

MELIKA SALIHBEG BOSNAWI

## LOTFI BOUCHNAQ - HOMAGE TO SARAJEVO

Sublime one, would be an accurate translation of the Composer's name, an artist on oud, and a singer, to who I dedicate hereby an unforgivably delayed - thanks. Perhaps because of the said delay, it came not as a quite accidental, the selection of the red video of our shame. In whose colour is being dyed our respect & gratitude, addressed to the man, a foreigner, whose last name sounds so familiar: Bouchnaq, Bushnaq, Bosniak! Our subconscious and fate are possibly adjusted in the virtual world much more accurately than in the real one. Or the next question is more accurate: does it speak in our depths, the very truth, and nothing else, even if silent?! For example, one of this kind: that Lotfi Bouchnaq remained unknown to the Bosnian because he was not coming from the (setting) side of the Sun, the very one which initiated, and governed, and ended to Bosnia, her war?!

Lotfi Bouchnaq (Bushnaq) reveals to the world the marvel of Arabic, i.e. Tunisian, Egyptian, Algerian, The old Andalusian, and so on, secular & spiritual music, emerging from spirituality and tradition of Islam. Fertilized, enlarged and magnified by the power of Lotfi's own artistic genius, it is being embedded in the present and the future of the World, on the mission of whose well-being he is one from among the UN "ambassadors of peace".

But alas! I'm afraid of being not alone in Bosnia, not from among Bosniaks, nor others, who remained completely ignorant about him ever until this very day. Bosnia, whose name he carries in his second name, presents him not in her media; Sarajevo to which he dedicated his singing during the city's war-bleeding, did not offer to him its "red heart", nor "red carpet", nor any glory. On the contrary; media in whose mirrors, likewise communist & democratic, Islam and Bosnia and Muslims and Bosniaks are most often, in war likewise in peace time, to reflect themselves only red, never did anything about him... Or this writer is uninformed?!

Lutfi Bošnjak, if we transcribe his name according to Bosnian, the language of the native land of his ancestors from the time of Ottomans' conquests, sang to Sarajevo, chained by the war, on the

lyrics of A. Fathi. But as far as I know, Lutfi's singing did not arrive to the goal. For the beloved city and Bosnia from his surname, for B&H, and for her arrogant journalism - Sarajevo "third (frightening) force", for the rough-cut NGOs & deceiving parties of ours, for "fama" and festivals on the red carpets... Lotfi has stayed completely unknown. But truth is always the one coming, and lie the one disappearing! Truth is that a Bosniak from Tunisia set to music and sang to the wartime Sarajevo with all his Bosniak and human soul. And that is the fact, which nobody's evil would or could deny!

Only a member (or the whole family?), as suggests to me Internet sources, was roaming the world per dictates of the ancient Ottoman's imperial army, and settling at the end in Tunisia. Centuries later, in the world with now different empires and military behemoth, the Islamic West - Maghreb is sending to us back, as "a refugee", Lotfi's best musical instrument: his incredible vocal cords. But also sound of other instruments and rhymes, and rhythms of the Islamic East after which there "ran mad" many a one noble western musician. Well, alas! the ignoble soldiers as well, to whose millions of victims we also owe our homage. If only this sinful writer would get enough strength to refer on each sad job on time, or ever, or whenever possible. And to any justice in help!

***Post Scriptum:*** This page on my web is a late apology to our Bosniak, i.e. Bošnjak, to The Sublime - Lutfi; an excuse for not before today, December 14, 2016, I came to know about him and his music, and his "Sarajevo", and his art in general.

A versatile artist who writes and composes and acts in movies, though never "playing" love in any life-movie, deserves our apologies. He is the author of "The Songs of Vision" (surpassing the eye seeing). As he sings, I can hear in Lotfi Bouchnaq as sobbing, Bosnia. (And Herzegovina, it goes without saying!).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6QnhMkqUc4>

## **SARAJEVO**

### **Singing: LOTFI BOUCHNAQ**

Lyrics: A. FATHI

Sarajevo how much more time should pass  
How much should pass

How many times should we die  
So that life returns..., that life returns

Sarajevo  
Nothing this evening  
Except snow over the blood of the innocent  
Absolving sins, and the lamentations

Aren't there ends to this madness  
Isn't it time for the soul to not feel miserable  
And for the mercy when you say «be» and it is  
So that life returns..., that life returns

Sarajevo  
Nothing new this Fall  
Except for the war reverberating with a scary silence  
And your stealing steps after the piece of bread

Aren't there eyes for these villages  
Isn't it time for the soul to say Allahu Akbar  
And for the people to understand what has happened  
So that life returns..., that life returns

Sarajevo  
Nothing apart from words  
Saying peace, and meaning a pile of things  
Including even walk over the pigeons' eggs

Isn't it possible to overcome this strain  
Isn't it time for the soul to wake up  
Perhaps fire will illumine the road  
So that life returns..., that life returns