

consolidation in a social, intellectual, evolved European and international project.

Contemporary cultural forces exist. They are crushed on one side by a Celant-type of pragmatic censure and squeezed on the other by the savage crowding of a Bonito Oliva-type. Should they survive, they will be stepped upon by shortsighted alternates like Jean Clair whom tomorrow could have another name, perhaps better, but probably equally inclined to exploit the pathological vice of the Italian system. It is impossible to believe that a solution to the malfunctioning of a country's culture can be found during an afternoon in which names are substituted for other names and where ideas are only slightly altered. It is improbable that by substituting the nature and the origin of the charlatans, the results or the operational systems will change. What will be transformed is the vision of reality, which does not mean the distortion of the nature of this reality, but the beginning of its perception in its right scale of values and through the quality of its realization.

In Italy, anxiety is confused with passion, and the communal good corresponds to that which is good for the individual determining the communal good. Thus the wait for the true Tartars is once again prolonged. The group of artists who will occupy the Italian Pavilion for three months next summer, is not the populace so awaited and geared, giving meaning and identity to the fortress we occupy. No, this bunch of people is none other than a group of pilgrims who lost their way in the Italian desert and have been taken in by a generous Frenchman who does not know what the true Tartars look like. Italian contemporary art is desperately awaiting its Tartars while, like the second lieutenant Drogo, it is dying. It knows that over there on the horizon its enemies and saviors rise and fall, waiting for the door to the fortress to open for them, thereby transforming the enervating expectation into an extraordinary, inevitable, confrontation.

*(Translated from the Italian  
by Jenny McPhee)*



## NOTES AFTER THE SHOOT

BY BERNARD-HENRI LÉVI

### THE TITLE

"Bosna!," like Sarajevo, Gorazde, Maglaj, Bihac, Breko and Prjedor. "Bosna!," like Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has been dismembered by the Great Serbia's henchmen for years, and at the same time sacrificed by most of the so-called civilized nations. "Bosna!," like an inquest about this monstrous –and enigmatic– abandonment. And "Bosna!," like a combat film, alongside men, women, who, by defending their country, defending our values. "Bosna!," like Bosnia in Bosnian. This film could bear no other name than "Bosna!"

### THE DATE

There is no film that is not dated. This one is more so than any other, since it was hot, and then edited while the war continued. It is a film inscribed in time, sometimes hounded by the events. A film that is inscribed by the force of things in a period of the war. This had to have an effect –both on what it says and on how it says it. Meaning: Some 6 weeks shoot (following the location scouting and the preparation) that is broken down as follows: First shooting of the film in Bosnia: September '93. Second shooting in Bosnia: December, then January '94. Filming (Paris and Warsaw) the main interviews outside Bosnia: March '94. Final mix: April 20, '94.

### WHAT THE FILMS SAYS

The story of the war in Bosnia. The story of how Europeans –and on a wider scale, us Westerners– have perceived it, thought it and lived it. A film on them and us. As much about the West as it is about Bosnia. A film in which one sees only Bosnians, but which only talks about Europe after all. Why they are fighting? Why we did not fight?

### THE STYLE

Godard: "Documentaries are what happens to others, fiction is what happens to me." "Bosna!" is a documentary. But it is a subjective documentary.

### TIME ONCE AGAIN

It is known that more war movies are made after the fact. So much that the "after the fact" may sometimes take a long time to happen, and has even been known never to happen. War without images. War without memory. Such is the old eternal problem that wars have. The idea, this time: to film right away. The challenge: to make a film on the war while the war was still going on. "Bosna!," because the war is not over, and because one can not always wait for it to be over to tell it.

### THE GOAL

Neither a history film (to tell what happened), nor a mourning film (to break loose from the past that has happened). But a combat film (with, for, the Bosnians –being at their service). The Bosnians often told us: throughout the story they had no other friends than the opinions. Meaning the indignant citizens. And the journalists in the field. And sometimes the intellectuals. The journalists did their duty. They carried it out with a constancy, strictness and courage, which often saved their honor. Here, some intellectuals modestly try to do their job in their own way. The work? No, it of course does not mean talking in place of the Bosnians (they do not need us for that: one only has to look at the admirable work of Adhemir Kenovic, who has followed the tragedy from its start with his friends of Saga), but it means furthering the Bosnian speech (in order to think what one can about this inconceivable tragedy with words and images.)

### US

In the film I say "us." Who is this "us"? It is the film crew, of course. Meaning, first of all, Allan Ferrari, who has already directed "Les aventures de la

liberté.” alongside me. And then, with footage by Thierry Ravelet. “Un jour dans la mort de Sarajevo.” Once again, I made “Bosna!” thanks to him. But it is before the film, before the project was even thought of, the team of Gilles Hertzog and I make –since it is with him, with Gilles Hertzog that I will have experienced the Bosnian adventure, Gilles Hertzog, the author of “Brigades de la mer.” Friendship did the rest. And common reflexes. And various pages of various books. And names that work like passwords. And neighboring genealogies. Bosnia like a combat. Bosnia like remorse.

#### TIME. ONCE AGAIN

*Bosnia, therefore, before “Bosna!”* Coming. Going. For the film. Without the film. To see Alija Izetbegovic again. For Ibrahim, Kemal, Zlatko, Mermina, and so many others. To receive an honoris causa Ph.D. To give a conference. To follow another. For the film again. For nothing. For politics –I said politics– did we not, for this uncommon president whose name we did not know, eight days before meeting him, did we not do for him what we had never done before, and what we shall probably never do again, and that we never imagined doing for any chief of state in the world? One day I will tell his story. I will give the details of the adventure. But for now, “Bosna!”

#### WHAT IS ORIGINAL IN THE FILM. AND WHAT IS NOT

The chance of “Bosna!” was the trust the Bosnians showed it, and what they made possible. Special thanks to general Jovan Divjak and to the officers of the 1st Corps. We owe them for having been able to see rare documents –that had not previously been seen in the West. We owe them for having been able to shoot in Grondj, and on the front at Stup –images of the Bosnian front line, essential to the film’s narration.

#### WHAT IS OURS. WHAT IS NOT OURS

In the film, with a few minutes leeway, there is 50% of our footage, and 50% of archives. What is the difference? The

archives are video footage, that are given, every time, as such, that are given as documents and flash backs in the course of the narration. Our images are movie images, shot in 35mm and Super 16mm. To which one must add, first of all, the sequences in Super 8mm that tell the story of the film in its making, the research. These are, among others, some of the footage we took in the trenches. Second, there is a series of archive footage that, despite being in video, belongs to us (among others: the meeting with Celo, the images of Mount Igman, the ruins of the “purified” village of Brda, the scene with the UN troops).

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE ARCHIVES

The film’s 50% of archives are divided up as follows: Over half the images are from the Bosnian TV and their military archives; just under half of the images are non Bosnian footage.

#### THE GOAL AGAIN

To testify, one sometimes says. But there is martyrdom in testifying. And I am not quite sure that this is really about martyrdom. Bosnia is holding out. Bosnia is resisting. Bosnia with an incredible courage, nearly alone, paying with its blood, has been holding out for years against the Serb soldiery and the Western blackmail. These heroics do not deserve a testimony, but rather deserve praise. A salute. Salute to Bosnia. Praise be Bosnia Herzegovina. Between the Orwell of Catalonia, and Melville, our Melville, the writers’, this is a film that assumes its militant dimension.

#### WHY THEY ARE FIGHTING, WHY WE ARE HELPING THEM

The film’s last word –which could be the story’s : “...so it can not be said that: Europe died at Sarajevo.”

#### AGAIN: WHY THEY ARE FIGHTING? WHY WE ARE HELPING THEM?

Again, the end of the film. Because Bosnia can win. Because it is not a lost cause. Because hope in Bosnia is our business. “Bosna!” pleads for letting the refugees back in to their homes, for

judging the war criminals, and for integrity found anew in a Bosnia returned to its borders. Partition? With all their soul, the authors of this film refuse the idea of partition. Because it would not be a partition between ethnic groups, between religions, it would not even be a banal partition between belligerents. It would be the partition of a Fascist Bosnia on one side, and a Antifascist Bosnia on the other. And that would mean seeing Fascism growing in Europe once again.

#### DEATH. VIOLENCE

To show? Not to show? That was the question, of course. And the answer: to show, of course; to show the images: because war is not, as people have been stupidly repeating after Clausewitz, the continuance of politics & c. It really is death, it really is butchery, it really is our species lowered to the butcher’s stall, so one shows war –but if one wants to show it, then one must produce a carnage. The entertainment society, contrary to what is sometimes said, hates to show violence. Oh! They stage it, for sure. They play with it. They play it. They make bad serials and carnival like movies out of it. And that is what it is, a faked violence. Clown like death. It is always a fake death. A death that shows it is faked. It is death as a lure. It is special effects death, with Dolby stereo with sound effects. The other death, the real one, the violence with no outbidding, the violence we know is a true one, I wish it to remain taboo for the entertainment industry, taboo for the image dealers, and taboo for television.

#### AN EXAMPLE

We made the experience with the footage we took from what the Western TV had already broadcast. Every time, nearly, the TV shows the sequence. But every time, nearly, it stops dead, literally, on the image of death. The rifle, but not the moment it shoots. The artillery shell, but before, just before the blood and gore. Violence, but in suspense, a virtual violence, quasi abstract. The respect of the victims? No. The respect of the families. Meaning those who consummate the images. This film is a

homage to the Bosnian victims, not to those who consummate the images in the West. This film takes the side of the martyred bodies, not those who consummate the images. That is why this film does what only films can do: look straight into the eyes of horror, show.

#### DEATH AGAIN: VIOLENCE AGAIN

I insist. These images of war and violence –the film’s “hard” images, the ones that we ourselves sometimes hesitated and felt reluctant to show– are often the images the Bosnians shot. *There are our images once again. The images they let us shoot. Then there are theirs –that they wished to give us. The Bosnians filmed everything, one must know that. Everything is engraved. It is like a book of the dead that they would have methodically logged. Open the book, they told us. Broadcast it. Would you rather look away? Look somewhere else? What a mistake! These images were made for you. They were made to be seen. Go to the end of these images. If the West sees them, it will be as though they are opening the death pits with us –it will be as though they are helping put a face back on the dead, giving them back the identity they lost. Do not hide anything. You owe it to the dead. You owe it to the survivors.*

#### ALWAYS DEATH. ALWAYS VIOLENCE

Imagine, said the Bosnians, the Warsaw ghetto with cameras. We have the images. We have all the images. “Bosna!,” so Bosnia will not be the Warsaw ghetto.

Reprinted with kind permission of Celluloid Dreams



## WARCHITECTURE- SARAJEVO A WOUNDED CITY

“Warchitecture-Sarajevo: A Wounded City” is an extensive exhibition documenting the destruction of architecture in Sarajevo through

photographs, publications, films, audio-tape, and personal testimony. Created by the Bosnia-Herzegovina Association of Architects (Das-Sabih) in Sarajevo between May 1992 and October 1993, “Warchitecture” describes the combined physical and psychological assault against the civilian population by presenting one of the main forms of aggression: the destruction of the city’s architecture. On March 16, 1994, five members of Das-Sabih –Midhat Cesovic, Borislav Curic, Nasif Hasanbegovic, Darko Serfic, and Sabahundin Spilja– escaped with the exhibition packed in two crates. To inform the general public and professionals about the degeneration of Sarajevo, and to establish contacts that hopefully would lead to the reconstruction of the city, they presented the exhibition at the *Arc En Rêve Centre d’Architecture* in Bordeaux, France; at the *Centre Georges Pompidou* in Paris; subsequently at numerous other museums and galleries in Europe, and recently at the *Storefront for Art and Architecture* in New York, which gave us permission to print the following text and a selection of the pictures included in this courageous show.

“YOU CAN DESTROY OUR CITY,  
BUT OUR SOUL NEVER”

BY PROF. DR. MEHMED HRASNICA

The region of Sarajevo has been inhabited since the New Stone Age, but intensive urbanization of the Sarajevo valley started during Roman rule in the first century A.D. The city of Sarajevo gained status as an administrative and governing center of Bosnia-Herzegovina for the first time under Turkish rule. Since then, for more than five centuries, Sarajevo has been a political, economic and cultural center of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Founded by Eastern and Western cultures and civilizations, Sarajevo has been recognized as a multi-national and multi-confessional environment since its early days. Direct contacts and reciprocal influences between diverse spiritual traditions in this multi-cultural space had a major impact on the formation of an architectural and urban image. During its long history, the city’s urban image

changed according to the dominating social and cultural conditions. Today, three separate urban entities can be recognized: the first was formed in the Turkish period, leaving deep traces in the spiritual and material culture of the city; the second was established during the Austro-Hungarian occupation, and the third in the period of the intensive building after 1945. Before the aggression in April 1992, Sarajevo had been a modern European city with over half a million inhabitants; a city in which all the idiosyncrasies of its multi-cultural space had been transposed into a modern architectural quality.

Known for its specific charm and its spirit of tolerance, Sarajevo had become a symbol of civil rights and justice for all citizens regardless of their religion and nationality. For centuries, Moslems, Serbs, Croats, Jews and other nationalities had lived side by side. This collective identity has acted as a recognizable determinant in Sarajevo’s long existence, even though the continuity of the city’s development was endangered many times in its history. Sarajevo has been devastated by fires which consumed the city quaters, shaken by earthquakes, flooded and ravaged by plague and pestilence. It was conquered a number of times by foreign invaders. The year 1697 is still within the memory of its citizens when Eugen Savoy reached Sarajevo in his bloody campaign through Bosnia to burn the city down. Sarajevo endured the two world wars without any significant damage. In spring 1992, however, the city faced its greatest temptation in its long history. From the hills above, the chetnik aggressor pointed several hundred artillery pieces of the largest caliber and of the most destructive power with a clear goal: to destroy the city’s half millenium long urban tradition, to kill its soul and its collective identity. That would be the end of the internationally recognized state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Sarajevo was first attacked in April 1992, and that continued up to the present day. The city is destroyed, thousands of its citizens were murdered, a lot of defenders were killed, but Sarajevo did not surrender. The exhibition of the destroyed city illustrates most