 1959, which then led to, in 1963, the liquidation of the Tutsi aristocracy and its replacement by a number of successive Hutu regimes. For those who care to scrutinize more distant history, the origins of that phase, too, can be found in earlier events. The subject Tutsi population that immigrated to that region in the fifteenth century had already subjugated communities of Hutu farmers to their rule. All this took place before one of the most recent and most brutal European colonialisms—Belgian colonialism—took over the country in 1919, which heralded the firm anchoring of an unjust and unstable political structure. The same thing, with some difference in the details, can be said about Nigeria or the Congo or others that experienced bloody domestic struggles that grew out of the modern formations brought by the colonial age.



This, in turn, raises a quite complicated problem. If radical nationalist and fundamentalist movements, for example, tend to refuse the Western nation state model because of its association with the West's colonial past, supporters of human rights must re-imagine that model on account of their recognition of the importance of its virtues.

We have seen this equation clearly in recent years, as it presented itself in glaring fashion through the contradiction between the desire for intervention by a "colonial" state and the durability of anti-colonial ideology in the postwar period. This dilemma appears as well in the context of international intervention in the name of human rights or halting atrocities, wherein a paradigm of states or international alliances "helping" states in decay is apparent. Often, the principal of intervention, which itself is a noble and universal one, is confused with the national interests or the patronizing discourse of the intervening party.

The misunderstanding expands when we compare the highly advanced level of individualism in countries requested to intervene, which sanctifies every individual life, to communalism—both ethnic and religious—that typically stirs up civil conflicts and leads to the death of the individual in the "Third World". We note here, for example, how the Dutch government—a country regarded as highly tolerant—refused to order any air strikes against the Serbs during the war for Srebrenica before its last soldier had left Bosnia. And because the Serbs knew how to take advantage of this, they held the Dutch forces like prisoners in the U.N. compound in the neighboring village of Potočari until their bloody mission in Srebrenica came to an end in mid-July 1995.

Furthermore, we must also add the problematic raised by "the human". If we go beyond the biological definition, we can agree on the "inhumanity" of inflicting pain, perpetrating torture or oppression, and committing murder or genocide. Of course, this meaning is still insufficient to give birth to an applicable and sustainable politics of human rights. This being the case, it is incumbent upon us to reclaim "the human", in its philosophical and historical meanings drawn from the Enlightenment tradition and humanistic impulse. In this framework, "the human" becomes an alternative to God and an alternative to the sect, tribe and creed in governing human progress. Someone has always affirmed this meaning of "the human", which was once bound up with rights and obligations towards oneself and one's neighbors, even before one's own interest. Defining human rights without taking obligations into account reduces humans to discrete biological beings, incapable of forming political and economic structures capable of preventing atrocities.

Again, the rule of law provides a more durable bridge for passing from the simple meaning of "the human" to the more complex one. It is no coincidence, moreover, that states which commit shameful acts and abuse human rights are, through their actions, renouncing their nature as states, either by escalating their authoritarian practices and violations of the law, or by using militias as a proxy to facilitate carrying out those acts. As we have seen, the militia is often more effective than the state at committing atrocities (however good the state might be), as demonstrated

by how the Arab Janjaweed militias under the guidance of Musa Hilal took over in Darfur, in western Sudan, with the full support of the government in Khartoum. The leader of one of the Arab-Bedouin tribes, Hilal is known to have expressed, in 1988, his gratitude for the weapons and ammunition “necessary” to wipe out the Darfurian tribes.

There are several significant meanings to be drawn from the Janjaweed–Khartoum alliance. In the mid-90s, before the name Janjaweed had become well known, they committed, with the urging and collusion of the Sudanese rulers, a massacre that left 2,000 of the Masalit tribe dead. In 2000 and 2002, destructive attacks were launched against villages inhabited by the Fur and Zaghawa tribes. Atrocities such as those spurred the Darfurians to organize themselves and form an armed resistance movement against the Islamic government in Khartoum. In June 2002, they attacked a police station; in early 2003, they continued their revolt by torching army bases and destroying a warplane on the tarmac of the military airport. In response, the government of President Omar el-Bashir launched a scorched earth campaign to eliminate as many Darfurians as possible. However, using the army in such a campaign was impossible for many reasons, one being the presence of a great number of people from Darfur serving in the armed forces. Khartoum resolved to pursue another strategy, the pillar of which was informal militias. Not satisfied with those fighters available to them, they released a number of Arab prisoners, most of them common criminals, and incorporated them into the Janjaweed.

There, in Darfur, the methodical killing, rape, and amputation of limbs proceeded on a wide scale, according to the victimized tribe, and the accumulating evidence would have made it impossible for the state to take responsibility for such actions. Saddam Hussein did not carry out his massacres in the name of Iraqi patriotism symbolized by the Iraqi state, but, rather, in the name of Arab nationalism as it swept the country. At the same time, this didn’t prevent him from using Kurdish militias—what the Kurds referred to as “the donkeys”—to do his bidding.

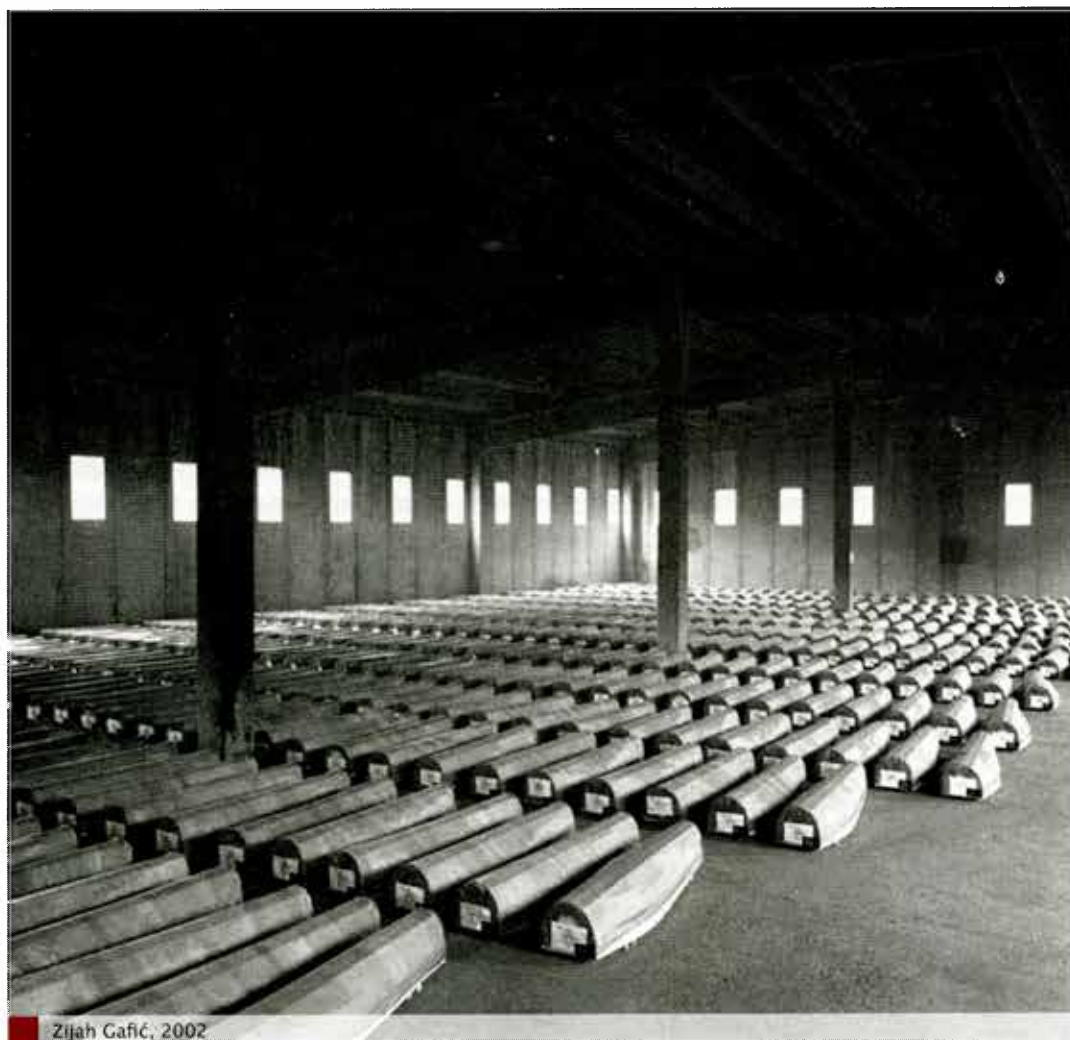
It goes without saying that the “culture” of genocide is not the culture of the nation-state, nor is its history the complete history of the state. In place of compromise and construction in terms of culture, an aggressive “splinter” culture begins to speak in the name of a limited territory within the state, and in the name of aspirations of a specific population that takes pride in an historical legacy whose interpretation is open to dispute. It is no coincidence that Ratko Mladić, during the battle of Srebrenica in the summer of 1995, gave a talk about reclaiming “The Rebellion of Dahijas” to a number of Serbs who were preparing to celebrate an upcoming Serbian national holiday, saying that the time had come to revolt against “the Turks” in their region, in reference to a Serbian uprising against Ottoman power in 1804 that was put down with excessive brutality.

The point is that the complete and clear division of the state itself rivals, or almost rivals, national consensus and common symbols—as we saw in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), or the Lebanese war starting in 1975, and even earlier in the Vietnam war—and is a necessary requirement for the total abandonment of any claim for the politics or

necessity of human rights. In that way, two warring parties already ensure the total ideologization of their conflict, making it acceptable, or even legitimate to disregard human rights. This removes any human face from these conflicts and tempts other countries to support local allies in the name of a common ideology. It is senseless to suppose that is possible to devise an absolute theory capable of providing us with a full explanation and solution for this phenomenon. It is also impossible to neglect the fact that countries with strong constitutions, which qualify as modern nation states, are capable of committing and condoning atrocities. But, in general, the lack in constitutionality of the state, whether it is absent in laws or in consciousness, is mainly what allows such catastrophes to happen. If such a consciousness were not lacking, this would lead to a link between human rights and a higher concept of politics with the capacity to change human relations.

And it is feared, so long as this balancing between human rights and politics is not taken into consideration, that the response to atrocities, when there is a response, will be limited to well-intentioned violence as opposed to malicious violence. But a violence like that, by necessity, will not solve the problem or guarantee that it doesn't happen again unless it is accompanied by a consciousness that is more far-reaching than violence. Without this consciousness, it will not possess the necessary defense against violence that the victim himself might later engage in. Many instances have shown us that victims are not immune to being carried away by such temptation. And while there is no doubt as to the oppression of the Palestinians, their politics have contributed to catastrophes that have befallen them and neighboring Arab peoples. The Kurds, too, are victims of oppression—that is not open for discussion—and they have deemed it wise, on several occasions, to not take any lessons from their Arab neighbors. How shocking it was, therefore, in the mid-1990s for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), under the leadership of Jalal Talabani, to clash in a wider way with the Kurdish Democratic Party (PDK), under the leadership of Massoud Barzani, and for the latter to request, when the United States didn't bail him out, help from Saddam Hussein himself and his partners in crime.

As long as we have already brought up Hannah Arendt, it is worth mentioning her once more in terms of her distinction between violence and power. Violence is capable of destroying established power but it cannot create a situation that provides legitimacy for a new and alternative one. Therefore, violence is the most impoverished foundation possible upon which to construct power, but when it is relied on, the result must be embodied in the destruction of every legitimate form of power.



Zijah Gafić, 2002

Cover Photo: Muhamed Mujkić
"Search for bodies" 2003
Design: Lara Balaa



معرض صور سريبرينيتسا في ٣٣ صورة

EXHIBITION SREBRENICA IN 33 PICTURES

من الخميس ٢٧ نيسان إلى الأحد ١٤ أيار ٢٠٠٦
يومياً بين الرابعة من بعد الظهر والتاسعة مساءً
في الهنغار حارة حريك (قرب مسجد الإمام المهدي)
الافتتاح: السادسة من مساء الخميس ٢٧ نيسان ٢٠٠٦

27.04.06 through 14.05.06 @ The Hangar,
Haret Hreik (next to Al-Mahdi Mosque)
Daily from 4 pm – 9 pm
Opening Thursday 27.04.06 at 6 pm

المصورون

PHOTOGRAPHERS

يقترح هذا المعرض على زائريه وزائراته ٣٣ صورة بعدسات عشرة مصورين، خمسة منهم من أبناء يوغوسلافيا السابقة والخمسة الآخرون من جنسيات شتى. توثق الصور مشاهد من أيام سريبرينيتسا وناسها، الناجين منهم والضحايا. كان تنظيم هذا المعرض لأول مرة في العاصمة البلجيكية بروكسيل في حزيران ٢٠٠٥، بعد العاصمة البلجيكية انتقل المعرض إلى بلغراد وبرلين وواشنطن وستراسبورغ (فرنسا) وسراييفو وقد أكيته في كل المراحل التي حل فيها نقاشات تاريخية سياسية في المسائل التي يفتحها استذكار سريبرينيتسا.

This international project is a collection of documentary photographs about the genocide in Srebrenica. The exhibition, which opened in Brussels in June 2005, has traveled to Belgrade, Berlin, Washington D.C., Strasbourg, and Sarajevo, and now to Beirut. Including the work of 5 Bosnian and 5 international photographers, the project documents the fate of the survivors, the search and identification of the victims, as well as the post-war fate of the scene of the crime.

اداركو بانديتش: مواليد زغرب ١٩٦٧. بين ١٩٩١ و ٢٠٠١ عمل كمصور مستقل لحساب الأسوشيتد برس في كرواتيا وسلوفينيا.

جيل بريس: مواليد فرنسا ١٩٤٦. بين ١٩٧٤ و ١٩٨٧ عمل لحساب وكالة ماغنوم وترأسها طوال سنوات. حائز على عدد من الجوائز المرموقة.

ألين زينو: مواليد سراييفو ١٩٦٦. مصور مستقل. حائز على عدد من الجوائز المرموقة.

صبياء غافيتش: مواليد ١٩٨٠ سراييفو. نالت تحقيقاته المصورة عن المأساة البوسنية العديد من الجوائز المرموقة.

دانيلو كرستنوفيتش: مواليد سراييفو (١٩٥١). يعمل لحساب رويترز منذ العالم ١٩٨٦.

بول لوي: مواليد بريطانيا ١٩٥٢. يعمل في التصوير والتعليم) ويعيش بين لندن وسراييفو. حائز على عدد من الجوائز المرموقة.

محمد موجكيتش: مواليد سراييفو ١٩٥١. عضو لجنة تقصي الحقائق وتوثيقها عن جرائم الحرب. في العام ١٩٩٦ انضم إلى لجنة التقصي عن المفقودين.

سيمون نورفولك: مواليد بريطانيا ١٩٥٣. حتى العام ١٩٩٤ عمل لحساب عدد من الصحف والمجلات. منذ العام ٢٠٠٢ يعمل على توثيق آثار العسكرة على عدد من الدول.

روحية هوتشكنز: مواليد بريطانيا ١٩٥٢. بين ١٩٩٢ و ١٩٩٧ تخصص معظم نشاطه المهني لتغطية الحرب في يوغوسلافيا السابقة.

أنشيف هودوفيتش: مواليد سراييفو ١٩٥٩ (توفي ٢٠٠٥). عمل مصوراً لحساب عدد من الصحف اليومية خلال عشرين عاماً قبل أن تتخذ لجنة تقصي الحقائق وتوثيقها عن جرائم الحرب أحد مصوريها الرسميين.

Darko Bandić: born 1967 in Zagreb; 1991 – 2001 free-lance photographer; photographer for Associated Press in Croatia and Slovenia.

Zijah Gajić: born 1980 in Sarajevo; photo-documentation of war in BiH; winner of numerous international photo awards; photos published by Libération, Le Monde, New York Times Magazine.

Acif Hodović: 1959 – 2005, Sarajevo; photographer for daily newspapers for more than 20 years; during the war, he worked as the photographer for the Commission for Documentation of War Crimes.

Roger Hutchings: born 1952 in the UK; 1992 – 1997 he documented the war in the territory of former Yugoslavia; winner of key press and art photo awards, agency Network Photographers, London.

Danilo Krstanović: born 1951 in Sarajevo; has been working for Reuters since 1996; photo-documenting the war in and around Sarajevo; two European photo exhibitions.

Paul Lowe: born 1963 in the UK; free-lance photographer and lecturer; winner of numerous awards; lives and works between Sarajevo and London; among others, his work has been published by Time, Newsweek, Life, Der Spiegel, The Observer; in 2005 he published a book titled Bosnians.

Muhamed Mujkić: born 1959 in Sarajevo; member of the Commission for Documentation of War Crimes; in 1996 he started following the process of exhumations and joined the Commission for Missing Persons.

Simon Norfolk: born 1963 in the UK; until 1994 he worked for left-wing newspapers and magazines; awarded for photo reports and books; since 2002 he has been working on documenting the consequences of militarization on countries.

Gilles Peress: born 1946 in France; 1974 – 1987 he worked for Magnum Photos and was its president for several years, winner of numerous awards; photo-projects: Farewell to Bosnia, Hate Thy Brother.

Almin Zrno: born 1966 in Sarajevo; free-lance photographer; has won several awards since 2002.

سريبرينيتسا الجريمة والعقاب

ROUND TABLE

SREBRENICA Crime & Punishment

السبت ٢٩ نيسان ٢٠٠٤ في الهنغار
حارة حريك (قرب مسجد الإمام المهدي)
من الثالثة عصراً إلى السادسة والنصف مساءً
ترجمة فورية من العربية والفرنسية والإنكليزية وإليها

Saturday 29.04.2006 @ The Hangar,
Haret Hreik (next to Al-Mahdi Mosque)
From 3 pm – 6.30 pm
Simultaneous translation provided in Arabic,
French, and English

تمام الثالثة الترحيب بالحضور

15.00 WELCOME

(Monika Borgmann, Kirsten Maas, Lokman Slim)

الثالثة والرابع افتتاح الندوة
بمداخله يقدمها ضياء غافيتش
تحت عنوان قصص من وادي الظلمات

15.15 OPENING LECTURE

"TALES FROM THE DARK VALLEY" by Zijah Gafić

الثالثة والنصف حتى الخامسة
الحلقة الأولى من الندوة
تحت عنوان جرائم الإبادة والجرائم ضد الإنسانية

15.30 – 17.00 FIRST PANEL

GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

• أمين مكي مدني:
المحاسبة على جرائم الإبادة في الإطارين المحلي والدولي
• حازم صاغية:
المتقف بين يدي المجازر

• Speaker: Amin Maki Madani

Title of intervention:

"Genocide in the Context of National and International
Judicial Accountability"

• Speaker: Hazem Saghie

Title of intervention:

"Genocide and the Intellectual"

Followed by a discussion moderated by Kirsten Maas

تقدم المداخلتين وتدير النقاش الذي يليهما كيرستن ماس

الخامسة حتى السادسة والنصف
الحلقة الثانية من الندوة
تحت عنوان في الحقيقة والعدالة

17.00 – 18.30 SECOND PANEL

TRUTH AND JUSTICE

• مرصاد توكاشا:
محل الوقائع من سياقات الجهر بالحقيقة والمصالحة
• نزار صاغية:
الجرائم ضد الإنسانية في دولة هيبة: لبنان نموذجاً
يقدم المداخلتين ويدير النقاش الذي يليهما لقمان سليم

• Speaker: Mirsad Tokača

Title of intervention:

"Truth Telling and the Reconciliation Process:
The Role of Facts"

• Speaker: Nizar Saghie

Title of intervention:

"Crimes Against Humanity in a Charismatic State"

Followed by a discussion moderated by Lokman Slim

المنتدوت

BIOGRAPHIES:

مرصاد توكاچا (سراييفو): مؤسس ورئيس مركز سراييفو للأبحاث والتوثيق. بين ١٩٩٢ و٢٠٠٣ شغل توكاچا منصب أمين عام لجنة تقصي الحقائق عن جرائم الحرب.

حازم صاغية (لبنان): صحفي. بدأ حياته المهنية في السفير اللبنانية (١٩٧٤ – ١٩٨٨) قبل أن ينتقل إلى الحياة. له العديد من المؤلفات عن لبنان والثقافة السياسية في العالم العربي. منها:

- مأزق الفرد في الشرق الأوسط. ٢٠٠٥
- بعث العراق – سلطنة صدام قياماً وحطاماً. ٢٠٠٣
- قوميو المشرق العربي من درافوس إلى غارودي. ٢٠٠٠
- دفاعاً عن السلام. ١٩٩٧

نزار صاغية (لبنان): محام. له العديد من الأبحاث في المسائل ذات الصلة بالعدو والعدالة الانتقالية في لبنان من أبرزها «ذاكرة الحرب في النظام القانوني اللبناني» (في: ذاكرة للعدو، دار النهار، ٢٠٠١) و«قانون العفو يؤسس دولة الهيبة» (النهار، ١ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٠) و«القضاء يكرس حق المعرفة» السفير (١٧ نيسان ٢٠٠٣) و«العدالة الانتقالية في لبنان في منعطفات ثلاثة». قدم في مؤتمر «العدالة الانتقالية» (بيروت، كانون الأول ٢٠٠٥).

صبياء غافيتش: من مواليد سراييفو. ١٩٨٠. مصور فوتوغرافي. نالت تحقيقاته المصورة عن المأساة البوسنية العديد من الجوائز المرموقة. في العام ٢٠٠٣ أدرجته مجلة Photo District News في عداد لائحة ثلاثين مصوراً واعداً. تنشر صوره في العديد من المجلات العالمية. مدار اهتمامه على المجتمعات والبلدان المتنازعة من البوسنة إلى رواندا ومن الفوقاز إلى العراق.

أمين مكي مدني (السودان): محام. أستاذ في القانون. وزير سابق. ناشط في مجال حقوق الإنسان. أمين عام المنظمة العربية لحقوق الإنسان. الممثل السابق لمفوض الأمم المتحدة السامي لحقوق الإنسان في الدول العربية فضلاً عن نشاطه في إطار الأمم المتحدة في غزة وأفغانستان وكرواتيا والعراق.

Zijah Gafić: A photographer, in 2001 his reportage about the Last Bosnian Village won the Ian Parry –The Sunday Times Magazine scholarship and second prize at the World Press Photo contest. In 2002, his reportages on war crimes in Bosnia and return of refugees won two prizes (first and second) at the World Press Photo contest. In 2003, he was elected as one of the 30 emerging photographers by Photo District News magazine. He was also awarded with the annual prize of the City of Prague. He is regularly featured in several international magazines. His main topic of interest is societies in conflict/transition, from Bosnia to Rwanda, from the Caucasus to Iraq.

Amin Maki Madani: Lawyer, law professor, human rights activist, and former minister, Madani is currently the chairman of The Arab Human Rights Organization and was formerly the Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Arab States. Madani has worked with the UN in human rights in Gaza, Afghanistan, Croatia, and Iraq. Madani currently practices law in Sudan.

Hazem Saghieh: Journalist for the Arabic daily As-Safir (1974–1988) and Al-Hayat (1988–Present). Saghieh has published several books about Lebanon and Arab political culture.

Nizar Saghieh: A lawyer, Saghieh has written several studies concerning amnesty and transitional justice in Lebanon, among them: “The Memory of War in the Lebanese Judicial System”, in Zakira lil-Ghad, Dar an-Nahar, 2001, “The Amnesty Law as Foundation of the Charismatic State, an-Nahar, 2000, “The Law Enshrines the Right to Know”, as-Safir, 2003, “Transitional Justice Through Three Turning Points, presented at the conference “Dealing with the Past in Lebanon: Various Approaches to Transitional Justice.”

Mirsad Tokača: Founder and President of the Research and Documentation Center in Sarajevo, Tokača was formerly the General Secretary of The State Commission for Gathering Facts on War Crimes (1992 – 2003) responsible for implementation of governments tasks in regards to war crimes.

صرخة من القبر وثائقي

DOCUMENTARY CRY FROM THE GRAVE

وثائقي بتوقيع ليسلي وودهيد
١٩٩٩. ١٠٤ دقائق. مترجم إلى الإنكليزية

A documentary by Leslie Woodhead
1999, 104 mins, English subtitles

الجمعة ١٢ أيار ٢٠٠٦ تمام الثامنة في الهنغار
حارة حريك (قرب مسجد الإمام المهدي)

Friday, 12.05.06, 8 pm @ The Hangar,
Haret Hreik (next to Al-Mahdi Mosque)

على مشهد صالحة عثمانوفيتش. إحدى ناجيات مجزرة
سربرينيتسا. يفتح صرخة من القبر. رواية ليسلي
وودهيد. بالصوت والصورة والتفاصيل. للمقتلة التي
شهدتها سربرينيتسا في تموز من العام ١٩٩٥. وإذ جثت
صالحة من المقتلة فليس من شأن جثتها أن تعيد عقارب
الساعة إلى الوراء: فخلال فرارها صلبة زوجها وابنها
أمام تقدم قوات صرب البوسنة يعتقل الاثنان على أيدي
هؤلاء وحتى الساعة ما تزال صالحة تبحث عنهما مؤلمة.
رغم تلاشي الآمال. أنهما ما يزالان على قيد الحياة.
بناء على شهادات لناجين وأخرى لمحققين تابعين
للمحكمة الدولية التي تنظر في الجرائم المرتكبة
في يوغوسلافيا السابقة. وثالثة لمسؤولين سياسيين
وعسكريين. يرسم صرخة من القبر ما يشبه أن يكون
جدارية عن مقتلة سربرينيتسا مقترحة بعض الإجابات
وكثيراً من الأسئلة.

A Cry From the Grave opens with the story of survivor
Saliha Osmanovic. Saliha parted ways with her
husband and son when they fled into the woods to
escape from the Bosnian Serbs. Her husband and
son were then captured by the Bosnian Serb military.
Against all odds that they will be found alive, Saliha
continues to search for them.

Through the testimony of survivors and relatives of
those who died, investigators from the UN-sponsored
court at The Hague, the UN special prosecutor as
well as other witnesses and officials, this documentary
is a chilling portrayal of the events surrounding the
July 1995 nightmare that engulfed Srebrenica. Many
sequences were recorded on camcorders by the
people who were there, including Serb and Muslim
soldiers, civilians, and peacekeepers.

A Cry from the Grave has won numerous prizes. It
has been shown at the UN, and it was used during a
war crimes trial at The Hague. While trying to answer
some pending questions, A Cry From the Grave
raises many more.